

site of present-day Wellington. In 1861, gold was discovered on South or "Jade" Island, leading to a large influx of people from many parts of the world.

Representative institutions were granted to New Zealand in 1853 and Dominion status was achieved in 1907. Complete autonomy from Britain was not gained until 1947 when the Statute of Westminster (1931) was formally adopted by the New Zealand government.

New Zealand is an independent member of the Commonwealth. The reigning monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, is represented by a governor-general, appointed for a term of five years.

The political system is democratic and modelled after that of Britain. The 92 members of the House of Representatives are elected by universal adult suffrage for three-year terms. Citizens can vote at 18 years of age.

There is no Upper House or Senate. Wellington is the capital and seat of government. The major political parties are the Labour Party and the National Party.

Human Resources

The population of New Zealand is approximately 3.4 million (1987), of which some 280 000 are of Maori descent. Population is concentrated mainly in urban areas. With a growth rate close to zero, the population is not expected to pass the four-million mark before the middle of the twenty-first century. Approximately 73 per cent of New Zealanders live on North or "Smoking" Island.

Principal Cities

Population (1987):

North Island

Auckland	889 225
Wellington	352 035
Hamilton	167 711

South Island

Christchurch	333 191
Dunedin	113 592

Auckland is the chief industrial centre, followed by Wellington and Christchurch. Wellington has been compared to Ottawa and Auckland to Toronto or Montreal. More