



## Trying to right the imbalance

Maori and Pacific Island students introduced to journalism, journalists.

**Until there is a healthy number of Maori and Pacific Islanders involved in news gathering, there is always likely to be an imbalance in the news in this country.**

This is according to Mr Gary Wilson from the New Zealand Journalists Training Board, co-organiser of three introductory journalism courses for Maori and Pacific Island students with Mr Bill Panapa, from the Maori Affairs Department in Wellington.

Mr Wilson said a survey last year showed that 1.7 per cent or 17 out of every 1000 people working in journalism in New Zealand were Maori or Pacific Islander.

He also said the numbers of Maori and Pacific Islanders coming through the training courses — at Wellington Polytechnic, Auckland Polytechnic and Canterbury University — were insignificant.

### GENERALLY IGNORED

Despite its popularity as a career, journalism appears to have been generally ignored by Maoris and Pacific Islanders.

This was why the introductory courses were started; to make Maoris and Pacific Islanders aware that journalism was a worthwhile and available career for them as well.

Mr Wilson said he tried to give those on the course — mostly secondary school students — a taste of journalism and to teach them some of the basic skills.

The third course, on August 26 to September 3 this year, was based at Pendennis Hostel, Wellington. The 20 students, between 16 and 19 years old, came from as far as Greymouth and Gore to Turangi and Eketahuna.

Throughout the course's six working days, they had work sessions on basic journalism skills; visited the two Wellington dailies, the Dominion and Evening Post; spoke with editors, chief reporters and cadet reporters; visited Wellington Polytechnic, Television New Zealand's Avalon Studios, Radio New Zealand, Parliament and the Parliamentary Press Gallery.

Towards the end of the course, they visited local community newspapers where they were able to look for news, interview and produce a suitable story. Most of the stories were published in the following issues of the respective newspapers.

Mr Wilson said the most significant thing the students could learn from the course was that journalism was not beyond them; it was not the mysterious and terrifyingly com-

Some of the 20 students on the third introductory journalism course at Pendennis Hostel, Wellington. From left to right: Lesley Browne, Gore; Jeanne Hamlin, Wairoa; Raewyn Ramage, Maitua; Sarona Aiono, Christchurch; Bronwyn McGarvey, Auckland.

**Cover photo** Rowena Asher, Turangi; Marion Rangihuna, Te Araroa; Samson Samasoni, Wellington.

plicated business it could appear.

He said they were able to see from the practical work they did on the course that they could do it and that it was fun.

### UNREAL PICTURE

Some people had built up an unreal picture of journalism and journalists simply because they hadn't been to a radio station or a newspaper.

Although these courses are basically a brief introduction to journalism and are not training courses as such, they have been producing some worthwhile results.

Mr Wilson said at the end of each course, if there were any who appeared keen and capable, they were guided towards applying for one of the three journalism training courses already mentioned.

He said out of the first course, six people were either on a course or had been on one.

It was likely another six would go from the second course and probably four would apply and be accepted from the latest course.

### SLOW INFILTRATION

Such an increase, although small compared to the number of New Zealanders entering journalism every year, was very important.

"Their influence probably won't be felt for many years. It will be a slow but useful infiltration into the industry," Mr Wilson said.

Meanwhile, some of those who attended the latest introductory journalism course in Wellington give their views:

Karen Nicholas, 18, New Plymouth. Te Atiawa of Taranaki. 7th former and deputy head girl at Spotswood College.

"Previously the word journalism gave the picture of just hard factual reporting for newspapers, but