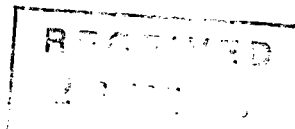


**MIGRATION, EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC**

**COUNTRY REPORT NO. 7
KIRIBATI**

John Connell



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Front cover:

We are grateful to James Griffin for permission to reproduce a design of a Bougainville canoe paddle from *Bougainville artifacts: conserved or cookim coffee?*, James and Helga-Maria Griffin, Occasional Paper Number 1. Port-Moresby: Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1975.

Preface

This report is one of a series of country reports covering all the countries in the South Pacific Commission area that have been produced as part of the Migration, Employment and Development in the South Pacific project. This project is administered jointly by the South Pacific Commission and the International Labour Organisation and was established in April 1981 with funds provided by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. The project, which is based in Noumea, covered all the countries and territories in the South Pacific Commission area and also investigated migration from the region into Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America. The series of specific country reports is listed on the back cover of this report.

In consultation with the SPC, the ILO appointed Mr John Connell as a resident expert to co-ordinate the implementation of the project. Within the SPC, Drs Ko Groenewegen provided guidance on technical and administrative aspects of the project. Work on the preparation of the reports was undertaken by Mr John Connell with some early research assistance from M. Jean-Marie Delmas and the secretarial assistance of Ms Maeva Betham. Advice, comments and assistance, both technical and administrative, were also provided by the ILO's Labour and Population Team for Asia and the Pacific (LAPTAP). The project is indebted to many individuals within the countries, in SPC and elsewhere, who helped in the compilation, analysis and assessment of the data and related reports, and these are acknowledged in specific country reports.

The ILO's association with the publishing of the report does not imply expression of any opinion whatsoever on the legal status of any country or territory or concerning any delimitation of its frontiers. Responsibility for opinions expressed in signed material such as this report rests with the author and publication does not constitute their endorsement by the ILO.

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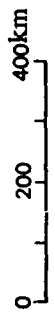
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- Washington (Tabuهران)
- ◉ Fanning (Teraina)
- ◉ Kiritimati (Christmas Island)

LINE ISLANDS

- ◉ Malden
- ◉ Starbuck

- ◉ Vostok
- ◉ Flint
- ◉ Caroline

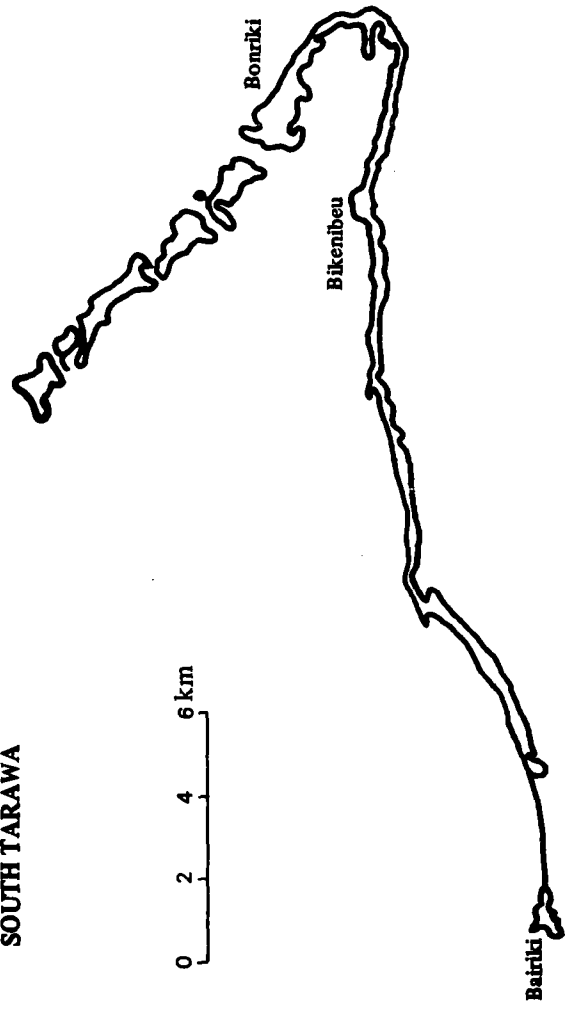


PHOENIX ISLANDS

- Canton
- Enderbury
- Birnie
- Phoenix
- Sydney (Manra)
- Hull (Orona)
- McKean
- Gardner (Nikumaroro)

- Makin
- Butaritari
- Marakei
- Abaiang
- Tarawa
- Maiana
- Kuria
- Aranuka
- Abemama
- Nonouti
- Beru
- Nikunau
- Onotoa
- Iamana
- Arorae
- Banaba (Ocean Island)

SOUTH TARAWA



'Planning for economic development in both the Gilbert Islands [Kiribati] and Tuvalu poses formidable problems, given the rather limited range of natural resources that can be exploited as a basis for sustained economic growth. Indeed few countries of the South Pacific serve to remind one so well of the so-called 'Malthusian dilemma' as do the two countries under consideration with their rapidly expanding population pressing against a limited and non-expanding stock of natural resources' (Fairbairn, 1976:i).

The Republic of Kiribati comprises three main island groups, the Gilbert Islands (Tungaru) the northern and southern Line Islands and the Phoenix Islands, and one isolated island, Banaba (Ocean Island). Until the mid-1970s these islands were linked with Tuvalu (the Ellice Islands) to form the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. All the islands are atolls, with the exception of Banaba which is a raised coral island; Kiritimati (Christmas Island) in the northern Line Islands is regarded as the largest atoll in the world. Whilst the land area of Kiribati is extremely small (around 700 sq.kms.) the sea area is the largest in the South Pacific region (3.6 million sq.kms.) and Kiribati is unusual in spanning both the equator and the international dateline. Jarvis and Palmyra Islands in the Line Group are still owned by the United States and Washington and Fanning (once a 'penal colony' for Hawaii) were until March 1983 the freehold property of the Burns Philp Company when Kiribati bought back the two islands for \$1.5 million. The most distinctive characteristic of Kiribati is the wide scatter of tiny islands; Kiritimati is 3,500 kms. from the capital, Tarawa, and the most distant Line Islands are 4,000 kms. away from Tarawa.

The Gilbert Islands are the easternmost and southernmost part of Micronesia; the Phoenix and Line Islands were intermittently occupied by Polynesians in pre-European contact years but were not occupied at the time of European contact. Subsequently they have been colonised by Micronesians from the Gilbert Islands so that, after the secession of Tuvalu (Country Report No.19), Kiribati has become a primarily Micronesian country. The population of the islands of Kiribati has always been almost entirely Micronesian with never more than 6% of the population being from elsewhere; in 1978 98% of the population were Micronesian. Banaba is somewhat distinct from the rest of Kiribati and, although the Banaban language is related to Gilbertese it has been argued that there is only a 'myth of Ocean Island being traditionally an integral part of the Gilbertese group' (Kituai, 1982:39). However Kiribati is on the border of Polynesia and there is evidence of an invasion of Samoans, and perhaps other Polynesians around 500 years ago, which has influenced local culture and is referred to in several creation myths (Kirion and Karaiti, 1979). Micronesian settlement occurred several thousand years ago. Unlike most of the rest of Micronesia the people of the Gilbert Islands do not particularly emphasize matrilineal descent. In the northern atolls there was considerable stratification in traditional society whereas in the south this was largely absent (Alkire, 1977:78-9).

The first definite European sighting of the Gilbert Islands was in 1606 by the Spanish explorer Quiros who sighted the northern atoll of Butaritari. Modern discovery and exploration of the islands began in 1765 when Nikunau was sighted; in 1788 Captain John Gilbert sighted several more islands and the remainder of the Gilbert Islands were sighted between 1799 and 1826. The Phoenix group were first visited by Europeans in the 1820s (when all

were uninhabited); the Line Islands were similarly uninhabited when discovered by Europeans in the late Eighteenth Century and early Nineteenth Century. Captain Cook discovered Christmas Island (Kiritimati) on 24 December 1777. Trading vessels began visiting the Gilbert Islands in the mid-Nineteenth Century and some Gilbertese were taken on as crewmen; the Phoenix and Line Islands were principally used in the Nineteenth Century either for phosphate exploitation or as coconut plantations, hence there was much labour migration to those atolls from the Gilbert Islands and elsewhere in the South Pacific region. In the second-half of the Nineteenth Century many Gilbertese, perhaps as many as 9,000, worked overseas at the phosphate workings, in the plantations, in South America (Maude, 1981:90-91) and also in Samoa, Tahiti and Hawaii (see below). To some extent these early labour migrations established patterns for Twentieth Century migration to Ocean Island (Banaba) and Nauru (Pacific Islands Yearbook, 1981:253).

The first European missionary in the Gilbert Islands was established in 1857 on Abaiang and after 1870 Samoan missionaries from the London Missionary Society established themselves on the southern atolls. In the northern islands Catholic missionaries were more important. In 1892 the Gilbert Islands were proclaimed a European protectorate and after 1896 the Ellice Islands (Tuvalu) were incorporated into a joint administration with headquarters at Butaritari and Tarawa. In 1900 following the discovery of phosphate, Ocean Island was annexed and in 1916 the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony was established. In that same year Fanning and Washington Islands in the Line Islands were incorporated in the Colony and in 1937 the uninhabited Phoenix Islands also became part of the Colony; other Line Islands were not effectively incorporated into the colony until after the war and not all Line and Phoenix Islands are now a part of Kiribati. Since 1975 the Banabans have pressed for secession but have not been successful, although the Kiribati Constitution makes special provision for Banaba. Kiribati was the only part of Micronesia to have been a British colony, although in such a limited way that Kiribati and Tuvalu have been referred to as the 'Cinderellas of Empire' (Macdonald, 1982).

The Gilbert Islands, and especially Tarawa, was a site of bitter fighting in the war and when Banaba (Ocean Island) was re-occupied in 1945 it was found that the Japanese had killed all but one of the Gilbertese labour force and deported the Banabans to Nauru and Kosrae. On returning from Nauru the Banabans elected to live on Rabi Island which had earlier been purchased for them (see below). After the war there was progress towards self-government when in 1963 an Executive Council and an Advisory Council were created; in 1967 the Advisory Council was replaced by a House of Representatives and in 1971 this was replaced by an elected Legislative Council. In 1971 the Council was replaced by an elected House of Assembly and a Chief Minister. In the same year the Ellice Islanders (Tuvaluans) voted overwhelmingly to secede from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony and separation took place in October 1975 although joint administration from Tarawa continued until January 1st 1976 (Pacific Islands Yearbook, 1981:254). There was further localisation in the government and Independence was achieved in July 1979; the name Kiribati was then adopted (the local pronunciation of Gilberts) and the country became a Republic.

Economy

All the islands of Kiribati except Banaba are coral atolls or reef islands. Generally these atolls are larger and with larger lagoons than in other parts of the South Pacific and Kiritimati (363.4 sq.kms.), accounts for more than half the land area of the country. Coral atolls offer only

limited scope for agricultural development because of the shallow topsoils, the low water-holding capacity and usually limited rainfall. Major constraints on agricultural development in Kiribati therefore include the limited potential of atolls, the limited amount of land available and especially the rainfall, which is irregular and infrequent, particularly outside the northern Gilbert Islands, and there are recurrent droughts, especially in the Phoenix and Line Islands. Droughts took a heavy toll on life in earlier times; for example, in Tamana in 1877, there were reported to be 216 deaths from starvation during a particularly severe drought (cf. Bailey, 1984). Although Kiribati is outside the hurricane belt severe storms do occur occasionally.

The basic agricultural system is similar to that of other atoll economies in the South Pacific region, being based on a limited range of planted crops (especially taro), coconuts and pandanus. On the southern atolls, pandanus and coconuts are virtually the only crops able to survive low rainfall and periodic droughts. On the northern atolls taro and breadfruit are the main subsistence crops. Swamp taro (babai) is grown in deep pits; this demands a considerable expenditure of time and energy and some varieties take a number of years to reach maturity. Throughout most parts of the Gilbert Islands pits have fallen into disrepair and babai has become less important as a subsistence food (Geddes et al, 1979:33). Vegetables have been increasingly introduced into home gardens, especially in Tarawa, but production is insufficient to enable any local marketing to counteract costly imported foods. Pigs and chickens are also produced locally, but little production (other than eggs) is available for sale. Although there is some potential for the marketing of agricultural products, especially on the islands closest to Tarawa, this has not been realised and the agricultural system has not changed in response to marketing opportunities. Fishing techniques are diverse, accompanied by an extensive lore and formalised patterns of catching and distribution. However the I-Kiribati uniquely, or to a marked degree, practise crop fertilisation, construct taro pits and reportedly consume a wider range of available plant foods than do other Micronesian populations (Catala, 1957). Atoll agriculture and the subsistence economy are thus more complex than elsewhere in Micronesia and also vary from atoll to atoll; however, as a recent review of agricultural prospects in Kiribati concluded, 'prospects for agricultural and rural development are closely constrained by the nature of the country's natural environment, which is one of the most restrictive in the tropical world' (Ward and Proctor, 1980:357). The same report further refers to Kiribati as an 'ecologically marginal region' (op cit:41), where polished rice has become the main staple food (ibid) and dependence on imported foods is extremely high such that 'the country faces the prospect of continued food importing for the bulk of its requirements' (op cit:363) to which the only solution seems to lie in 'an intensification of multi-storey cropping' (op cit:364). Prospects for the intensification and improvement of the traditional agricultural system are therefore relatively limited.

Land resources in the Gilbert Islands are in extremely short supply, as is apparent from the population densities in that chain (Table Seven) which now average around 200 persons per sq.km., a density exceeded only by Nauru and Tuvalu in the South Pacific region. Consequently there have been attempts to both decentralise population and agricultural development eastwards and to reclaim land, especially on Tarawa. In 1970 the Temaiku reclamation project reclaimed almost 3 sq.kms. of lagoon close to the airport, which are now used for baitfish farming, and other smaller projects have reclaimed land elsewhere in urban Tarawa and are continuing to do so.

Kiribati and Tuvalu are the only two countries in the South Pacific region where there have been significant attempts to reclaim land for agriculture or housing, an indication of the importance attached to even very limited land resources in these countries.

The only agricultural export from Kiribati is copra, most being from small farmers in the Gilberts although almost a third is from Line Island plantations. Copra constitutes 80% of the value of all exports from Kiribati. Production of copra has been relatively static during the 1970s, at a time of falling copra prices, despite government incentives to promote new plantings and improve existing coconut groves. By 1982 8% of the land area of the Gilbert Islands had benefitted from the coconut replanting schemes. However subsidies (and perhaps the decline in alternative sources of income) produced a record copra crop in 1981 (of 9,352 tons from smallholders alone) and copra production in Kiribati is known to be extremely responsive to price changes (Geddes *et al*, 1979:52-53). Although yield trials of new coconut varieties have been attempted in Kiribati they have not been successfully incorporated into atoll agriculture because of both problems of hardpan development and land tenure (see below). Since copra sales are the main source of cash incomes in rural areas, and there appear to be few real opportunities for substitution, further development of the coconut industry is essential; however in the Gilbert Islands chain, 'even if yields of copra were raised significantly and every possible piece of land put under palms the area of the islands of the main Gilbert Group is insufficient to provide commercial smallholdings for more than about 60% of the rural households (Ward and Proctor, 1980:362). Whilst there are other uses for coconuts, beyond copra, the potential is limited and copra prices are notoriously unstable.

Kiribati has a 200 mile exclusive economic zone which now extends over the whole area of the country giving the country an enormous area of fisheries potential (and possibly, eventually, seabed mineral resource potential); hence there is considerable optimism over the potential for fisheries development which has the highest priority for economic development in Kiribati and will eventually be of greater importance for Kiribati than it is for any other South Pacific country. Fisheries resources are currently leased out to Japan and South Korea and this provides a further source of income. Japanese lease rights currently provide about 10% of national income although at the end of 1982 there was considerable concern in Kiribati over the breakdown of discussions relating to further Japanese leasing of Kiribati waters. The national fishing company, Te Mautari, now has four fishing boats, one contracted from Star Kist, and a 60-ton cooling shore installation. Despite higher than anticipated catches in 1983 low world fish prices suggests that the fishing industry will not make a profit in 1983 (Mackenzie, 1983:47). The Government is currently aiming at increasing the number of fishing boats and establishing a joint venture with a foreign fishing company (Batawa, 1982). The size of Kiribati makes policing the marine resources of Kiribati difficult and Kiribati has complained of illegal American purse seining in Kiribati waters (Islands Business, October 1982) and hence reduced income for Kiribati. There is some evidence that intensive exploitation of Kiribati waters by foreign vessels has reduced the availability of fish for local artisanal fishing and hence consumption in some of the Gilbert Islands (R. Kearney, pers. comm. 1983). On the atolls themselves there is potential for development of lagoon aquaculture, especially on Tarawa and Kiritimati, for baitfishing and subsequently other forms of fish farming. By 1978 baitfish production in Tarawa was already adequate for the early stages of a commercial tuna fishing industry and by 1982 I-Kiribati had

become advisers to baitfish operations elsewhere in the South Pacific region. In 1980 Kiritimati was exporting milkfish to Nauru and lobsters to Hawaii and locally caught fish is marketed on a regular basis in Tarawa. A Fisheries Training Centre was established in 1978 which will work in association with the new USP Atoll Research Institute.

Attempts have been made to develop a limited but basic forestry industry in Kiribati, especially on Kiritimati, to reduce the heavy cost of timber imports. So far this has achieved little success and the potential for atoll forestry is extremely limited.

There is very little industrial development in Kiribati which is principally confined to import substitution industries, such as foodstuffs (bread and recently biscuits) and a small handicrafts industry. Of the 32 manufacturing establishments recorded in November 1978 22 were sour toddy manufacturers (Kiribati, 1979:129). Manufacturing currently contributes only about 3.5% of GDP. Almost all these industries are in South Tarawa. The lack of natural resources in Kiribati and its remoteness from potential markets suggests that the prospects of industrial development (beyond, perhaps, fish-related industries) that is not import-substituting, are virtually non-existent. Current proposals exist for small industries involving metal fabrication, coconut oil extraction and soap production and the manufacture of exercise books (Tetinaniku, 1982) but, even if these are successful, no more than around two or three hundred jobs will be created. The National Loans Board has expanded since 1978 and will eventually be expanded into a Development Bank to meet increased demand for loans.

Although there is some possibility for tourism, perhaps related to war relics in the country, isolation, high airfares and limited facilities reduce the potential for future development. Currently Kiritimati is being marketed as a tourist resort for game fishermen and bird watchers and the Honolulu-Kiritimati-Tarawa air link provides some possibility of access to an American market. In the absence of other development opportunities tourism must be considered a possible 'aid to the economic woes of Kiribati' (Pryor, 1982) although its prospects are extremely poor. Since developments are likely to be primarily in Kiritimati the erosion of Kiribati cultural values is likely to be slight.

Until phosphate mining on Banaba finished at the end of 1979 this was the basis of the Kiribati economy, as it had been for the whole of the century. Unlike in Nauru ownership of the phosphate industry was never localised, and in 1975 the Banabans initiated a legal action against the British Government and the British Phosphate Commissioners, claiming more than \$7 million for back royalties on phosphates. Although legal judgment found against the Banabans on the royalties issue it also found that the BPC had not restored certain portions of Ocean Island, and the British, Australian and New Zealand governments offered the Banabans an ex gratia payment of \$10 million in addition to any damages decided upon (Pacific Islands Yearbook, 1981:255). The closure of the phosphate mine a few months after Independence meant that 'few nations on achieving political independence have seen their economic independence so drastically reduced' (Tetinaniku, 1982:1). Although there are still some phosphate resources in the Line Islands there is no prospect that they will ever be of economic value and there are no other known mineral resources in Kiribati, other than manganese nodules around the Line Islands, that may eventually be commercially exploitable.

Kiribati has a considerable trade imbalance, which increased dramatically after the end of phosphate mining, since copra and, to a much lesser extent, fisheries products are almost the only exported goods. After copra, stamps are the most important export from Kiribati, although their contribution to the economy is proportionately not as great as in some smaller countries. In 1982 their export value was estimated at about \$800,000 compared with \$575,300 for fish exports. Total exports increased in 1981 and 1982 chiefly due to higher service receipts from investment income and, to a lesser extent, from increased stamp exports since copra exports have scarcely changed (Asian Development Bank, 1983:4). Imports of food, fuel and manufactured goods have increased considerably in recent years and the cost of imports, especially of fuel, has been very high for a country so remote from the major suppliers. Indeed in 1981 oil imports were one and a half times the value of all exports. The main source of imports is Australia. The growth of private consumption increased (in current terms) from 1981 by about 8% per year, especially because of a rise of demand for some foodstuffs and durable goods, including motorcycles. The forthcoming Development Plan has investigated the possibility of restricting the import of motorcycles to those with engines of no more than 125 c.c. capacity, which would both reduce their cost and reduce fuel requirements. Government consumption expenditure also increased in that period and 'the consumption ratio to GDP was more than 125% which means that the country has not been saving' (Asian Development Bank, 1983:3). Kiribati is therefore highly dependent on aid, the majority of which comes from the United Kingdom; the U.K. funded nearly half of the 1978 development expenditure and in 1980 official aid amounted to \$287 per capita. Most aid is in the form of capital assistance (such as ships and buildings) but these require recurrent costs, such as maintenance, fuel and staff wages and training which have to be met from Kiribati's own recurrent expenditure. Capital aid therefore places a burden on recurrent expenditure.

As in all atoll economies transport presents a major development problem and this is compounded by Kiribati's remoteness to the extent that Kiribati has had difficulties attracting international shipping services (Pacific Islands Yearbook, 1981:247). Internal shipping services are principally operated by the Kiribati Shipping Corporation (KSC) which serves all the atolls in the Gilbert Islands group. By 1981 every atoll in the Gilbert Islands had an airstrip which was served by the domestic airline Air Tungaru. In 1980 Air Tungaru purchased a Boeing 727 and inaugurated an international route to Kiritimati, Papeete and Honolulu; the Papeete link was quickly dropped and the route has been economically disastrous. Communications with the Line Islands are necessarily limited and extremely expensive and the distance and costs of communication with these islands are the principal constraints to development there. However, even within the Gilbert Islands, distances are considerable; freight rates are high and services are infrequent; hence there are long delays in the arrival of materials and equipment, limited and expensive access to emergency services, and poor prospects of marketing locally produced goods.

The Fifth National Development Plan (1983-1986), and the second post-independence plan, is currently being finalised during a difficult period in the economic development of the nation. The problems facing the economy are being tackled by a multiple strategy based on the principle of self-reliance, especially in terms of national survival, health, education and employment provision, and directed at:

1. maximizing the return from existing resources, such as fisheries, copra, handicrafts and tourism;
2. controlling the growth rate of population and the increasing trend of rural-urban migration;
3. continuing to support the training of seamen at the Marine Training School;
4. examining all possible schemes for import substitution and developing those that are worthwhile;
5. promoting the development of the Line and Phoenix Islands, in particular the resources of Kiritimati, and
6. restraining the rate of growth of public and personal consumption to more realistic levels than those of the phosphate boom years.

Alongside the diversification of new economic activities, especially marine resources, particular attention will be given to the improvement of the subsistence system in rural areas and the possibility for some decentralisation of economic activity and institutions from the urban area of South Tarawa. Underlying this issue is concern over the increased concentration of wealth both between individuals and within the urban area (see below). Concerning available resources, a start has been made towards the development of marine resources. A number of projects are being actively pursued - notably the establishment of a tuna fisheries industry and the exploitation of milkfish and crayfish on Christmas Island.

The provision of services in Kiribati is more limited than in many other countries in the South Pacific region. Primary schools exist throughout the country but there is a shortage of qualified teachers; in 1978 122 out of the 414 teachers in government primary schools were completely untrained (Pacific Islands Yearbook, 1981:238). In 1977 Kiribati established four pilot Community High Schools (on Makin, Maiana, North Tabiteuea and Tamana) to provide an education system more suited to the rural environment in which most high school graduates would live and provide skills more appropriate to those tasks; however in 1982 the system was abandoned. The reasons for this were not known at the time of writing, but were believed to be a response to parental opposition. There are five secondary schools which, in 1978, had a total enrolment of 873 (one on South Tarawa, one on North Tarawa and the others on Beru, Abaiang and Abemama) but at that time 393 of all the high school places were in South Tarawa. In 1982 total Kiribati enrolment was 950. There are three tertiary education establishments in Kiribati, the Tarawa Technical Institute on Betio, which provides a series of short courses on various technical matters, the Tarawa Teachers College, which is responsible for all primary school teacher training, and the Marine Training School (MTS) in Tarawa (Betio). The MTS was set up in 1967 to conduct one-year courses in basic seamanship so that I-Kiribati graduates from the school could obtain employment principally on overseas ships; in 1976 more than 700 I-Kiribati were employed on overseas ships, many outside the South Pacific region.

At the end of 1978 the proportion of the relevant age group attending primary school was greater on the outer islands than on South Tarawa; primary school attenders constituted 91% of the 5-14 group on outer islands and 89% on South Tarawa. However this is more likely to be a result of migration to South Tarawa than to rural bias in the provision of schools (Love, 1982:68) or to the presence of over-age students (Walsh, 1981:176). By contrast at secondary school level the situation is reversed, constituting only 7% of the 15-21 age group on outer islands compared with 16% on South Tarawa. For tertiary education the situation is similar with 0.2% from the outer islands and 1% from South Tarawa, giving a national

average of only 0.5%, an exceptionally low rate when compared with other countries in the region or elsewhere in the Third World (ibid), and indicating the very limited availability of skilled personnel in Kiribati. Even so in 1982 15 I-Kiribati gained degrees but five were still seeking employment early in 1983 (Islands Business, 9(4), April, 24). Consequently very few secondary school leavers return to their home island and most take up employment elsewhere. By the start of the 1980s Pitchford was arguing that the education standards for employment should be lowered, to avoid intense competition for jobs demanding high education standards, whilst Fyfe described the education system, with the exception of the Tarawa Technical Institute, as an inappropriate English model (cf. Knowles, 1981:3). In January 1983 there were moves to raise the entry requirements for Form VI to admit a maximum of thirty students to correspond with the skilled manpower requirements of Kiribati and cut down on competition for jobs between the highly educated and thus reduce the severity of competition and the wastage of manpower. The forthcoming draft Development Plan recorded that the potentially valuable resource of secondary-educated children 'is being stifled because the popular objective of education is to secure a safe and soft permanent Government white collar job'. The 'diploma disease' is a critical problem as access to employment via education is of major importance in Kiribati.

Health services, like education services, are limited in their extent in Kiribati; there are two major hospitals in Kiribati, both on South Tarawa at Betio and Bikenibeu, and various dispensaries. Since 1978 there has been an improvement in the supply of medical services in the outer islands although the disparities between South Tarawa and elsewhere in the country are considerable; in mid-1981 there was one doctor per 8,649 people on the outer islands, a ratio three times that of South Tarawa. There was then one doctor on Butaritari and one on Tabiteuea compared with 15 in Tarawa (Walsh, 1981:176). Wider disparities occurred for medical assistants and nurses since 'the population covered by each medical assistant or nurse on the outer islands was approximately five times that of South Tarawa but for health workers the ratio was only twice that of South Tarawa (Love, 1982:67). Whilst transport improvements may have increased the effectiveness of centralised services communications remain poor so that the disparity in the distribution of services does reflect a disparity in health care provision. Some characteristic diseases associated with poor, tropical countries, such as diarrhea and gastroenteritis, remain fairly common since water supplies and sanitation are often poor. However, during the 1970s, the incidence of tuberculosis and leprosy fell sharply. In 1977 there was a major outbreak of cholera in South Tarawa (Kuberski et al, 1979). Diabetes rates are relatively high in Kiribati, especially in urban South Tarawa (Zimmet, 1981). In a study conducted in 1977 malnutrition was found to be quite widespread in pre-school children, especially amongst Catholic families in the northern islands which is likely to be due to socio-economic factors such as larger family sizes and shorter birth intervals (Roberts et al, 1979:639). At least 10% of Kiribati pre-school children suffer from malnutrition and the level reaches 30% in some areas, whilst one out of fifteen children, aged between 6 and 12 months, in South Tarawa had a growth problem of sufficient seriousness to warrant hospitalisation (Kiribati, 1979:212). Throughout Kiribati there are development projects involving the provision of improved drinking water and sanitary facilities.

Whilst access to health and education services is important it has less immediate effect on the population than other basic needs such as food, housing, water supplies and sanitation (Table One). The distribution of these indicates that a large majority of the Kiribati population, especially

on the outer islands, live in traditional housing, without special sanitary provision or water supplies. Only South Tarawa has a centrally generated electrical system whilst the supply of kerosene to most parts of Kiribati is irregular and a third of households on outer islands do not have kerosene lamps (Love, 1982:72). The level of access to basic amenities in Kiribati is therefore extremely limited and indicative of a substantial degree of poverty. As Love notes, whilst the low level of material goods could be considered 'subsistence affluence', and this may be the case 'on many of the islands of the Gilbert Group, where fish, coconut and breadfruit are plentiful..it should not be allowed to obscure the fact that living standards in the cash economy remain low and even that the prospects for future growth are less than in countries starting from a lower material base but with a potentially more productive natural resource endowment' (1982:73).

Table 1. Availability of Selected Household Services in Kiribati, 1978.

Type of Service	% households	
	South Tarawa %	Outer Gilbert Islands %
Traditional house	48	97
No sanitation	22	67
Well water	34	85
Wood fire	46	88
Bottle lamps (a)	19	35

(a) A 'bottle lamp' is a simple wick suspended in a small amount of kerosene.

Source: Love, 1982:70.

Development planning in the 1970s has concentrated on diversifying the economic base of Kiribati to compensate for the end of phosphate mining. The first post-independence National Development Plan for 1979-1982, which is about to be replaced, was formulated on the basis of a continued supply of overseas aid without which any significant development in Kiribati would be almost impossible. Alongside the diversification of new economic activities, and especially marine resources, particular attention was given to the improvement of subsistence systems in rural areas and the decentralisation of economic activity and institutions from the urban area of South Tarawa. Underlying these issues was concern over the increased concentration of wealth both between individuals and within the urban area; the development of the tuna industry and decentralisation were expected to reduce these differentials.

The Development Plan identified Kiritimati as an area of special development opportunity since, firstly, it comprises half the land area in the country but is thinly populated, secondly, the land is owned by the government and, thirdly, the island has potential for tourism and is less

than three hours flying time from Hawaii. The other Line Islands have more restricted potential for development. The Government has set up a Ministry of the Line and Phoenix Islands and has undertaken several major studies of the potential for decentralisation, most recently and comprehensively by Pitchford (1981); whilst land of potential economic value is available in both groups of islands the cost of development there (at a time of rapidly rising transport costs) severely limits the potential for development (see below). The significance of transport and communications links, not only for development in the Line and Phoenix Islands but also for development in the outer islands of the Gilberts group, is apparent:

'..if outer island development is to be given high priority and take place at an appreciable pace as envisaged in the present Development Plan, perhaps the single most important factor needing maximum inputs, and hence the Government's concern is Communication - inter and intra-island and external road, sea and air links, telecommunications services and mass media' (UNFPA, 1980:120)

It is a measure of the problems of development in Kiribati that serious attention is being given to the development of quite small islands that are 3,500 kms. away from the majority of the population, when decentralisation is contrary both to contemporary economic trends and population movements even within the Gilbert Islands. Overall Kiribati has an extremely small natural resource base, a dense population and extremely limited opportunities for economic development.

Employment

A relatively small proportion of the Kiribati labour force is employed in the formal sector, and that proportion has fallen since the closure of the Banaba phosphate workings. Of the total 1978 population, 7,053 (21%) of the population aged 15 and over were active in the cash economy, either as employers, employees or with their own business; this compares with the 1973 situation when 19% were formally employed thus there has been some increase in formal sector employment. Similarly, in 1978 it was found that 65% of the population were economically active outside the cash economy, compared with 42% defined as being 'active in the village' in 1973 (Love, 1983). These two time periods are not strictly comparable, especially because of Tuvalu secession, but they do indicate both a degree of stability in the formal employment sector and a growth in the unpaid work force. The most directly comparable data over the five year period is on the number of males active in village life which, with three exceptions (the atolls of Nonouti, Nikunau and Tamana), increased during the period so that 'emigration had not yet reached the extent where villages were experiencing a net loss of active males' (Love, 1983).

The most recent detailed breakdown of the employment structure of Kiribati is also from the census of December 1978 which is now five years out of date. This historical element is particularly apparent from Table Two which records some 317 workers in mining, entirely concerned with phosphate mining on Banaba, an activity which ended a year later. (Since the total labour force of Banaba was only 381 the significance of mining, and nothing else for Banaba, is apparent, because the remaining employment on Banaba is in the service sector). The overall distribution of employment indicates the very small proportion of wage employment in the primary and secondary sectors. Only 495 (7.5%) were engaged in agriculture (264) or fisheries (113) or the service sector (118) directly dependent upon these

activities. Similarly manufacturing (183) employed less than 3% of the paid workforce. Thus the vast majority of all employment (90% in 1978) is in the service sector and, after the closure of the Banaba mine, this proportion is likely to have increased. The importance of construction and administration as sources of employment increased between 1973 and 1978 with these two areas registering the biggest absolute and proportionate increases in the five-year inter-censal period; this is typical of other parts of the South Pacific region in the years immediately prior to Independence. This expansion may have continued in the years immediately after independence, if Kiribati has followed similar patterns elsewhere, but numbers are now likely to be static or even contracting.

Table 2. Employment by Sector, 1978.

	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture and Fisheries	478	17	495
Mining	304	13	317
Manufacturing	131	52	183
Utilities	186	7	193
Construction	935	37	972
Commerce	616	297	913
Transport	609	75	684
Companies	25	7	32
Community Services			
Administration	844	172	1,016
Education	401	270	671
Health	127	271	398
Missions	353	62	415
Other	189	140	329
TOTAL	5,198	1,420	6,618

Source: Love, 1983.

Employment is dominated by government and the public sector generally which in 1973 was estimated to be responsible for over 50% of employment in Kiribati (Fairbairn, 1976:7). However the proportion employed in the public sector cannot be identified from the census alone and there are no alternative sources of data on the structure of employment. On the basis of the 1978 census Pitchford estimated that 70% of all employment was with the government or in government-related organisations, with 6% with missions, 6% in mine employment on Banaba, 13% with local private enterprise and 5% with overseas private employers (Pitchford, 1981:13.1). With the exception of missions and mines these categories are not recorded separately; Pitchford gives a figure of 360 for mission employment whereas the census gives a total of 383 I-Kiribati alone, alongside 32 others, and his total of 418 in mine employment is much higher than the census total of 317, whilst Pitchford's total employed population of 6,448 is not that of the total census figure for workers of all ethnic origins of 6,432. Pitchford's estimates may therefore not be wholly accurate. Excluding mine employment, which no longer exists in Kiribati, and making various assumptions (such as that most agricultural employment is government employment, one-third of construction activities are in the private sector and almost all commerce is in the private sector) crude estimates from the 1978 census (Kiribati,

unemployment than earlier estimates. The figures may however have also been unusually inflated at this time by the return of phosphate workers from Banaba, many of whom returned to Tarawa or subsequently moved there, rather than being repatriated to their home islands. Overall however it is apparent not only that there has been an increase in the level of unemployment in Kiribati, and especially in urban Tarawa, but that the prospects of developing new employment opportunities and reducing the unemployment level, again especially in Tarawa, is extremely poor.

In terms of the geographical distribution of economic activity there are four geographical 'regions' in Kiribati of very different types (Table Three). The first is Banaba, characterised in 1978 by a mining population from other islands in the Gilberts group and now characterised by a lack of economic activity. The second region is the urban area of South Tarawa which contains the greatest proportion of virtually all categories of paid employment. The third region is the Line Islands characterised by employment on the copra plantations of these islands, and accounting for more than half of all agricultural workers in Kiribati. Well over 80% of the male population of the Line Islands is in wage employment, as are 42% of those aged between 15 and 19, a result of the situation where the islands contain no indigenous population and the labour force is recruited from the Gilberts group. The final region consists of all the islands of the Gilberts group, other than South Tarawa, where a more or less traditional agricultural economy exists and there is some employment of administrative and other service workers, especially in education and health.

Table 3. Employment Activity by Region, 1978.

	Number Employed	% Banaba	% South Tarawa	% Other Gilbert Islands	% Line Islands
Professional and Technical	1,563	5	50	42	3
Administrative and Managerial	91	2	80	11	7
Clerical	948	5	75	16	5
Sales Workers	567	3	56	40	2
Service Workers	845	8	63	23	5
Agriculture and Fishing	358	0	29	20	51
Production Workers	2,253	14	66	25	9
TOTAL	6,625				

Source: Love, 1983.

In South Tarawa the significance of the primary sector (4% of employment) is much less than that for Kiribati as a whole, whilst in utilities (electricity and water), construction and manufacturing the proportions in urban employment are greater than those for the whole country (Table Four). The proportion of female workers (25%) is also greater than that (21%) for the whole of Kiribati and is concentrated particularly in health, administration and education. Only 23 people out of the employed

activities. Similarly manufacturing (183) employed less than 3% of the paid workforce. Thus the vast majority of all employment (90% in 1978) is in the service sector and, after the closure of the Banaba mine, this proportion is likely to have increased. The importance of construction and administration as sources of employment increased between 1973 and 1978 with these two areas registering the biggest absolute and proportionate increases in the five-year inter-censal period; this is typical of other parts of the South Pacific region in the years immediately prior to Independence. This expansion may have continued in the years immediately after independence, if Kiribati has followed similar patterns elsewhere, but numbers are now likely to be static or even contracting.

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1980:62-63) suggest that around 4,300 workers out of a total of 6,859 are in the public sector; thus almost two-thirds of all employment in 1978 was in the public sector. This conforms reasonably well with Pitchford's locally-informed estimates so that it is probable that government employment did then constitute about two-thirds of all employment. It was certainly characterised by its higher proportion of those with secondary or tertiary education. Since 1978 the proportion in government employment appears to have increased relative to that in the private sector (which also includes such activities as missions) and is likely to now represent more than 70% of all employment in Kiribati. A study made in 1982 recorded that private sector wage employment constitutes no more than 10% of wage employment and that in 1977-8 the public sector employed 90% of those in wage employment (Knowles, 1982:5). Whilst public sector employment since 1978 has grown relative to private sector employment it is apparent that not all these estimates can be correct. Since Knowles provides no data to support his conclusions on percentages it is apparent that more data on the sectoral distribution of the workforce would be most useful.

It has been estimated that the government sector has grown at a rate of about 7% a year for the past ten years but national financial constraints resulted in a freeze of all new public sector positions between 1980 and 1983, which created employment problems for many school leavers. There is no real economic base on which to generate public revenue to support a growing public service. Moreover, as elsewhere in Micronesia, since the public sector is largely composed of commercial establishments which depend on the expenditure of public servants and the public service, if the public sector does not grow then the private sector cannot grow either and new employment opportunities will be limited to localisation and normal turnover (Knowles, 1982:1-2), apart from some expansion of the fishing industry. On the other hand the draft Development Plan concluded that since 'urge employment in the public sector seems more a channel through which public money is distributed than a means of increasing productivity and improving services', cutting the size of the public service might not reduce services and might stimulate increased copra production. The prospects of any substantial increase in jobs in Kiribati in the next few years is therefore extremely small. Moreover although the private sector was not subject to the government freeze it may well have been affected by the implied restrictions on the rate of growth of public spending. Since 1980 and 1981 were also a period of consolidation as a number of ventures competed for a viable market share (UNFPA, 1980:35), employment expanded extremely slowly in the post-Independence period.

In May 1982 only 53 out of 1,881 public service positions (especially in health and education) were held by expatriates, thus there is limited scope for localisation, especially because of the small number of specialists in several areas. These are therefore difficult to localise and there is a high degree of wastage because of the risk of preparing for a post in which there are limited opportunities, where the duration of training is considerable and where there are difficulties in securing on-the-job training and experience (Knowles, 1982:6-7). Even so this situation is better than that of other smaller states, such as Tuvalu. Throughout the formal sector in 1978 some 193 expatriates were employed out of a total of 6,625 workers; the two largest groups were teachers and missionaries (Knowles, 1982). Thus the structure of expatriate employment is broadly similar to that elsewhere in the South Pacific, although the number of expatriates is proportionately much less than in areas of Micronesia to the north. The number of expatriates suggests that there are limited opportunities for jobs through localisation especially since most

such jobs demand high education levels; however Knowles notes that there are no more than sixty jobs held by expatriates that require a university degree and there are 86 I-Kiribati now studying for degrees overseas although there would be considerable problems attached to employing all graduates simultaneously (op cit: 7). In January 1980 the retirement age was lowered to 50 but, whilst this produced immediate vacancies, it is a once-only possibility.

The 1978 census provides some data on unemployment in Kiribati which suggests that there were fewer 'unemployed' in 1978 than in 1973; this may be a real reduction (associated with increased employment opportunities before Independence) or it may reflect a change in the interpretation of the relevant census questions. In 1978 the main groups of unemployed were, firstly, those involved in water transport which, since the group included students, was artificially inflated by the presence of large numbers at the Marine Training School and, secondly, missions on outer islands, for which the same kind of situation occurs. Of the 416 unemployed in December 1978 (392 men and 24 women), 327 were involved in water transport and 40 in outer island missions. Whilst the single largest group of 'experienced unemployed' were probably seamen (Love, 1983) the available census data otherwise suggests an extremely low level of unemployment, especially for women. As elsewhere in the South Pacific region, the concept of 'unemployment' has limited value in Kiribati, firstly, since most people are able to work in the subsistence sector, even in South Tarawa, hence the number actively seeking employment without simultaneously being engaged at least part-time in some other activity is extremely small. This is particularly true of women. Moreover 'it is likely that many if not most of those not in wage employment on South Tarawa would prefer to be in wage employment, given the choice' (Love, 1983). Secondly, the measurement of unemployment only refers to those 'previously employed' hence school leavers seeking employment for the first time would be excluded; since this is usually the most important group of unemployed in other countries in the region this exclusion significantly reduces this formal measure of unemployment. The formal data on unemployment in Kiribati is therefore of very little value.

Excluding those not formally employed from the numbers in each age group (and also excluding students) gives a rather different measure of 'unemployment' being based on the assumption that all those without wage employment would prefer it (because wages are high relative to subsistence income, in cash and kind, there is regularity of wages and security of employment). For South Tarawa this would give 'unemployment rates' of 77% for males between 15 and 19 and almost 50% for the 20-24 age group; much lower percentages occur for females (Love, 1983). Outside South Tarawa, where subsistence activity is of much greater importance, this measurement is of limited value. Thus two techniques of analysis give very different measures of 'unemployment' and to the extent that there is a 'real' measure of unemployment the proportion would be much lower than the second technique records.

At the start of 1980 a National Employment Register was established in South Tarawa by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Labour and by mid-1980 over 2,000 applicants had registered for work, out of a total population there of around 20,000 and, in 1978, a population of 9,398 in the age-group 15-59. By 1981 there were 3,000 registered job seekers. Whilst these figures undoubtedly include some individuals with employment and many engaged in some aspect of the subsistence economy it both indicates an increase in urban unemployment and is a more accurate measure of

unemployment than earlier estimates. The figures may however have also been unusually inflated at this time by the return of phosphate workers from Banaba, many of whom returned to Tarawa or subsequently moved there, rather than being repatriated to their home islands. Overall however it is apparent not only that there has been an increase in the level of unemployment in Kiribati, and especially in urban Tarawa, but that the prospects of developing new employment opportunities and reducing the unemployment level, again especially in Tarawa, is extremely poor.

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population of South Tarawa are directly engaged in agricultural production (Kiribati, 1980:6), which is one explanation for a lack of fresh food; however a high proportion of the urban population are engaged in some agricultural and fishing activities.

Table 4. Employment by Sector, South Tarawa, 1978. I-Kiribati only.

	Male	Female	Total
Agriculture and Fisheries	137	11	148
Mining	2	0	2
Manufacture	109	41	150
Electricity and Water	141	7	148
Construction	696	32	728
Commerce	305	225	530
Transport	467	63	530
Companies	18	6	24
Community Services	918	566	1,484
Not Stated	5	3	8
TOTAL		2,798	954 3,752

Source: Census of Kiribati, 1978 (1980):60.

Major differences in economic activity occur between the urban area of South Tarawa and other Gilbert Islands; the adult (15+) population forms 58% of the population in the Gilbert Islands but 64% in South Tarawa. The proportion of the adult male population in employment is 50% in South Tarawa compared with only 14% for the rest of the country; for females the equivalent proportions are 17% and 3%. This indicates both the exceptionally low availability of job opportunities for women in the outer islands and, above all, the great differences in formal sector job availability between Tarawa and the outer islands. Necessarily the proportions 'active in village life' are the reverse, with a proportion of 79% of adults for the outer islands and 20% in South Tarawa; male and female rates did not differ significantly. Whilst these figures further emphasize the differences between South Tarawa and everywhere else in the country they do indicate that the contrasts between urban and rural life are not absolute, a situation emphasized by the traditional housing and agricultural systems of significant parts of the urban area, especially around Bikenibeu. Within the atolls themselves there are variations in the proportions of those active in village life. The percentage of the adult male population economically active in village life ranges from 64% on Maiana to 88% on Arorae, compared with only 20% on South Tarawa (Love, 1982). At that time Maiana, one of the closest atolls to Tarawa had had an airstrip since 1976 whereas Arorae, the most distant atoll from Tarawa, had no airstrip and was much more subsistence-oriented.

Variations also exist in the age structure of employment; the proportion of each age group in South Tarawa in employment is considerably higher than that on outer islands. There is also an age-bias in employment structures which is particularly apparent for males in the age group 20-29 who account for 32% of male employment on South Tarawa but only 25% on outer islands. On the outer islands employment contains a higher proportion of

Table 5. Household Sources of Income. (a)

	Wages	Own Business	Pension	Sales of Goods	Remittances	None Reported	Total
Banaba	347	7	1	8	10	-	356
South Tarawa	2,051	94	20	327	325	67	2,284
Other Gilbert Islands	1,627	107	26	5,086	1,514	78	5,896
Line Islands	335	7	17	33	5	3	346
Kiribati	4,360	215	64	5,454	1,854	148	8,882

(a) Since some households have more than one source of income the total number of households is less than the sum of the households in particular categories.

Source: Census of Kiribati, 1978:92-96.

older men than on South Tarawa (Love, 1982). This differential employment structure is likely to be primarily a result of emigration (rather than a function of a different employment market in Tarawa). The age distribution of female employment does not show the same marked differences between South Tarawa and the outer islands.

There are substantial differences in the source of income between regions of Kiribati (Table Five); for example, as many as 90% of households on South Tarawa in 1978 received some cash income from wages compared with only 29% in other Gilbert Islands, whereas only 14% of South Tarawa households received income from sales of produce compared with 86% of households elsewhere in the group. Regular remittances contributed to the income of about 10% of households in the Gilberts group but only 7% of households in South Tarawa (Love, 1983). In the Line Islands (and Banaba) almost all income was obtained from wages, an indication of the 'artificial' nature of the economy of those islands. The government is a leading influence on income levels since upwards of 70% of all wage and salary employment is in the government sector; in the mid-1970s the 'imbalance in the income distribution between public servants and the remainder of the population' widened (Gilbert Islands, 1977:34). In 1982 the Government fell, following rejection of the President's move to give a 5% pay rise to senior government officials. Two major strikes since independence also demonstrated the significance of wage issues in Kiribati although, in 1980, a major issue was the reduction of the retirement age. In 1976 the minimum wage was 39 cents per hour, although some workers aged less than 18 were receiving 30 cents an hour, whilst some government wage earners were receiving 67 cents an hour (Pacific Islands Yearbook, 1981:240). The limited significance of the commercial sector in Kiribati and the relative isolation of each island has resulted in a relatively high level of self-sufficiency so that subsistence production constitutes a large proportion of household incomes and, especially outside South Tarawa, few households do not obtain a large proportion of their effective income from subsistence activities.

There is only scattered information on the actual size of incomes. Estimates made by the Ministry of Finance in 1979 indicate that average household income from all sources on the outer islands of the Gilberts group was A\$1,282 compared with an average personal income from employment alone on South Tarawa of A\$2,212 (Love, 1983). After adjusting for household size and other sources of income the evidence indicates that average cash incomes on South Tarawa are likely to be much greater than on the outer islands. Average household size on the outer islands was then 5.6 persons (compared with 7.4 on South Tarawa) hence average per capita income on the outer islands was \$227. This figure is much higher than the incomes recorded by Geddes et al, in the early 1970s, who found that the average per capita income on the island of Abemama was \$69, on Butaritari \$29, on Tamana \$24 and on Tabiteuea North \$11; these figures collected through detailed sample surveys are likely to be more reliable than those provided by the census (Geddes et al, 1979:60-63). However these earlier surveys indicate a higher proportion of income from remittances (between 14% on Butaritari and 48% on Tabiteuea North) and a lower proportion from wages (between 5% on Butaritari and 15% on Tamana) hence expansion in wage employment on the outer islands in the pre-Independence era may account for the increased cash incomes. All the available evidence on income levels conclusively demonstrates that cash incomes in Kiribati are extremely low.

Data on the distribution of income is equally fragmentary but the evidence from the island studies of Geddes et al, is that there was a very wide distribution of incomes within islands (1979:61) and that this uneven distribution was not compensated for by traditional forms of distribution and redistribution. A study of Beru in the late 1970s recorded,

'Perhaps the most striking feature about the total pattern of incoming cash is its uneven distribution within the island, as the distribution of household goods has already suggested. Particularly vulnerable appeared to be a small proportion of elderly widows and widowers who had few relatives and no remitted income' (Farquharson et al, 1978:7.5).

Thus not only are absolute income levels low but their distribution is extremely unequal, especially on South Tarawa, and there is no indication that this distribution is becoming more equal. Attempts to redress this imbalance resulted in an increase of theft in the 1970s (Macdonald, 1982:217-218). Between I-Kiribati, income inequalities may well be less than in many other countries, but the differences between I-Kiribati and expatriate incomes are considerable.

Population

From the mid-Nineteenth Century there are estimates of the population of Kiribati and an estimate of around 50,000 at that time came to be generally accepted, although it may have been too high by 20,000. Whilst the arrival of Europeans around that time resulted in population decline, as a result of the combined effects of introduced diseases, guns and the labour trade, this decline was not as great as has been hitherto assumed because earlier population estimates were too high. These early estimates are discussed in detail elsewhere for the whole of Kiribati (Bedford and Macdonald, 1983) and also for the specific case of Makin (Lambert, 1975). For the Nineteenth Century as a whole, although there is little data on fertility and mortality, it is generally assumed that much the most important influence on population growth was international labour migration (see below) which resulted in a loss of population from Kiribati, and especially on certain of the small southern islands such as Beru, Arorae and Tamana. The population continued to fall until around the early 1920s, when the census recorded the lowest population total for Kiribati but from then on the population grew steadily (Table Six). In the 1910s and early 1920s there was administrative concern that population decline was such that some of the islands would become depopulated; by the 1930s the reality of steady growth had become apparent, so much so that the administration were now concerned that the drier islands of southern Kiribati especially would become 'overpopulated' and began to search for suitable islands elsewhere where a resettlement programme might be established (see below). After the war population growth was more rapid and many islanders had raised aspirations following the wartime American military presence.

The main features of the current (1978) age-sex distribution of the Kiribati population are that there is a very high proportion of children (41% of the population is aged under 15), mainly because of the high level of fertility, and hence that there is a low proportion of old people but a high dependency ratio, especially on the outer islands. The crude birth rate (CBR) for the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony was approximately 35-37 per thousand during the period 1921-1947. Between 1947 and 1968 the CBR increased to a very high level of around 45 per thousand; fertility then

dropped between 1968 and 1973 but did not drop further between 1973 and 1978. In 1978 the CBR for Kiribati was estimated at about 35 per thousand (Macrae, 1983b) and thus remains at a relatively high level. In general fertility rates in 1978 were higher for Catholics than for Protestants, and hence for the northern atolls rather than the southern atolls, and higher in rural than in urban areas (Macrae, 1983b; Watters et al, 1979; Lambert, 1975:238).

Table 6. Population of Kiribati, 1852-1978.

1852	about 46,500
1861	about 50,000 - 54,000
1871	about 39,000
1892	about 26,430
1901	about 24,969
1911	25,133
1922(a)	23,224
1931	26,416
1947	31,513
1963	43,336
1968	47,735
1973	51,931
1978	56,213
1983	about 60,000

(a) Indigenous population only.

The fall in fertility coincided almost exactly with the establishment of a family planning programme in Kiribati so that it is reasonable to conclude that there was some relationship between the two events. A family planning programme began in earnest in 1968 and in the first Development Plan the administration stated that 'the first priority in the first year of the Plan period (1970-72) is to devise and implement the first stage of a major programme for the control and reduction of the rate of population growth' (cited by Macrae, 1983b). The programme achieved some success for about five years and then its success waned. A survey at the time concluded that most men thought four to six children were sufficient to guarantee security in old age so that lower family sizes occurred either where the market economy predominated and/or where there was a shortage of land; consequently it was concluded that 'until rural development and the status of women have improved fertility is likely to remain comparatively high' (Pitchford, 1972). More recent studies in four islands of Kiribati have shown that fertility decline was greatest in the Protestant islands where population densities were highest (Geddes et al, 1979:26), and a limited study in Maiana and Tarawa concluded that family planning activities might influence child spacing but would have a much lesser impact on reduction of fertility rates and thus population growth (Gobius, 1979). A year later a UNFPA mission concluded that for various reasons, including male resistance, religious resistance, shortage of supplies and misinterpretation, the programme was largely unsuccessful (UNFPA, 1980:27-28). In 1982 the newly elected government re-established the Ministry of Health as the Ministry of Health and Family Planning, a designation which indicates a new determination to promote family planning and which may increase its status and impact. This is essential since the most recent data (P. Hedrick, pers. comm. 1983) demonstrate a declining impact of family planning.

Available official evidence suggests that 19.4% of all women in the age-group 15-44 were practising family planning in 1982, with wide variations within Kiribati; much higher acceptance rates existed on the islands south of Tarawa, compared with Tarawa itself, the islands to the north and especially the Line Islands (ibid).

Traditional controls over population growth were strong in many areas of Kiribati, as they were in the neighbouring Marshall Islands (Country Report No.8); thus in the southern islands at least,

'The Gilbertese were also aware that they lived quite close to the population limits of their islands and consciously maintained a nominal rule that no woman should be allowed more than three living children. Adoption, abortion and infanticide were recognised processes for adjusting the population in accordance with the available resources, and adoption in many cases was merely nominal, serving primarily to extend the choice of possible residence sites' (Knudson, 1977:203).

Similarly the behaviour of unmarried girls was strictly regulated to minimise their opportunities for procreation (ibid) and concubinage was also practiced (op cit:205). Broadly, the same kinds of controls also occurred on the northernmost island of Makin (Lambert, 1975:228-233). Thus not only were traditional population practices aimed at slowing population increase and increasing access to available land areas, the demise of these traditional practices in the present century under colonial regulations, the decline of traditional authority and the improvement of medical services all contributed to population increase. That such rigorous traditional controls existed suggests both that even at much lower population densities than currently exist (see Table Seven) it was important to control population growth and that the possibility of extending family planning in contemporary Kiribati is greater than in some other parts of the South Pacific region.

Between 1921 and 1947 the crude death rate in the Gilbert and Ellice Island Colony was approximately 27-32 per thousand and then decreased to around 23 per thousand during the period 1947-63. There was a further decrease in the inter-censal periods 1963-68 and 1968-73 and the most reliable estimate for 1978 is about 14 per thousand. The infant mortality rate also declined rapidly between 1947 and 1968 but at the time of the 1978 census it was no lower than 87 per thousand, a rate that is very high compared with other states in the South Pacific region. Nevertheless the overall decline in mortality is primarily a result of the decline in infant mortality rate. The child mortality rate is on average higher in the urban area of South Tarawa than in the outer islands, a situation which is most likely to be a result of poorer urban nutrition, because of the dependence on imported foods and greater pressure on local resources, overcrowding and inadequate sanitation (Macrae, 1983a). Child mortality rates are also higher in the northern atolls, rather than the southern atolls, and higher in the northern atolls than in South Tarawa; this is most likely to be a result of a greater incidence of parasitic disease in the north and generally higher population densities, with the exception of Tamana in the south (Macrae, 1983a). Adult mortality appears to have no significant geographical variation. Expectations of life at birth, in 1978, were 50 years for males and 54 for females, relatively young ages which indicate that the potential for a reduction in mortality in Kiribati is considerable.

Table 7. Population Change, Kiribati, 1947-1978.

	1947	1963	1968	1968-73		1973	1973-78		1982	1978 Population Density (a) Persons per sq. km.
				Change	%		Change	%		
Banaba (Ocean Island)	2,060	2,706	2,192	5.6		2,314	-4.9	2,201	72	352
Makin	969	1,292	1,387	4.2		1,445	-1.8	1,419	1,538	180
Butaritari	1,824	2,611	2,714	9.5		2,971	6.0	3,149	3,440	234
Marakei	1,803	2,213	2,180	1.5		2,212	5.6	2,335	2,560	165
Abaiang	2,823	3,370	3,271	0.8		3,296	4.6	3,447	3,740	197
Tarawa	3,582	7,914	12,642	35.5		17,136	17.6	20,148	22,325	649
Maiana	1,425	1,688	1,710	-9.5		1,412	19.5	1,688	1,880	101
Abemama	1,174	2,060	2,126	8.2		2,300	4.8	2,411	2,690	88
Kuria	315	729	958	-14.3		821	-2.2	803	890	50
Aranuka	366	533	738	5.8		781	8.8	850	1,000	73
Nonouti	2,004	2,229	2,408	-5.4		2,223	2.7	2,284	2,690	115
Tabiteuea	3,784	4,082	4,419	-10.6		3,942	5.5	4,157	4,600	110
Beru	2,231	2,337	2,412	-3.9		2,318	-4.6	2,212	2,455	125
Nikunau	1,592	1,908	2,029	-9.1		1,845	-0.9	1,829	2,075	96
Onotoa	1,491	1,993	1,960	1.9		1,997	1.9	2,034	2,295	130
Tamana	883	1,254	1,422	-2.1		1,392	-3.1	1,349	1,580	285
Arorae	1,558	1,760	1,830	-11.2		1,625	-6.0	1,527	1,715	161
GILBERT ISLANDS (excluding Banaba)	27,824	37,973	44,206	7.9		47,716	8.2	51,642	57,473	192
Fanning	158	521	376	-9.6		340	27.6	434	470	13
Washington	259	373	437	4.8		458	9.2	416	450	43
Kiritimati	52	477	367	83.7		674	87.7	1,265	1,360	3
LINE ISLANDS	469	1,371	1,180	24.77		1,472	43.7	2,115	2,280	5
Ships	176	268	157	-		429	-	255	-	-
PHOENIX ISLANDS	984	1,018	-	-		-	-	-	-	-
KIRIBATI	31,513	43,336	47,735	-		51,931	-	56,213	59,825	79

(a) Population densities given here are those recorded in the 1978 Census and are not the same as those recorded by Geddes et al (1979) or UNFPA (1980). Significant differences occur for the islands of Makin (212), Abaiang (227), Kuria (70), Aranuka (55), Nonouti (79) and Beru (151) but, at the time of writing, there was no means of establishing which were the most appropriate land areas and hence densities.

Source: Census of Kiribati, 1978; Statistics Office, Ministry of Finance (cited in Asian Development Bank, 1983:22). The 1982 figures are estimates only.

Migration

The availability of data on population change in Kiribati suggests that, even in the Nineteenth Century, international labour migration - the labour trade - was the principal influence on population growth. The first formal recruiting of labour was in 1847 when 22 men from the southern atolls of Arorae and Tamana were taken to work on sheep and cattle stations in New South Wales. Subsequently there was French recruitment for Reunion and New Caledonia, Spanish recruitment for Peru (Maude, 1981), employment in Tahiti, work on Fijian and Samoan ships and, later in the century, migration to Hawaii, Mexico, Guatemala and Queensland, where there were about 200 I-Kiribati plantation workers. Labour migration to Hawaii has been well-documented to indicate that migration was apparently primarily a response to difficult conditions within the islands: 'many islanders sought to migrate to escape the warfare, while famine itself drove others to seek sustenance aboard the ships' (Bennett, 1976:16); warfare may also have resulted from droughts and resultant famines. In Banaba conditions were often particularly difficult and Banabans above all were often in such poor health that they were unable to survive as far as the transshipment point of Jaluit in the Marshall Islands (*ibid*). About 1,800 labour migrants went from Kiribati to Hawaii, mainly from the northern atolls, and most returned with a trunk of goods (*op cit*:17-21). The numbers and conditions of other early labour migrations are discussed elsewhere (cf. Lambert, 1975; Bedford and Macdonald, 1983; Macdonald, 1982:54-74) but it is apparent that for the last half of the century there was a constant movement of labour migrants (and a few women and children) from and to Kiribati; perhaps 10,000 adult migrants travelled away from Kiribati in that period. The majority returned usually with trade goods of some kind and the precedent for Twentieth Century labour migration had been well established.

By the end of the century a new labour migration had begun that was eventually 'to prove crucial to the economic future of Kiribati' (Bedford and Macdonald, 1983). From the 1880s I-Kiribati were employed on Fanning and Washington Islands in the Line Group and also on the new phosphate workings on some of the islands in both the Phoenix and Line Groups. This was the first significant link between the Gilberts and the other two groups and the first migrations of I-Kiribati to work phosphate deposits, the start of the most important labour migration in Kiribati (and Tuvalu) history and one that was to last for another century. In the Twentieth Century migration to the phosphate workings of Nauru commenced and by October 1900 76 Gilbertese labourers were gathering and loading phosphate on Ocean Island which in 1901 was formally annexed by Britain. After 1920 the numbers working overseas increased quite rapidly. In 1922 for example more than 10% of the listed population were overseas (Bedford and Macdonald, 1983). By contrast migration within the Gilbert Islands appears to have been both localised and limited at this time (Lambert, 1975:240).

In terms of the availability of data on contemporary migration Kiribati (and Tuvalu) are better served than perhaps any other states in the South Pacific region. Since 1963 censuses have been conducted at five year intervals so there is now a series of four censuses, each of which records population by 'home island' and 'place of residence', and for the first three of these censuses there is some analysis within the census volume of this migration and its significance. For the 1973 census this data has been analysed in even greater detail in an academic thesis (Wilson, 1979) and the 1978 census data has been analysed by Walsh (1982) and Bailey (1984). Whilst this data is analysed in some detail in the following paragraphs it remains a resource of considerable value for subsequent more detailed

evaluations of migration, either in examining the historical evolution of the migration situation or to provide a more comprehensive evaluation of the existing situation. The principal limitation of this data, in terms of its value for planning, is that it essentially refers to a situation before the closure of the Banaba phosphate mine which resulted in substantial return migration to the Gilbert Islands. Necessarily the data cannot give more than crude indications of the rationale for and impact of migration.

Much of the value of this data revolves around the utility of the concept of 'home island' which is defined as 'the place which individuals regard as their true home to which they will one day return' (Gilbert and Ellice Islands, 1974:ix). It was argued therefore that 'usually it is where lands have been inherited, not necessarily the island of birth' (ibid). Whilst only one home island was recorded for each person, 'due to much intermarriage, especially on Tarawa, there are now many people who not only have a home affiliation to several islands, but may not in fact have ever visited any of them' (ibid). Increasingly, as children are born in Tarawa (and some other migrant destinations), the concept of 'home island' loses its relevance (Wilson, 1979:53), and many of these, and others, are classified as 'migrants' even if they have lived in Tarawa all their lives (op cit:57).

The first comprehensive review of migration in Kiribati (and Tuvalu) was that of the 1963 census which recorded 'home island' (as opposed to island of birth) and place of residence. Canton and Banaba (with 0 and 9 respectively referring to these as a 'home island') were excluded from the analysis whilst the 42 people claiming Fanning (Teraina) or Washington (Tabuaeran) as their home island were probably recording their island of birth (McArthur and McCaig, 1964:40). The principal islands of lifetime (but mainly temporary) emigration were Maiana, Kuria, Nonouti and perhaps Arorae. By contrast there was little emigration from Tarawa, the two northern islands of Makin and Butaritari and also Abemama. In terms of lifetime immigration, Kuria stands alone as a special case where less than a quarter of the enumerated population were native to the island; however this is principally a result of a special interpretation of 'home island' there (Zwart and Groenewegen, 1970:61). Both Aranuka and Abemama experienced significant immigration but on a more limited scale than Kuria. Tarawa (even where the urban area is aggregated with rural North Tarawa) is also exceptional having more than 50% of its population born elsewhere, an indication of the significance of urban growth even in the early 1960s. Thus by the early 1960s much of the present structure of internal migration had already been established.

Five years later, at the 1968 census, the migration situation was broadly similar; the principal islands of lifetime emigration were Maiana, Onotoa, Nonouti and Marakei, most of whose migrants had gone to South Tarawa. Tarawa attracted more migrants than any other island and the proportion of 'native' Tarawans enumerated there dropped from 457 per thousand males and 450 per thousand females in 1963 to 352 and 369 respectively in 1968, a development which was accompanied by a decline in the emigration of Tarawans (Zwart and Groenewegen, 1970:62). Thus the principal impact of migration in the 1960s was the rapid growth of Tarawa, and the migration there of people from all parts of the Colony (including Tuvalu). As is apparent (Table Eight), when the home island of the resident South Tarawa population is compared with the resident population on those home islands, the principal sources of migrants were the nearest atolls - Marakei, Abaiang and Maiana - although Butaritari and some of the southern atolls, especially Nonouti, were also characterised by out-migration to

Tarawa. Three of the five islands that produced the lowest proportion of emigrants to urban Tarawa (Abemama, Kuria and Aranuka) were the three most thinly populated islands in Kiribati. Those southern islands, such as Tamana and Arorae, that did not provide relatively large numbers of urban migrants provided proportionately more to the phosphate mine at Banaba.

Table 8. South Tarawa Population.

Home Island	1968		1978	
	Population in Urban Tarawa (c)	Home Island Population	Population in Urban Tarawa	Home Island Population
Banaba	7	2,192	2	2,201
Makin	178	1,387	365	1,419
Butaritari	469	2,714	1,037	3,149
Marakei	654	2,180	1,277	2,335
Abaiang	895	3,271	1,689	3,447
Tarawa	2,743	12,642	3,211	20,148
Maiana	633	1,710	1,223	1,688
Abemama	234	2,126	470	2,411
Kuria	134	958	301	803
Aranuka	84	738	151	850
Nonouti	649	2,408	1,459	2,284
Tabiteuea	828	4,419	1,855	4,157
Beru	495	2,412	1,034	2,212
Nikunau	337	2,029	846	1,829
Onotoa	412	1,960	945	2,034
Tamana	195	1,422	412	1,349
Arorae	280	1,830	787	1,527
Phoenix and) Line Group)	13	1,180	16	2,115
Nanumea	184	1,076)	
Nanumanga	114	585)	
Niutao	79	796)	
Nui	137	569)	480
Vaitupu	183	876)	
Nukufetau	141	646)	
Funafuti	137	826)	
Nukulaelae	51	354)	
TOTAL	10,275	53,517 (a)	17,659 (b)	63,307

(a) This total includes those islands (Niulakita, Washington and Kiritimati) without migrants in urban Tarawa.

(b) This total includes 'other overseas' population.

(c) This total excludes the European population.

(d) This is the 1979 Tuvalu population.

Source: Zwart and Groenewegen, 1970; Census of Kiribati, 1978:43.

In 1973 a similar migration pattern was apparent; apart from South Tarawa only one other island, Kuria, had more than half its population made up of local people, and the three low population density islands of Kuria, Abemama and Aranuka have a broad spectrum of immigrants, with the islands of Arorae, Tabiteuea and Maiana making the largest contributions. Using the

'home island' data for the the 1973 Census it is not surprising that, apart from Ocean Island, Tarawa shows the smallest out-migration and the largest immigration. Of the indigenous population aged 15 years and over, only 101 persons per 1,000 claiming Tarawa as 'home island' were resident elsewhere while 748 persons per 1,000 claiming Tarawa as 'usual residence' had a 'home island' elsewhere (Veltman, 1979:20).

Of all the islands in Kiribati Tabiteuea had the largest number of people, 6,196 (10.7% of all those enumerated in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony) claiming it as their 'home island'. It also had the largest number of absentees (2,405) and hence had the largest migrant group both in Tarawa (1,390) and the Line Islands. Abaiang, Nonouti and Maiana also contributed more than a thousand migrants to South Tarawa. The principal islands that lost lifetime migrants were Kuria, followed by Nonouti and Arorae. The islands which experienced least immigration were Onotoa, Nikunau, Nonouti, Arorae and Tamana all of which islands are characterised by relatively high population densities and the irregular occurrence of severe droughts (Wilson, 1979:114). Thus there was a substantial relationship between the natural resource base of particular Gilbert Islands and the significance of out-migration from them.

The most valuable of data relating to the contemporary migration situation is that contained in the 1978 census which, relative to other censuses in the South Pacific region, has unusually detailed information on migration. This has already been analysed (using the preliminary tables only) by Walsh (1982) and Bailey (1984). Between 1973 and 1978 the northern Line Islands had the highest rate of annual growth but had a very small population; since the islands differ from all other parts of Kiribati (other than Banaba in 1978) by having a restricted entry of population, so that at least one household member usually works on the copra plantations, they are atypical of other parts of Kiribati. The Line Islands were one of only two areas, with South Tarawa, that did not have net lifetime migration losses (Table Nine). There have been attempts to stabilise the population of the Line Islands. In 1968 Fanning Island plantations abandoned the policy of regular recruitment and encouraged the existing labour force to make the islands theirs. On Kiritimati, where the plantation operators could not afford to finance recruitment ships, the same policy was then adopted. Somewhat later, in 1982, half acre plots were made available on Kiritimati to those who had been working on the island since before 1970. They were not asked to surrender land rights to their 'home islands' but were required to accept that they were domiciled on Kiritimati and did not therefore qualify for paid leave by their employer to their 'home island', a concept which they had real difficulty in accepting (Bailey, 1984). Thus land allocation policies and the cost of leaving the Line Islands have resulted in significant stabilisation.

The lifetime migration of the population aged 15 and over (Table Ten) indicates that all islands in Kiribati (except the Line Islands) had very high rates of out-migration, in terms of the ratio between the population born in an island but living elsewhere in Kiribati and those born and living on their home island (Table Eleven). There were two exceptions: Tarawa, the main employment centre in the country, and Tabiteuea South. Rates of in-migration, that is the ratio of immigrants to the resident island population, were rather more variable. Firstly, the Line Islands stands alone as a centre of in-migration (primarily because of the very tiny population for whom these are home islands) but is followed fairly closely by Tarawa, even though 'rural' North Tarawa is here aggregated with 'urban' South Tarawa, again indicating the massive importance of lifetime migration

Table 9. External Migrants by Home Island, 1978.

	Banaba		South Tarawa		Line Islands		Other Gilbert Islands and Kiribati Ships		Nauru		Seamen on Foreign Ships (a)		Outside Home Island		Home Island Population	
Banaba	5	2	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	19	32	2,201				
Makin	48	365	28	1,520					78	45	2,084	1,419				
Butaritari	100	1,037	57	3,147					110	60	4,511	3,149				
Marakei	82	1,277	111	2,541					97	38	4,146	2,335				
Abaiang	65	1,689	94	3,113					105	46	5,112	3,447				
Tarawa	81	3,211	180	2,155					68	98	5,793	20,148				
Maiana	79	1,223	60	1,829					81	29	3,401	1,688				
Abemama	84	470	46	1,659					50	42	2,351	2,411				
Kuria	18	301	15	569					22	8	933	803				
Aranuka	61	151	31	576					23	10	852	850				
Nonouti	216	1,459	132	2,411					132	34	4,384	2,284				
North																
Tabiteuea	171	1,788	428	3,478					97	65	6,027	2,975				
South																
Tabiteuea	9	67	57	1,073					44	3	1,253	1,182				
Beru	101	1,034	120	2,428					110	53	3,846	2,212				
Nikunau	119	846	143	1,987					129	46	3,270	1,829				
Onotoa	145	945	191	2,107					108	42	3,538	2,034				
Tamana	162	412	60	1,379					99	21	2,133	1,349				
Arorae	141	787	210	1,803					102	38	3,081	1,527				
Line Islands	-	16	48	3					1	15	83	2,115				
Tuvalu	422	480	79	154					4	-	1,139	-				
Other																
Overseas	15	99	7	17					-	9	147	-				
TOTAL	2,124	17,659	2,097	33,955					1,460	721	58,116	55,958				

Note: (a) The information on seamen was taken from records which sometimes showed only 'place of birth' and not 'home island' hence some of these are wrongly recorded. For example some of those listed as North Tabiteuea probably belong to South Tabiteuea.

Source: Census of Kiribati, 1978:42-47.

Table 10. The Indigenous Population aged 15 Years and Over by Home Island and Sex showing the Island on which they were usually Resident in 1978

Island of Usual Residence 1978	HOME ISLANDS														TOTAL																		
	Banaba		Makin		Butaritari		Marakei		Abaiang		Tarawa		Maiana		Abemama		Kuria		Aranuka		Nonouti												
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F									
Banaba	4	2	6	12	11	23	30	24	54	22	17	39	17	23	40	25	22	47	20	16	36	2	4	6	14	8	22	46	67	113			
Makin	-	-	335	345	680	5	10	15	5	5	22	10	1	1	2	2	2	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Butaritari	-	-	15	35	50	722	781	1,503	13	16	29	13	22	35	8	4	12	4	10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Marakei	-	-	7	6	9	5	13	18	551	552	1,103	17	20	30	3	6	9	10	7	17	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Abaiang	-	-	4	10	14	12	20	32	15	30	45	716	717	1,433	19	53	72	18	15	33	5	3	8	3	1	4	3	4	7	17	18		
Tarawa North	-	-	2	132	126	258	355	312	667	409	366	775	503	530	1,033	884	994	1,878	374	389	146	148	294	95	91	186	49	43	92	461	481		
Tarawa South	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Maiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Abemama	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Kuria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Aranuka	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Nonouti	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tabiteuea North	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tabiteuea South	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Beru	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Onotoa	1	-	1	1	1	2	2	4	4	6	10	6	1	7	12	9	21	3	5	8	4	2	6	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Tamana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Arorae	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Line Group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Outside Kiribati	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
TOTAL	5	4	9	535	566	1,101	1,198	1,238	2,436	1,134	1,151	2,285	1,449	1,486	2,935	1,513	1,687	3,200	917	967	1,884	568	602	1,170	245	253	498	183	214	397	1,186	1,319	2,505

Island of Usual Residence 1978	HOME ISLANDS														TOTAL																		
	Tabiteuea North		Tabiteuea South		Beru		Nikunau		Onotoa		Tamana		Arorae		Line Group		Tuvalu		Outside		Total												
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F											
Banaba	37	56	93	1	2	3	34	68	31	34	65	32	40	72	38	47	85	39	32	71	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Makin	1	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Butaritari	5	9	14	-	-	-	8	16	4	2	6	8	9	17	1	1	2	5	6	10	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Marakei	2	7	9	-	-	-	4	6	10	6	2	3	6	9	3	1	4	1	2	3	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Abaiang	33	26	59	2	3	5	12	13	23	4	14	18	7	19	26	4	8	12	5	16	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tarawa North	12	15	27	3	3	6	6	9	15	10	8	18	4	10	14	2	6	8	3	7	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tarawa South	574	618	1,192	21	23	44	325	329	654	279	267	546	288	314	602	140	135	275	278	285	563	5	6	11	212	141	353	31	22	53	5,561	5,622	
Maiana	8	10	18	1	-	-	6	10	16	1	4	5	-	5	5	4	4	8	2	6	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Abemama	54	53	107	-	-	-	19	10	29	16	23	39	16	39	55	5	5	25	30	30	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kuria	18	17	35	-	-	-	5	5	10	1	5	6	7	10	17	3	6	25	26	17	31	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Aranuka	15	13	28	-	-	-	17	15	32	8	13	21	12	12	24	2	4	14	17	17	21	1	1	2	4	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	
Nonouti	31	31	62	-	-	-	5	9	14	4	3	7	2	13	15	2	5	5	4	11	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tabiteuea North	737	814	1,551	12	17	29	5	8	13	8	3	11	2	8	10	2	4	3	10	13	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tabiteuea South	22	41	63	282	301	583	3	4	7	3	6	9	1	3	4	2	4	3	10	13	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beru	5	9	14	-	-	-	599	637	1,236	6	3	9	1	3	6	1	1	7	5	12	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nikunau	8	9	17	-	-	-	1	15	16	447	497	944	1	6	7	2	6	8	7	18	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Onotoa	6	17	23	-	-	-	4	3	8	11	3	9	12	483	574	1,057	1	6	7	18	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tamana	3	3	6	-	-	-	4	5	9	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	319	432	751	5	11	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arorae	4	5	9	-	-	-	1	3	3	6	9	15	4	5	9	5	5	10	385	492	877	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Line Group	119	120	239	13	16	27	42	32	74	44	38	82	51	66	117	19	14	33	62	46	108	15	10	25	27	18	45	1	2	3	609	566	
Outside Kiribati	2	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	1,696	1,875	3,571	335	371	706	1,103	1,161	2,264	882	942	1,824	931	1,153	2,084	556	673	1,229	882	1,036	1,918	22	17	39	399	336	735	37	31	68	15,776	17,082	

Source: Census of Kiribati, 1978:48.

Table 11. Inter-island Lifetime Migration, 1978. Person aged over 15.

	A Resident Population	B Home Island	C Born and Resident on Home Island	D Out- Migrants (B-C)	E In- Migrants (A-C)	Out- Migration Rate (a)	In- Migration Rate (b)
Makin	760	1,101	680	421	80	382	105
Butaritari	1,737	2,436	1,503	933	234	383	135
Marakei	1,275	2,285	1,103	1,182	172	517	135
Abaiang	1,927	2,935	1,433	1,502	494	512	256
Tarawa North	1,321	3,200	905	417	9,721	130	777
Tarawa South	11,183		1,878				
Maiana	989	1,884	827	1,057	162	561	164
Abemama	1,362	1,170	697	473	665	404	488
Kuria	484	498	244	254	240	510	496
Aranuka	457	397	233	164	224	413	490
Nonouti	1,295	2,505	1,112	1,393	183	556	141
Tabiteuea North	1,710	3,571	1,551	2,020	159	566	93
Tabiteuea South	688	706	583	123	105	174	153
Beru	1,308	2,264	1,236	1,028	72	454	55
Nikunau	1,054	1,824	944	880	110	482	104
Onotoa	1,215	2,084	1,057	1,027	158	492	130
Tamana	809	229	751	478	58	389	72
Arorae	965	1,918	877	1,041	88	543	91
Line Islands	1,175	39	25	14	1,150	359	978
TOTAL	31,714	32,046	17,639	14,407	14,075	-	-

Note: (a) The In-migration Rate is calculated by dividing the totals in column D by those in column B and multiplying by 1,000.

(b) The Out-migration Rate is calculated by dividing the totals in column E by those in column A and multiplying by 1,000.

The calculated rates are different from those of Walsh (1981:171) since they use the final census data.

Source: Census of Kiribati, 1978:48.

to South Tarawa. Thirdly, the cluster of Abemama, Aranuka and Kuria again appear as islands (of low population density) to which there has been substantial internal migration. Fourthly, a number of islands, especially in the Southern Gilberts, and most notably Beru and Tamana, have received very little immigration from elsewhere in Kiribati.

Table 12. Lifetime Emigration by Major Destination, 1978.
Population aged over 15.

	Resident Population	Banaba	South Tarawa	Line Islands	Nauru	All Internal Migrants (a)
Makin	760	23	258	13	44	421
Butaritari	1,737	54	667	29	60	933
Marakei	1,275	45	775	65	49	1,182
Abaiang	1,927	39	1,033	59	56	1,502
Tarawa	12,504	40	1,878	90	42	417
Maiana	989	47	763	34	45	1,057
Abemama	1,362	36	294	31	28	473
Kuria	484	6	186	8	14	254
Aranuka	457	22	92	12	12	164
Nonouti	1,295	113	942	81	64	1,393
Tabiteuea North	1,710	93	1,192	239	53	2,020
Tabiteuea South	688	3	44	27	24	123
Beru	1,308	68	654	74	74	1,028
Nikunau	1,054	65	546	82	78	880
Onotoa	1,215	72	602	117	65	1,027
Tamana	809	85	275	33	57	478
Arorae	965	71	563	108	63	1,041
Line Islands	1,175	-	11	25	-	14
TOTAL	31,714	882	10,775	1,127	828	14,407

(a) 'All internal migrants' excludes those in Nauru but includes migrants to other Gilbert Islands.

Source: Census of Kiribati, 1978:48-49.

Data on the 1978 sex ratios indicate that all islands, with the exceptions of North Tarawa (511) and the two Line Islands of Fanning (513) and Kiritimati (528), had an excess of females. The excess of males on the two Line Islands is explained by predominantly male migration to those islands; the sex ratio on Washington (492) however is no different from the national average (493). The general excess of females is attributable to male emigration, especially to Nauru, and very low sex ratios on some islands can be explained almost entirely by the labour migration of males. The lowest sex ratios occur primarily in the two southernmost atolls of Arorae (456), Tamana (452) and also on Aranuka (462), whereas much higher sex ratios than the national average occur on the northern atolls of Butaritari (498), Marakei (496), Abaiang (500) and also Nonouti (496).

Further analysis of the lifetime out-migration data for the adult population (Table Twelve) shows that the southern Gilbert Islands have tended to provide greater proportions of migrants to both Banaba and the Line Islands whilst the northern islands have tended to provide a greater

proportion of those in South Tarawa. These three principal migrant destinations completely dominate migration moves; only in one island, Tabiteuea South (60%) where there is relatively little emigration, are less than 70% of all migrants not in one of these three destinations. For several islands (Butaritari, Maiana, Nonouti and Tamana) more than 80% of migrants are in these three destinations. When migrants to Nauru are added to this group of three destinations the proportion of migrants to other islands in Kiribati is even further reduced. Thus migration in 1978 was essentially concentrated in four principal destinations, of which South Tarawa was by far the most important for every island. The pattern of migration that has followed the closure of the Banaba mine is certainly to have further emphasized the dominance of Tarawa.

In terms of lifetime migration it is readily apparent (Table Twelve) that the urban centre, South Tarawa, has been by far the most important migrant destination, although the use of 'home island' rather than 'place of birth' does exaggerate the significance of this migration. Moreover Walsh comments that the net migration rate for Tarawa was considerably in excess of that in a series of other South Pacific capitals (Walsh, 1981:169-172). The data on residence in Tarawa indicates that migration to Tarawa has been long established in the sense both that nearly a quarter of all migrants had been continuously resident for more than ten years whilst only 13% of males and 10% of females over the age of 15 had been urban residents for less than three years. Migration to Tarawa also appears to have been more recent from the islands south of Tarawa, a higher proportion from those islands having been continuously resident for less than ten years (Walsh, 1981:174). Some of those classified as migrants were actually born in Tarawa; this group accounted for about 8% of those whose 'home islands' were north of Tarawa and 5% of those whose 'home islands' were in South Kiribati. The islands with the highest proportion of their 'home island' population actually born in Tarawa were Abaiang and Maiana, the two islands closest to Tarawa (*ibid*). Comparing the population composition of South Tarawa between 1968 and 1978 according to 'home island' (Table Eight) indicates that, over the course of the decade, the southern Gilbert Islands of Kuria, Tabiteuea, Beru, Nikunau and especially the southernmost island, Arorae, considerably increased both in the number of people from those islands in South Tarawa and also in the proportion of urban residents compared with home island residents. In a sense this represents a shift in the pattern of migration away from the more 'developed' islands closest to Tarawa to the more 'traditional' and remoter islands. This is also true at a smaller scale; in 1971 Lambert found that almost all migrants from Makin to South Tarawa were from the central area of Makin (Makin Town) and very few were from the 'backwater' of Kiebu (1975:245). Tabiteuea provided the greatest proportion of urban residents (apart from Tarawa itself) and, in general, the population composition of South Tarawa shifted towards the southern islands. This is likely to have been further accentuated after 1978 since the southern islands provided a greater proportion of the migrants on Banaba.

The 1978 Census also recorded by 'home island' data on the population aged over 15 according to their length of continuous residence on the islands on which they were then living. This indicates that there is a much higher degree of mobility than is apparent from the data on lifetime migration; amongst those whose 'home island' was Tarawa only 40% of males and 47% of females had been continuous residents for life whereas for those whose home islands were other Gilbert Islands only 7% of men and 8% of women were lifetime residents of those islands. Thus, particularly in the outer Gilbert Islands, there is an extremely high incidence of migration, although this is counterbalanced by considerable return migration to those islands

especially from the phosphate mines. An important characteristic of all migration in Kiribati, at least until 1978, is its ubiquitous but temporary nature; virtually all adults migrate and almost all of these subsequently return to their home islands although return migration from Tarawa is less important. This tradition of circulatory migration is basic to all considerations of migration in Kiribati.

There are some constraints to the analysis of migration in Kiribati, most obviously the fact that 'home islands' are not islands of birth so that, especially in the case of urban Tarawa, the extent of lifetime migration is exaggerated. There is also less possibility of refinement of data in the case of Tarawa because of the aggregation of 'rural' North Tarawa and 'urban' South Tarawa in a number of tabulations. It also seems probable that some migrant males in Tarawa gave Tarawa as their 'home island' to avoid possible repatriation to their true home islands. Given previous Tarawa Island Council demands for the repatriation of outer islanders, Government concern at over-population in Tarawa and the direct repatriation of workers in Banaba to their home islands (see below) such a concern may not be unrealistic. It does, however, raise the question of just how reliable information is when some migrants may have reason to conceal their origin (Walsh, 1981:173). However the amount of detailed information on migration in Kiribati is such that the basic structure of migration is clear. Firstly, migration is extremely important in Kiribati to the extent that there are few adults who have never migrated and the number of male migrants is only marginally greater than that of women. Secondly, migration is primarily circular migration and relatively few migrants do not eventually return to their home islands. Thirdly, the principal destination for migrants is urban South Tarawa which has grown rapidly since the mid-1960s, although the rate of growth is now less rapid, and the extent of return migration from urban Tarawa is less than from other principal migrant destinations. Fourthly, after urban Tarawa, the two most important migrant destinations in 1978 were Banaba and Nauru, but the Banaba mine closed in 1979 and Nauru will close after about another ten years, thus the third significant migrant destination, the Line Islands, is likely to increase in importance as a migrant destination, especially for migrants from the southern Gilbert Islands who have traditionally been more important as migrants to both Banaba, the Line Islands and, previously, the Phoenix Islands. To some extent, each island had its traditional areas of work destination, so that the closure of Banaba is likely to have been particularly strongly felt in Beru, Onotoa, Tamana and Arorae (Bailey, 1983). Increased migration to the Line Islands may have already occurred in the past three years. This kind of migration structure has steadily changed the pattern of population distribution in Kiribati; in 1947 South Tarawa was no more than a cluster of villages functioning as a minor administrative centre and having 6% of the Kiribati population, whereas by 1978 it was a town with 32% of the national population, a proportion which is now likely to be more than a third. The only other area that has witnessed a similar kind of growth is the Line Islands (Table Seven) but on a much smaller scale since the whole population there is less than 4% of the national population. In contrast to these two areas of expansion, there has been an absolute population decline on some outer islands in the past decade. The southernmost, and most remote, of the Gilbert Islands, Arorae, actually suffered an overall decline in population over the long period between 1947 and 1978. In all other islands post-war growth has not yet been offset by population decline, however, in the last decade between 1968 and 1978, half of the sixteen Gilbert Islands lost population; of the islands south of Tarawa only Abemama, Aranuka and Onotoa did not lose population. In a situation where there has been significant population growth such a

widespread population decline in the outer islands is quite unusual, especially in comparison with the present situation in the atoll states to north and south, the Marshall Islands (Country Report No.8) and Tuvalu (Country Report No.19), where there is no comparable contemporary population decline in the outer islands (although in the case of the Marshall Islands this decline occurred earlier). All these trends indicate an increasing concentration of population in one central place and a decline in most of the outer islands, indicating that the problem of reversal of such long-standing trends is likely to be considerable.

As in other atoll situations, such as the Marshall Islands (Country Report No.8), there has been substantial internal migration within particular atolls. Early in Protectorate times people were required to live in nucleated villages to facilitate administration. And although this has not been enforced since the 1950s, resulting in some decentralisation, as people have moved on to their own land, there has been renewed centralisation in recent years as access to modern resources has become more important. Thus on Butaritari, for example, population growth was most rapid in the main village partly because of an increase in administration officers there and partly because of population movement from other villages (Sewell, 1975; cf. Lambert, 1975:257). This concentration of modern resources, such as health services, missions, schools (and hence some wage labour) at a single point, results in the movement of people away from distant villages on the same atoll, and hence the declining use of more remote resources. As Sewell notes (op cit), this then also results in the limited decentralisation of modern resources on a particular atoll, an activity which in some places, where villages are very remote, would be of considerable value (cf. Pitchford, 1981:10.1). Since decentralisation of services has proved both difficult and expensive the prospects of decentralisation within atolls seem extremely slight hence population concentration at one place is likely to continue on most atolls alongside concentration within the country as a whole.

International Migration

Unlike other parts of Micronesia, with the partial exception of Palau (Country Report No.13), Kiribati is, like its former colonial partner Tuvalu (Country Report No.19), characterised by substantial and extremely significant international migration, primarily to Nauru, but also elsewhere. There are three principal sectors of international emigration; the first is migration for further education or training, the second is migration for employment on foreign ships and the third, and most important, is migration to Nauru. So important is international migration for Kiribati that this is one of the few places in the South Pacific where the census attempts to record all overseas I-Kiribati. The 1978 census recorded a total of 1,460 people (837 males and 623 females) on Nauru, 721 seamen overseas and 118 others (83 males and 35 females) were recorded as temporarily overseas for education and training; no account was taken of those I-Kiribati in the Solomon Islands, the Marshall Islands, Vanuatu and Rabi Island (Fiji) and other areas from which they might or might not return. Thus in 1978 2,299 (4%) of the total de jure population of 58,512 were overseas.

A large proportion of those undertaking education or further training overseas were in Fiji. At the end of 1978 there were 88 students overseas on higher education courses, 35 of whom were undertaking degree courses; there has been a high drop-out rate in higher education, principally because of limitations in the Kiribati educational system (Pacific Islands Yearbook,

1981:239) hence the supply of trained manpower is extremely limited relative to Kiribati requirements. By 1982 there were 86 I-Kiribati undertaking university education overseas (Knowles, 1982) and 128 in 1983 (Islands Business, 9(4), April 1983:4). Not all of these will eventually return to Kiribati; some are likely to remain in Fiji and elsewhere.

The most successful of recent attempts to find further employment opportunities overseas has been through shipping crews; this form of migration effectively began in 1959 with employment with the China Navigation Company and expanded rapidly with the establishment of the Marine Training School at Tarawa in 1967. Most I-Kiribati seamen work for a single German shipping company and their contracts were negotiated by the Kiribati government at two year intervals. Employment of seamen has raised particular problems in the trade union movement in Europe, related both to the hiring preferences of German shipping lines and to the payment of award rates (which might lead to the preferential employment of more skilled workers than I-Kiribati who can be employed at lower wage rates), and although this has not yet resulted in the unemployment of I-Kiribati seamen it has probably reduced their access to employment. The same is true of Tuvalu (Country Report No.19) and for both countries it seems improbable that there will be a future increase in the number of sailors. This particular form of employment for emigration highlights the problems of development in Kiribati.

Table 13. Migration to Nauru by Home Island.

	1966	1973	1978	1981
Makin	1	84	78	63
Butaritari	49	78	110	102
Marakei	61	42	97	66
Abaiang	74	121	105	95
Tarawa	2	22	68	76
Maiana	49	77	81	88
Abemama	-	34	50	54
Kuria	2	47	22	42
Aranuka	-	23	23	36
Nonouti	56	122	132	99
Tabiteuea	48	95	141	114
Beru	60	117	110	102
Nikunau	62	123	129	129
Onotoa	31	88	108	101
Tamana	26	93	99	98
Arorae	44	111	102	86
Line Islands	-	1	-	-
TOTAL	565	1,278	1,455	1,351

Source: Bedford, 1967:124; Censuses of Kiribati, 1973 and 1978; Nauru Phosphate Corporation.

By far the greatest migration from Kiribati is to Nauru (Table Thirteen) which for the whole century has been the most important destination for international migration from every island in the country, but especially from the southern Gilbert Islands. Almost all men are

employed in phosphate mining and a small number of I-Kiribati women, wives of migrants, are employed in stores and hotels. Overriding any consideration of contemporary migration to Nauru is the fact that Nauru phosphate will be worked out in about a decade and all mine-related employment there will then cease (see Country Report No.9). Not only will this result in a high level of I-Kiribati unemployment, and employment in Nauru increased during the 1970s, but a dramatic decline in remittance income which has long been greatest from Nauru. At least in the early 1970s migration to Nauru was closely regulated; recruiting officers travelled from Nauru once a year to select recruits and the maximum period of employment on Nauru was six years. The 1978 census indicates that of 833 I-Kiribati adults in Nauru, the majority (81%) had been there less than six years, although some 51 (6%) had been there more than 11 years, (Kiribati, 1980:49) presumably in more skilled employment to which time limits did not apply. Some may conceivably have married Nauruans. After six months men could send for their wives and not more than two children (Lambert, 1975:249). For many years recruitment excluded the northernmost islands of Makin and Butaritari since it was felt, in part, that men from these islands had less need for wages than those from the drier southern Gilbert Islands (*ibid*). The colonial administration placed restrictions on recruiting more than a particular number of men from any one island whilst encouragement was also given to families accompanying their husbands. Although there was no regulation compelling recruitment from particular islands the administration stressed that special consideration be given to those islands experiencing land hunger where droughts also affect copra production (Bedford, 1967:124). The distribution of migrants by home island (Table Thirteen) suggests that, at least in the 1960s, this form of positive discrimination was operating in favour of the southern islands. Moreover decisions on who should migrate for employment to Nauru were not solely administration or individual decisions but were partially made at both an island and a village level, based on local perceptions of who had the greatest need to work away (K. Knudson, pers. comm. 1981). Thus access to job opportunities in Nauru was extremely evenly distributed throughout Kiribati, and took some account of the needs of particular islands, but was also distributed according to need within particular islands.

A significant number of I-Kiribati remain in Vanuatu from the period after 1960 when there was recruitment to work in the South Pacific Fishing Company at Santo and later with the Syndicat Agricole on copra plantations (Bedford, 1967:125). In 1967 there were 94 I-Kiribati in Vanuatu (68 of whom were employed on plantations). This number only marginally increased in more recent years and there is no longer recruitment to Vanuatu. A ministerial visit to Vanuatu in 1983 attempted to regularise the status of I-Kiribati in Vanuatu, in the face of difficulties in obtaining work permits and threats of deportation (Country Report No.20); this mission conducted a very informal head count which gave a figure of 322 I-Kiribati in Vanuatu: 59 in Port Vila, 88 in Malakula and 175 in Santo. Half of these were children and the total included some ni-Vanuatu women married to I-Kiribati. For more than a decade there have been attempts to obtain new employment opportunities outside Kiribati, including in New Caledonia, Guam, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Palau, the Northern Marianas and also with the British Army. Few of these have been in any way successful although there are continued possibilities in Micronesia. In January 1983 there was discussion in New Zealand of possible job opportunities there and, although there have been two I-Kiribati working for several years in one particular factory, greater access to job opportunities has not yet occurred.

In conjunction with the 1973 census an attempt was made to derive the number of I-Kiribati (and Tuvaluans) overseas from the record of birth cards which were returned from the original 'home islands' and indicated the believed location of the individual (Table Fourteen). About half those listed were born before the war whilst the younger group included sailors in Europe and Asia. Three groups of migrants are distinctive, firstly, the resettled populations in Fiji (Rabi) and Solomon Islands, secondly, a large group in the nearby Marshall Islands which have social ties with Kiribati and, thirdly, a group in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) formerly working on contracts in copra plantations but now mainly working elsewhere. I-Kiribati in the Marshall Islands are concentrated on the two islands of Kwajalein and Majuro; many were hired in Tarawa because of their particular skills although others migrate because of strong social ties in the Marshall Islands (Lambert, 1975:252). Whilst the overseas total of 2,514 is likely to have been an underestimate, firstly, since those who could not be identified through the birth card were most likely to have been emigrants and, secondly, because some children of I-Kiribati ethnic origin may have been born overseas. The table also indicates that, although migration to Nauru is highly important, there is relatively little migration elsewhere, beyond resettlement migration. Consequently the closure of the Nauru phosphate mine will, unless alternative overseas employment opportunities are found, dramatically curtail emigration from Kiribati.

Table 14. I-Kiribati Overseas, 1973.

Nauru	1,277
Tuvalu	108
Fiji	354
Solomon Islands	473
Marshall islands	146
Vanuatu	61
Samoa	8
Tonga	2
Tokelau	1
New Caledonia	7
Papua New Guinea	3
Australia	11
New Zealand	18
Japan	15
China	3
Hong Kong	6
United Kingdom	17
North America	2
West Germany	2
TOTAL	2,514

Source: Gilbert Islands, 1974:iii.

If the 'non-indigenous' population of 1973 is considered as roughly comparable with 'persons of non-Pacific origin' in 1978 then the total numbers employed fell from 298 in 1973 to 193 in 1978. The principal sectors to experience a drop were phosphate mining, public administration and education whilst other sectors - fishing, construction and air transport - experienced an increase. Thus 'an overall increase in the degree of

localisation seems therefore to have been accompanied by a tendency for the more productive areas of the economy to expand their demand for non-indigenous employment' (Love, 1983). The number of expatriates in Kiribati is limited and broadly come in two categories, firstly, a substantial number (perhaps 300) of Tuvaluans, many of whom are married locally, and in most respect must be considered as part of the indigenous population. Their numbers have fallen substantially since secession. Secondly, there are a number of Europeans mainly employed in skilled activities of some kind who are slowly being replaced by I-Kiribati. Not all technical and professional expatriates are Europeans; for example, there are about 15 Indians in Kiribati (Gopalakrishnan, 1981) and 62 Asians were recorded in the 1973 census. Overall the number of migrants to Kiribati is both small and declining and reflects the extremely limited economic development opportunities in the country.

Urbanisation

In 1947 when a decision to establish the headquarters of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony there was made, South Tarawa had a population of 1,643, some 6% of the total population of Kiribati. By 1963 the population of South Tarawa had grown to 6,101 and then represented 15% of the population of Kiribati (and 13% of the population of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony). The next five years between 1966 and 1968, when the population grew to 10,616 was the most rapid period of growth for South Tarawa, so that by 1968 it accounted for 23% of the population of Kiribati. Between 1968 and 1978 the population grew more slowly, to 14,868 in 1973 and 17,921 in 1978, by which time it contained 32% of the population of Kiribati. Thus the 1960s was a period when migration to South Tarawa was extremely important whereas the 1970s was a period when, although migration remained important, natural increase within South Tarawa played an increasingly important part in the growth of the urban area. Thus, rather like the Marshall Islands to the north (Country Report No.8), migration was particularly important in the 1960s but was of reduced significance in the 1970s as the urban population consolidated. The migration of the 1960s provoked considerable concern in the country and, within the South Pacific region, Kiribati was one of the first countries to attempt to translate that concern into practical policies (see below). During the post-war years the population of South Tarawa also became more 'urban' in the sense that in 1947 many of the population were essentially dependent on subsistence activities (although with migration to and remittances from Nauru) whereas, in later years, the area took on more visibly urban characteristics, especially in Betio and Bairiki, the significance of local wage employment grew and the contribution and significance of subsistence activities (in the use of time or the production of income) declined. In the 1960s South Tarawa in large part effectively became a town.

By the early 1960s there was already considerable pressure on foster-relatives living in Tarawa to house and board both job-hunting immigrants and children sent to take advantage of superior educational facilities (Lambert, cited by Maude and Doran, 1966:288). A comprehensive study of urban Tarawa in 1968 recorded an increase in crime rates, problems of water supply (and fears of the impact that a drought would have), the erosion of the 'Green Belt' in Betio and hence problems of local food production (and supply) and water pollution (Bedford, 1968:9-10). Already problems of child malnutrition were being combatted by supplies of free milk powder and medical care (op cit:47). By the start of the 1970s the fact that South Tarawa contrasted dramatically with other parts of the country

was readily apparent; most people depended directly or indirectly on cash incomes although subsistence activities were maintained, especially to the east. It was estimated that three-quarters of all cash incomes in the country were earned there whilst 93% of all senior staff worked there (Hughes, 1973). However not only was South Tarawa visibly and socio-economically different from elsewhere in the colony its rapid growth and the concentration of population was creating problems,

'Rapidly of urbanization has produced problems such as malnutrition; the urban population tends to be separated both from land for good crops and from access to fishing grounds. Moreover in urban areas local foodstuffs are expensive, so that family income is increasingly spent on nutritionally substandard items or cheap carbohydrates, especially such imported foods as rice, flour and sugar. Consequently infant mortality is high and the problem of dental decay is increasing. Drunkenness and crime are beginning to occur; sanitation and the pollution and inadequacy of water supplies are further difficulties' (Connell, 1973:403).

Even the 1973 census expressed concern at nutritional trends (Gilbert and Ellice Islands, 1974a:x). One factor that then mitigated urban problems was the low level of overt unemployment, a function of the continued importance of food-gathering activities in the urban area. In 1968 Bedford found that the majority of those who were unemployed were not actually seeking work (1968: 4) whilst a survey of nearly 2,000 urban adults at the end of 1973 found that only 56 people (3%) were seeking work (Table Fifteen). Although some of those in cash employment were working irregular hours, their incomes were probably inadequate for urban living, and the numbers of unemployed were growing (Fox, 1976:55) the crisis of urban unemployment had not yet risen. Nevertheless, even in 1968, Bedford concluded,

'because of the peculiar physical features of the urban area and the limited avenues for settlement and employment South Tarawa cannot continue to support the ever increasing numbers' (1968:49).

But, although the rate of urban growth slowed in subsequent years, twelve years later the urban population had doubled.

Table 15. Urban employment, South Tarawa, 1968.

		M	F	All
Active:	Subsistence Work	136	142	278
	Cash Work	547	163	710
	Looking for Work	47	9	56
Inactive:	Students	122	95	217
	Visitors	32	98	130
	Housewives and Housekeepers	21	394	415
	Incapacitated/Institutionalised/ Old/Retired	72	99	171
	TOTAL	977	1,000	1,977

Source: Atoll Pioneer, 76, 14 February 1974.

By the end of the 1970s, without exception, the social and economic problems identified at the start of the decade had worsened. Unemployment, remaining at a consistently high level, was increasingly apparent alongside an intensification of related social problems. In South Tarawa the average household size in 1978 was 7.4 persons, compared with 5.6 in the outer islands, which meant that housing was more congested than in the outer islands. Although the proportion of traditional housing is much smaller in South Tarawa housing problems are greater than elsewhere in the country (Love, 1982:70-71) which poses problems for decentralisation and a more equitable distribution of resources. At the start of the 1980's illegal settlement on water reserve areas in Betio was presenting a problem for the Public Utilities Board and 'shantytown development was becoming a problem of increasing urgency in all three areas' of Betio, Bairiki and Bikenibeu, primarily in terms of poor housing, sanitation and the absence of amenities (Love, 1983) and hence creating problems of health and nutrition. The I-Kiribati custom of bubuti, whereby it is almost impossible for an individual to refuse a request, enables reasonable access to land virtually throughout the urban area. Sanitation has become a substantial problem in South Tarawa, although only 22% of households have no sanitation, compared with 67% outside the urban area, since sewage is traditionally disposed of by tidal action from the beaches. The outbreak of cholera in 1977 emphatically demonstrated the link between inadequate sanitation and health. Other amenities in South Tarawa are also of limited extent; a third of households use well water only and almost half of all households are dependent on wood fires for cooking (Table One); a main electricity cable stretches the whole length of South Tarawa but is too expensive for most households. Bailey has recorded how, in 1973, in Bairiki, firewood was collected from the ground but by 1978 young men were sent to climb trees to take down dry fronds before they fell, a clear indication of the declining availability of fuel (Bailey, 1984). Thus the distribution of social amenities and material resources is at a relatively low level in Tarawa.

The subsistence type activities that characterise other islands in the Gilberts group are also readily apparent in South Tarawa; for both ocean and lagoon fishing there are outer islands which have proportionately less participation than in South Tarawa. The eastern part of South Tarawa (Teinainano East) is generally less densely populated than either Teinainano West or Betio and consequently the extent of toddy collecting, copra cutting, babai cultivation and pig rearing is greater in this area and steadily decreases towards Betio, where population pressure on resources is extremely high. Similarly firewood collecting, mat and basket making are each more common in the eastern areas. However even on Betio 40% of households participate in coconut toddy tapping (compared with 83% on outer islands) although none produce copra (Love, 1983). Between 20 and 25% of households on South Tarawa (apart from Betio) dry salt fish for storage. Overall the extent of the maintenance of 'traditional' subsistence-type activities in South Tarawa indicates the general extent of self-sufficiency in the urban area itself, even to the extent of storing traditional foods. Thus, whilst South Tarawa is undoubtedly an urban area, its urban characteristics incorporate many features also found in the most remote rural areas of Kiribati. There is no absolute contrast between urban and rural.

The limited extent of social services and the growing population demanding access to these services has, firstly, resulted in a number of attempts spread over a long period of time to encourage the decentralisation of population from South Tarawa (see below) and, secondly, posed considerable problems for the distribution of resources. In the 1960s and

early 1970s considerable resources were spent on improving the welfare of urban residents (including the completion in 1963 of a causeway linking Bairiki and Bikenibeu). As attention was given to providing urban services, such as a water supply system, new jobs were created, the new amenity became an additional urban attraction and encouraged urban migration, whilst as money was invested on improving urban amenities a smaller proportion remained for rural development. In terms of health this poses further problems for the distribution of resources: 'the policy maker is faced with the dilemma of using scarce aid funds either to provide an imported type of sanitary system for the congested urban minority, or to improve the adequate but primitive facility for the majority of rural dwellers' (Love, 1982:71). More generally, Love has observed there is an obvious circularity in the establishment of urban-based projects to solve problems of urban unemployment:

'Unless migration can be controlled the demands of the urban area are therefore likely to be more pressing than those of the rural areas which still contain the majority of the population, many of whom will continue to seek employment in the very projects which have been set up to solve the problems created by urban migrants. In this respect a policy of satisfying basic needs in urban areas contributes to the process which gives rise to them in the first place, ensuring simultaneously that an ever increasing proportion of aid and other expenditure will be taken up by urban problems' (Love, 1982:74).

Urban political power has increased under the weight of sheer numbers and militant, urban-based unions have caused a number of serious industrial disputes (Teiwaki, 1980:30). In general 'rural-urban migration tends to generate basic need deprivation as unemployment and overcrowding begin to appear' (Love, 1982:73), thus there is a clear necessity for the control of migration. The attempt to develop such controls is discussed below.

The Rationale of Migration

Whilst, as elsewhere in the South Pacific region, there is a strong social basis to migration and kinship ties are of some importance in determining the structure of migration, perhaps nowhere more so than in Kiribati are fundamental economic issues at the heart of migration:

'employment (or the search for it) constitutes the overwhelming reason for residence away from home....periodic employment off their home islands has become part of the expectations of most males...The incentive to such temporary migration is definitely economic. The lure of bright lights and a desire to see new islands seem to play a relatively small part in motivating it' (Geddes et al, 1979:20).

These kinds of conclusions on Kiribati have been reported elsewhere (e.g. Fox, 1976:57; Lambert, 1975:245; Farquharson et al, 1978; Geddes, 1975:9) and less explicitly throughout the series of island reports undertaken in the early 1970s (Geddes et al, 1979). The broad and basic economic differences between the outer islands and the principal areas of wage employment in Kiribati are perhaps greater than almost anywhere else in the South Pacific region. The principal explanation for migration, both within the Gilbert Islands and from Kiribati overseas, is the limited availability

of wage and salary earning opportunities on the outer islands. In 1978 the outer islands of the Gilberts group, which contained 56% of the total adult male population of the country accounted for only 23% of adult male employment. By contrast South Tarawa, with 30% of the adult male population, had 51% of male employment. Overseas employment accounted for 9% of total adult male employment (Love, 1973). Moreover, in recent years, migration to South Tarawa increased particularly at a time when the public service expanded rapidly, especially in the period after the secession of Tuvalu (and the return of Tuvaluan public servants) and the end of the 1970s. The 1979 Kiribati Civil Service Staff List indicates that there were more civil servants whose home island was Tabiteuea (198) than Tarawa (160) and that the ratio of civil servants to island population was extremely low in Tarawa, much lower than anywhere else in the Gilbert Islands. As elsewhere in the South Pacific most people would probably prefer to stay at home if equivalent opportunities were available there; Geddes et al noted that, out of five surveyed islands, Butaritari had the lower percentage of emigrants and also relatively numerous opportunities for obtaining cash locally through employment and the sale of local produce (1979:20). However limited cash-earning opportunities on most islands has ensured that most capital goods can only be obtained by employment outside home islands; 'coupled with household dependence on remittance income [this] provides a powerful incentive for ensuring that young adults are strongly encouraged to obtain wage labour off the home island' (op cit:83). This situation is unlikely to change in the near future.

The conclusion that the search for employment was pre-eminent in decision-making over migration meant that better terms of service were also important:

'People on all the islands surveyed favoured employment on the phosphate islands of Nauru and Ocean or on ships because of the security of contract employment, the low living expenses and the availability of useful items to purchase...Partly because of the higher salaries on the phosphate islands, because it is difficult to realise these goals on Tarawa and also because the lack of contract employment makes work there more of a career choice than a life cycle segment, employment on Tarawa is less favoured' (Geddes et al, 1979:20).

Necessarily, as opportunities on Banaba have disappeared and access to jobs on Nauru become increasingly difficult (cf. Geddes, 1975:12) then Tarawa has exerted a greater attraction for all migrants and this is likely to continue, although Kiritimati and the other Line Islands provide some attractions.

Perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of migration in Kiribati, at least until the mid-1970s, has been the circularity of migration

'employment...is part of a pattern of circular migration from the village to the phosphate islands or other places of employment and then back to the villages....Certainly circular migration in the Gilberts is characteristic of a colonial or plural society in which the relatively few and distant sources of employment are managed by Europeans and in which marked economic disparities are known to exist between the place of origin and place of employment' (Watters with Banibati, 1977:127).

Watters *et al* compared this with similar situations in the earlier and essentially plantation economies of the New Hebrides (Vanuatu) and Solomon Islands. A similar perspective on this migration has been outlined by Knudson,

'Gilbertese did not turn to being sailors or phosphate workers as life long endeavors. Instead they became activities primarily for young men who would spend a few years at one or another (or perhaps both) and then return to the Gilberts, in accordance with the traditional obligations of a Gilbertese to support his or her parents. Viewed from another perspective, families sent out their young men to take advantage of these impermanent resources and to bring or send home their proceeds. Few Gilbertese saw these employment situations as "career opportunities" and a door to life's work. In fact in the case of the phosphate islands the elder men of the islands in the Gilberts worked out agreements with the phosphate companies as to the maximum number of men to be taken from each island, the length of a contract and the number of permissible renewals' (1981:94).

Moreover in these and other cases (e.g. Geddes, 1975:131, on Tabiteuea) a very high proportion of adult men had both migrated from and subsequently returned to their home island. The century-old tradition of labour migration was thus maintained. Not only has there been an ideology of circularity but this has been allied to a tradition of social control in which all young men, especially from more needy families, were enabled and expected to migrate and return with or remit a proportion of their income. The decline in formal sector employment appears to have influenced a parallel decline in circular migration, as jobs have given way to careers, so that increasingly access to employment has become much more difficult.

Kiribati (and Tuvalu) are perhaps the only two states in the South Pacific region (outside some particular atolls and small islands elsewhere) where there has been detailed analysis of the extent to which the country as a whole and particular areas within it, might be considered 'overpopulated'. The most extensive examination of this was undertaken by Cartland in 1947, based on his estimates of land requirements for food and copra production. The extent to which his assumptions were valid has never been subsequently reconsidered and considerable doubt has been cast on the value of such generalisations (e.g. Lawrence, 1977:22-23). Nevertheless for Tuvalu he calculated that the optimum population density that could be supported was 247 per sq.km. In the drier Gilberts group he estimated that the optimum population density would be 141 per sq.km. for Butaritari and Makin which, being drought free, could support densities like those of Tuvalu. Higher densities could be supported if population working outside the atoll remitted cash to enable more limited dependence on subsistence food production (cf. Bedford, 1967: 57-59). Applying this approach to the 1947 population figures, and assuming no islanders were working overseas, only Tamana exceeded Cartland's optimum densities and in 1963 only Tamana (and Niutao in Tuvalu) exceeded the optimum densities; consequently Cartland did not regard the islands as overpopulated since migration between islands could be encouraged (Bedford, 1967:59-60). Although only one or two islands exceeded Cartland's optimum densities it is apparent, firstly, that several other islands were close to those densities secondly, these average densities made no allowances for very unequal land distribution within islands and, thirdly, there were strong social constraints to migration

between islands. Following continued population growth, the return of population from Banaba and, despite migration to Tarawa, several islands - Marakei, Abaiang, Tamana and Arorae - now exceed those densities, whilst the average Gilbert Islands population density is greater than Cartland's optimum. Whilst Cartland's basic assumptions may be invalid it is apparent that his initial enquiries into 'land hunger' in 1947 were made at a time when the population was half that of the present population and was not then growing rapidly. It is an almost irresistible conclusion that in both Kiribati and Tuvalu population pressure on resources is generally much greater than elsewhere in the South Pacific and much greater than is appropriate to provide a reasonable livelihood judged by contemporary standards. In most rural areas, especially in the Southern Gilberts, there are perceived economic disadvantages to remaining within the rural area.

Shortage of land, in some sense, has been recorded in Kiribati for many years and certainly from before the war when the resettlement of the Phoenix Islands (see below) took place. However inequality in land distribution is not solely a function of island population density since all islands in Kiribati exhibit considerable inequality in land ownership, thus some groups are likely to be short of land everywhere. In 1952 some maldistribution of land and 'land hunger' were found to be a problem in nearly all islands in the two groups, but especially the Southern Gilberts, Kuria and Aranuka (Bedford, 1967:24) so that while Geddes et al (1969) argues that, in general, there is not a shortage of land, at least in terms of more extensive coconut development and copra production, there are localised land shortages although, even at high population densities, population pressure on resources may not alone significantly influence decisions on migration.

Analysis of the 1973 census data reveals unsurprisingly, that migrants predominate in the 15-44 age groups and that, again unsurprisingly, there is a male bias in migration generally (Wilson, 1979:137). Again the same pattern emerges from the 1978 census data. Thus a significant bias in the distribution of migrants and non-migrants in 1973 was by educational level; the more highly educated are more likely to migrate away from their home island, and also to make more than one move without returning home (Wilson, 1979:143). This correlation is unsurprising and similar to that recorded in many other South Pacific contexts. A relatively high proportion of the non-migrant group are married, have no additional training or skills not in use and are either not active or active in the village economy (ibid). Access to superior urban education facilities at least from the early 1960s has also been a cause of urban migration (Maude and Doran, 1966:288; Tanentoa, 1971:1; Talu and Tekonnang, 1979:164; Geddes, 1975: 12-13). Educational achievement has been an important means of obtaining off-island employment for children after their education is completed hence on a number of islands children are sent to Tarawa for education on the assumption that places in secondary schools are more easily obtained from there than from their home islands (Geddes et al, 1979:84) based on the assumption that urban primary education in South Tarawa is of better quality than in the outer islands. In the northern atolls of Butaritari and Makin,

'The secondary schools and teachers' colleges in effect remove boys and girls permanently from their home islands since their parents send them to school to prepare them for employment with the government or a mission, not for life as subsistence fishermen or housewives' (Lambert, 1975:215).

In its turn education reinforces these attitudes. Medical facilities in South Tarawa have also resulted in some in-migration (Tanentoa, 1971:2).

Table 16. Migration to South Tarawa, 1968. (Percentages)

Reason for Movement	Length of Stay in South Tarawa										Migration Moves	
	less than 1 year		1-5 yrs		5-10 yrs		10+ yrs		Total		M	F
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Employment	10.1	1.4	15.1	4.8	9.4	1.4	20.9	0.7	55.5	8.3		
Holiday/Visit	1.4	2.8	2.9	5.5	-	-	-	-	4.3	8.3		
Live with Relatives	8.6	6.1	7.2	13.2	5.0	2.8	0.7	4.9	21.5	27.0		
Education	1.4	-	4.3	1.4	-	-	1.4	0.7	7.1	2.1		
Accompanying Wife/ Husband/Parents	1.4	8.3	2.1	11.8	0.7	10.4	4.3	21.5	8.5	52.0		
Others	-	-	0.7	1.4	-	-	1.4	-	2.1	1.4		
TOTAL	22.9	8.6	32.3	38.1	15.1	14.6	28.7	27.8	99.0	99.1		

Note: (a) The survey was carried out in 20% of all households in Betio and Bonriki and included 283 adults respondents (139 males and 144 females).

Source: Bedford, 1968:31.

Others migrate to town to escape social responsibilities and social conflict (sometimes in marriage), to escape social disgrace and reduce social control (cf. Fox, 1976:57). A very high proportion of migrants, especially women, travel as the dependents of job holders or to accompany other relatives (cf. Table Sixteen); between 1961 and 1971 two-thirds of all emigrants from Makin to Tarawa travelled as the dependents of job holders (Lambert, 1975:247) and in a very real sense much of this migration is secondary and almost involuntary. Many migrants are children or old people sent for by their relatives in town; departing visitors may volunteer to take children or adolescents to town and offer to place them in Tarawa schools (*ibid*). Thus the existence of relatives in the urban area, and most I-Kiribati have close relatives in South Tarawa, is a powerful influence and attraction to urban migration. Where potential migrants do not have relatives in town the migration rate is reduced (cf. Lambert, 1975:247). Thus whilst migration has been fundamentally for economic reasons there are considerable social influences on migration.

The considerable difference between the level of provision of social amenities in South Tarawa and those elsewhere in Kiribati has been an influence on internal migration; where a number of urban amenities, such as night clubs and a sports stadium, are quite unique the attractions of the 'bright lights' on migrants, if not the primary influence, certainly play their part. As early as 1966, 'the cinema, restaurant, club, sophisticated social and recreational facilities and, above all, urban employment opportunities are all powerful magnets' (Maude and Doran, 1966:288). A survey of migration intentions in two villages of north Tarawa recorded that two-thirds of potential migrants sought to work in Betio, which was viewed as the centre of bars, cafes, dance halls, open air cinemas and clubs (Bedford, 1968:32). However a formal survey of 283 migrants to Tarawa revealed that employment was by far the most important reason for migration, followed by social reasons (including living with relatives and accompanying kin) without any mention of social amenities (Table Sixteen) other than three people seeking health care and one in jail (Bedford, 1968:31). What is apparent from this, as from all single motivation surveys of reasons for migration, is that social reasons for migration are rarely given any prominence, perhaps being regarded by both interviewer and respondent as too trivial for consideration. Those who have considered more generally the aspirations of migrants have given much greater weight to social reasons: thus Talu and Tekonnang note 'Young people come to Tarawa looking for entertainment, island nights and films which are not readily available on the outer islands' (1979:164; cf. Fox, 1976:57). In Abemama although more than half of all migrants stressed the primacy of economic reasons a variety of secondary features were important - 'island nights', the cinema, seeking wives and seeing new things - all of which stressed the cultural vitality of the town and 'few people were known who had returned to their home village and did not wish to return to Tarawa' (Watters with Banibati, 1977:129-130). Where outer islands are often short of kerosene such attitudes are unsurprising. In this context the social limitations (alongside the economic limitations) of outer island life may be stressed: 'there are cases on record where, for want of a few guitar strings, the cohesion of an entire village has virtually disintegrated because their principal means of expression had disappeared' (Pitchford, 1981:12-14). Where social attractions are concentrated in one place their significance is increased.

However much weight is attached to social reasons for migration it is apparent that when almost all formal sector employment is in a single urban area, the principal social amenities (such as high schools and hospitals)

are in the same urban area and most other more casual social attractions are also there then all the influences on migration point in the same direction. However often it is pointed out that,

'Very few people on the outer islands really realise how hard life can be on Tarawa. They can live without money on their own islands but not on Tarawa. Although most people migrating to Tarawa have relatives with whom they stay, living conditions have become very crowded and some services can hardly cope with the influx of population. This has brought about such visible consequences as increasing numbers of shanty-type houses, overcrowding of existing houses, unsanitary living conditions, lack of basic amenities and minimal privacy. Many families have built their homes on private land which they have bought, or for which they have acquired permission from the landowner. Those who have not found jobs have continued a bare existence...These conditions together with unemployment, low wages and the presence of a large number of unattached men without the stabilising influences of the extended family and the rural community, have contributed to an increase in marital instability, drunkenness and alcoholism, delinquency, physical and mental illness, undernourishment and malnutrition' (Talu and Tekonnang, 1979:164-5).

It remains true that the differences in the provision of amenities between urban and rural areas, the differences in employment opportunities and income levels (that take no account of unemployment), the dissatisfactions with subsistence life and copra incomes alongside return migration from Nauru, shipping employment and further education overseas continue to encourage migration towards the one urban area in Kiribati. Unless there are substantial changes in the distribution of incomes and resources in Kiribati, or a serious worsening in the conditions of urban life (a worsening which would be unlikely to be politically acceptable), then the rationale for migration will remain essentially unchanged and the alternative to further urbanisation will lie in more direct control of migration.

The Impact of Migration

Whilst the principal impact of migration in Kiribati has been to change the spatial distribution of population in the country, the principal reason for migration is to earn the regular cash incomes that are rarely obtainable in outer islands and to save and remit this income to be used in those outer islands. The significance of remittances in Kiribati cannot be underestimated and, as a contribution to rural incomes, is greater than in most other parts of the South Pacific region. The value of remittances has been estimated on a number of occasions in a number of different contexts; the most recent estimate suggests that as much as 17.6% of outer island income comes from remittances (Kiribati Planning Office, 1980) and this may be subject to under-reporting. Similarly the 1978 census recorded that regular remittances contribute to the income of about 10% of households in rural areas and about 7% of those in South Tarawa; the difference is principally a result of South Tarawa residents also remitting to their home island (Love, 1983). The implication that these are 'regular' remittances

certainly suggests that this is an underestimate. All measures of the actual size of remittances are fraught with uncertainty as they are elsewhere in the region; the Development Plan estimated that all remittances in 1977 could be valued at \$900,000 and from Banaba alone were valued at \$100,000 (3% of all cash incomes) although both of these estimates excluded savings (Kiribati, 1979:28, 58). Somewhat earlier total remittances were estimated at \$417,000 in 1971, \$616,000 in 1972 and \$690,000 in 1973 (GEIC, 1974b). Data on a small group (32) of seamen in 1982 show that they consistently remitted between \$60 and \$100 per month, a sum which may be typical of all overseas seamen. Seamen sent or brought back to Kiribati about \$2,250,000 per annum in the early 1980s. Data on an even smaller group (14) seamen for the single month of March 1983 show that all but two remitted some money and the total remittances in that month were \$4,341, some \$310 per capita. Of this all but \$1,290 went into their own accounts (although it might subsequently have been redistributed). Again this pattern appears to be normal. Whilst the actual level of remittances is impossible to calculate it is apparent that their contribution is substantial and, before the closure of the Banaba mine, remittances constituted about a quarter of all cash incomes in Kiribati and, consequently, a higher proportion of all cash incomes on outer islands.

In the early 1970s remittances were the single most important source of cash income in four surveyed outer islands (Tamana, Abemama, Tabiteuea North and Butaritari), a situation that was therefore probably typical of other islands. Only on Butaritari was any other single source of income (copra production) more important whereas on Tabiteuea North remittances accounted for 50% of all cash incomes. However there were considerable inequalities in distribution; on Butaritari 56% of households received no remittances, compared with 38% on Abemama and only 13% on Tamana (Geddes et al, 1979:61-62). There is a strong indication therefore that remittances are much more significant both in absolute size and in distribution in the southern islands. For Abemama and Tabiteuea North the main source of remittance income was Tarawa but for Tamama it was Nauru and Banaba and workers from Nauru remit more frequently and in larger sums than do workers on Tarawa (op cit:62-63). Remittances are also bi-directional; foodstuffs are sent to Tarawa from many islands, especially the nearest islands (Farquharson, 1978:7.2) and, more occasionally, are also sent to Nauru (Lundsgaarde, 1966:60). Tarawa is extremely important as a source of remittance income and, after the closure of the Nauru mine, will (with money remitted from overseas seamen) become by far the most important source of remittances. Yet 'subjective evidence suggests a weakening of obligation towards kin over time by some employees in Tarawa' (op cit:63) and hence a parallel decline in remittances over time. In Tabiteuea North children were increasingly reluctant to remit cash to their families, believing that this money belongs to them as individuals; this is a disruptive force in village society and is partly a result of children believing that they can live elsewhere in Kiribati either by buying land or remaining in wage employment in Tarawa (Geddes, 1975:85). This is almost certainly true elsewhere in Kiribati, and is a situation common to other parts of the South Pacific region. Whilst remittances from outside Kiribati may remain at high levels, although the trend towards individualism also exists there. If remittances from Tarawa to outer islands do fall, following social change, the increasing permanence of the urban population and increases in the urban cost of living, then outer islanders will fare less well and since any reversion towards subsistence is likely to be unacceptable then there will be urban migration, not only to seek out jobs but to be on hand to 'claim' remittances.

Whilst few studies have specifically investigated the use of remittances as distinct from other sources of income, and there is doubtful value in doing so, it seems that the utility of remittances in the outer islands is much like that in Makin, where remittances constitute the largest proportion of the island's cash income. There its impact is considerable,

'The people of Butaritari and Makin are becoming increasingly dependent on remittances to pay their taxes and their children's school fees, to buy corned beef and rice for feasts, and to purchase even moderately expensive items at the store. Most of the durable goods on Makin - planks for canoe hulls, canvas for sails, sewing machines, radios and even clothing - were brought by returning workers. The export of labour has become the principal means of maintaining the local standard of living' (Lambert, 1975:220-221).

Not only do remittances enable the purchase of luxuries they have become the means of effectively obtaining a subsistence livelihood. Thus,

'the village on Abemama, as on other outer islands, is by now a subsidised entity that lacks real economic viability of its own. And while people appear in general to be content with living in such an externally sustained village society, they are in essence no longer purely "villagers" although not yet "townsmen". Circular migration represents a compromise between the two worlds [and] illustrates the manner of their link to and accommodation with, the outside world, a world which villagers are gradually recognising is now necessary for their future survival' (Watters with Banibati, 1977:205).

In this respect remittances are in many areas quite crucial.

Predictably social change has followed migration as new influences reach Kiribati from overseas and are diffused from Tarawa; as elsewhere changes are both beneficial and harmful, as perhaps in the case of the influence of returning seamen (Toatu, 1980). Migration itself causes the dislocation of some social ties, and may be a factor contributing to increased divorce rates (cf. Lambert, 1975:262-264). Many of the social changes that have followed migration are occurring or would have occurred in any case, perhaps specifically the movement towards individualism, and are little different from the kinds of changes occurring elsewhere in the South Pacific region.

The male bias in migration and the concentration of migration amongst the younger age groups has resulted in high dependency ratios in the rural areas but in a group of four quite different islands (Butaritari, Abemama, Tabiteuea North and Tamana) the supply of rural labour was generally adequate to meet household needs, other than a shortage of toddy or (to a lesser extent fish) in some households on each island (Geddes et al, 1979:27). Similarly on none of the four islands studied by Geddes et al was land in short supply (although each island had a substantial number of absentees); at least until the early 1970s 'most households on all islands have access to more land than they utilise. On the islands of Abemama and Tabiteuea it appears that less than half the land owned by households is used on a regular basis, much only being used when copra commands a high price. This lack of recognised land scarcity has, on all islands...resulted in islanders failing to maintain a systematic replanting schedule so that

fewer than half the total coconut palms on some islands are bearing regularly' (Geddes et al, 1979:31). Moreover 'there can be no doubt that at present considerable surplus labour exists on the outer islands and that this could be mobilised without seriously threatening the survival of the household subsistence economy' (Geddes et al, 1979:80). In these circumstances emigration has not been a direct influence on the agricultural economy although the disintensification within the agricultural sector is partly a result of the use of remittances (and other cash income) to purchase imported foods.

One of the effects of emigration is the scattering of land rights, in the same manner as in the Cook Islands (Country Report No.2), both as migrants claim land rights in a number of different islands and because the migrants (both males and females) are distributed throughout the country. Although 15,722 (47%) of all I-Kiribati over the age of fifteen claim land rights only on their home island, some 1,499 (4%) and 678 (2%) claim land rights on four islands and five islands respectively (Census of Kiribati, 1978:53). For almost every one of the Gilbert Islands there are claimants to land living on every other island, and also in Tuvalu, Nauru and elsewhere (Census of Kiribati, 1978:54). Whilst the rights recorded in the census are not legal rights that have been registered and do not imply the intention to establish a claim, they are the rights that individuals claim. For four islands Geddes et al estimated that the proportion of land owned by absentees ranged from 15-35% of total land owned (Geddes et al, 1979: 32). Thus not only is land tenure in Kiribati unusually complex (because of dual structures of inheritance and male and female claims) but is complicated further by the extremely widespread distribution of land owners. This makes any attempts to reform land tenure and consolidate land ownership extremely difficult, a situation which hampers land management and may influence emigration. However the extent to which land reform is crucial to agricultural development in Kiribati is doubtful,

'The reasons for non-use of land do not relate solely or even primarily to land ownership and so any land reform programme which sought to redistribute or reaggregate land would not necessarily give rise to an increase in production. If the land tenure system was manifestly unsuitable, and in conflict with customary expectations....there would be some grounds for reform, but this was not found to be the case on any island studied and no report recommended any modification to the land tenure system in the interests of more efficient use of land' (Geddes et al, 1979:57).

However there is considerable scope for increasing the productivity of absentee-owned lands especially 'if there is a prospect of permanent urban populations developing on Tarawa' (ibid). The potential of land reform is discussed further below.

Limited economic opportunities in outer islands mean that those who return to the outer islands, even from skilled jobs in Tarawa, have limited opportunities to use their skills on their home islands, whilst they may face social opposition in attempting to do so. Similarly there is likely to be opposition to the development of individual economic enterprises (Geddes et al, 1979:75). In practice the bulk of return migration to home islands has been from Nauru, and previously also from Banaba. In the case of Nauru (see Country Report No.9) just under half of all I-Kiribati migrants are accompanied by their wives and children, some of whom have remained for long

periods of time in Nauru. Consequently the return of workers from Nauru, and from Banaba and Kiritimati, means that children there have never acquired the traditional Gilbertese agricultural and fishing skills that are required on outer islands (cf. Farquharson et al, 1978:9.21) and many adults disdain this kind of work. Thus the contribution of return migration, and remittances, to outer island economic development has been extremely limited and to a substantial effect negative. Remittances certainly enable a reasonable standard of living to be maintained on outer islands but beyond this maintenance they do not contribute to development.

Migration Policy

The recognition, before the war, that some of the Gilbert Islands were overpopulated prompted direct administration consideration of population problems and in the 1930s there was some consideration of the possible introduction of a family planning programme but, much more important, the actual establishment of a population resettlement scheme in the Phoenix Islands. This is discussed in the following section, consideration here being given only to relatively recent policies relating to population migration and decentralisation within Kiribati. In practice the issues of resettlement and decentralisation have been generally considered separately; at least until the early 1960s administration policy favoured centralisation and urban development, alongside further secondary education, in an attempt to make Kiribati and some I-Kiribati more like countries and people in the more 'modern' world. The legacy of this centralisation is now apparent.

As in other states in the South Pacific region, most notably Papua New Guinea (Country Report No.14) during at least part of the colonial era the administration was able to directly control some population movement through legislation. In Kiribati, as in Papua New Guinea, early administrative regulations were designed to slow the rate of urban growth and minimise the social and economic problems of over-rapid urbanisation. In the case of Kiribati this was a response to a high incidence of TB and malnutrition in the urban area and the inadequacy of schools for the large numbers of children. There is now little indication of the extent of these regulations or on their effectiveness although they certainly still existed at the end of the 1960's when the Colony administration had restrictions on entry into Betio; in theory intending migrants had to have a legitimate reason for travelling to the urban area and a local magistrate was required to grant permission to board trading vessels en route to Betio. However in 1968 the scheme was not working adequately; most arrivals in Betio had come 'to try my luck' (rather than for a more 'legitimate' yet here unspecified, reason) and no check was made in Betio of new arrivals (Bedford, 1968: 22,32). There was also an element of voluntary repatriation; the Makin and Butaritari people in South Tarawa, who formed a loose-knit community, 'occasionally send home a notoriously promiscuous woman, or someone else who is giving the island a bad name on Tarawa' (Lambert, 1975:249). Other island groups may well have acted in the same way. Although the administration regulations constituted the only direct attempt to control the 'disastrous shift of population' (Fox, 1976:57), amongst some officials, there was a strong emphasis on rural development as the potential solution to urban problems. Hughes argued in 1969 that,

'So called remedies for urbanisation problems suffer from confusion about the nature of the problem. The result is that the symptoms are treated rather than the cause. Urbanisation is a problem only because people 'urbanising' make

impossible demands on their own human resources and on the physical resources of the town. The allocation of more physical resources usually only makes things worse by accelerating the inflow of people to make use of them. Politically loaded choices are made in resource allocation to keep the urban voters quiet...People leave social and physical resources in the rural areas (which then decay) to go to non-existent social and over-strained physical resources in town. Realistically one cannot do nothing in town, which would be ideal, but too much is being done, at the expense of the rural areas, and this is merely aggravating urbanisation. The approach recommended is to do the absolute minimum in town; invest in rural development by labour intensive technology, and manage agricultural change so as not to release large surpluses of labour to be sucked into town' (A. Hughes, cited by Bailey, 1984).

A number of related policies or potential policies had been considered or implemented at about the same time. Firstly, the colonial administration had considered the possibility of dispersing some of its institutional programmes (but apparently without success); secondly, on completion of training, teachers were required to return to their home islands; thirdly, some non-resident juvenile delinquents and adult offenders had been placed back on their home islands; fourthly, some outer island schools had refused transcripts to out-migrants and, fifthly, school enrolments on South Tarawa had been limited to discourage an even greater influx. However these policies had been hampered, firstly, by the problems faced by parents in attempting to get their 'runaway' children, especially daughters, to return home; secondly, there was no restriction, other than financial, on under-age children getting passage on inter-island transport without parental permission, whilst stowaways sometimes avoided the financial problems; thirdly, magistrates were not permitted to use their discretion in returning persons in trouble to the supervision of their families; fourthly, there were no legal limits on the extent of house overcrowding and congestion; fifthly, the administration continued to centralise its programmes and institutions in South Tarawa and, at least in 1972, planned to continue subsidising amenities and improvements at a much higher per capita expenditure on South Tarawa than elsewhere and, sixthly, there were insufficient incentives to encourage development of the outer islands (Fox, 1976:57-58). Whilst this brief summary indicates that early attempts at defining and devising a migration policy met with very little success they do indicate that the problem of excessive urbanisation was being considered at a very early date in Kiribati.

The first post-Independence Development Plan (1979-1982) crystallised many of the subsequent discussions of excessive population migration and had as its main objectives, firstly, the decentralisation of economic activity and institutions and the development of alternative centres to South Tarawa and, secondly, to ensure that the benefits of development were felt throughout the country and existing inequalities reduced (Kiribati, 1979::63). It is significant that it was considered that 'in the shorter term..policies would be accounted a success if they succeed in moderating the growth of the South Tarawa population. The basic problems of urban development are likely to remain' (*ibid*). More specifically, related to these aims, the plan aimed at both decentralising functions that could be performed outside the urban area and imposing the principle that urban

dwellers pay for the services they use (op cit:63-64). Central government then effectively subsidised urban housing, water supplies and sewerage facilities, although the Plan is unclear over the extent to which full costs for water and sewerage might subsequently be charged to the consumers (op cit:66) whilst housing policy was intended to be reviewed (op cit:208).

This focus on decentralisation was emphasized by an attempt to devise new approaches to migration and urbanisation policy which emerged from a week long seminar funded by UNFPA and organised by the Ministry of Trade Industry and Labour in 1980 (with delegates from every island, members of parliament and representatives of many national institutions such as churches and trade unions). Intensive discussions produced a series of recommendations that are worth reproducing in their entirety both as an indication of the range of issues considered in some detail and because they were presented to the Kiribati House of Assembly which essentially gave them full support. Broadly the long-term recommendations related to means of creating new employment opportunities (or reducing competition for existing opportunities) whilst the short-term recommendations related to the more equitable distribution of existing employment opportunities. They were:

Long Term

- a) Recommendation 1: There should be more emphasis on family planning of all types. It was felt that the good work of the campaign of the early 1970s had not been continued with sufficient vigour, and that in consequence the birth rate was now beginning to rise again.
- b) Recommendation 2: More emphasis should be placed on the teaching of traditional and practical skills on outer islands. It was suggested for example that training institutions such as the Tarawa Technical Institute should be set up on outer islands, and that the teaching of skills be included in primary school syllabus.
- c) Recommendation 3: That the standard of education available in outer island primary schools be improved. One of the reasons for people coming to Tarawa was the strong belief that better education was available in the South Tarawa schools.
- d) Recommendation 4: That the existing District Centres be further developed and expanded. This would create work opportunities, and should be linked with an increase in the social amenities available particularly for young people. Outer island life could be very dull for the young.
- e) Recommendation 5: All landowners should receive more encouragement to develop and re-plant their lands. It was suggested that grants should be available to any landowner wanting to develop his land even if it was less than five acres in size. It was felt that a further boost to land development would be to increase the copra price paid to cutters.
- f) Recommendation 6: That the project presented by the Director of the USP Centre for the training of unemployed youth in practical skills, be approved and implemented.
- g) Recommendation 7: That every encouragement be given to the establishment of suitable small scale or cottage industries on outer islands. The sort of industry delegates envisaged were small copra mills, timber mills, fisheries or marine products, etc.

- h) Recommendation 8: That where possible some decentralisation of government off South Tarawa should take place particularly as part of the expansion of District Centres. However this should be confined to smaller Divisions of government as delegates did not favour large scale decentralisation which they felt would swamp an island, create land problems, and lead to large numbers of other islanders seeking employment on their island.
- i) Recommendation 9: That plans for the resettlement of uninhabited or sparsely inhabited islands be drawn up as soon as practical. Resettlement was a subject that generated considerable interest, but it was clear that substantial discussions and planning would be necessary before the details of such a scheme could be agreed.
- j) Recommendation 10: That the use of legislation or regulations to control the movement of people into or out of Tarawa be avoided if possible. It was felt that this would be a last resort when all else had failed. It was appreciated that such laws would be an infringement on a persons freedom of movement and would require a change to the Constitution involving a national referendum.

Short Term

- k) Recommendation 11: That existing jobs be shared more equitably by making all unskilled jobs within Government and Statutory bodies on South Tarawa three year contract jobs only. Recruitment would be from outer islands (or kain Tarawa) on a quota basis, and at the end of the contract the worker would be required to return home. It was appreciated that existing workers in these categories might have to convert to contracts if this recommendation was to have any effect in the immediate future. It was understood that this proposal could have a very substantial effect on overcrowding and employment prospects for outer islanders in a comparatively short period, particularly if linked with the other short-term recommendations.
- l) Recommendation 12: That all copra plantation work of an unskilled nature be three year contract only. It was felt that Christmas Island, Washington, and Fanning Island plantations should adopt this system with approximately a third of employees changing every year with recruitment from outer islands.
- m) Recommendation 13: That unskilled jobs with the Nauru Phosphate Corporation in Nauru should be on the basis of a maximum of a three year contract, with an annual turn-over of a third.
- n) Recommendation 14: That recruiting to the Marine Training School and Police should be restricted to home islands only. This would mean selection and interviews for vacancies in these organisations could only take place on the applicants home island. A person from an outer island on South Tarawa would be unable to join the MTS or Police. It was also suggested that other institutions such as the Prison Service could be included.
- o) Recommendation 15: That if possible financially the three monthly copra cutting/ fishing expeditions to uninhabited islands, be put on a regular basis to absorb some of the unemployed on South Tarawa. It was understood that the main problem was transportation costs to and from the islands.

- p) Recommendation 16: That Tarawa Urban Councils only employ true Tarawa people.
- q) Recommendation 17: That all recruitment for the jobs listed in Recommendations 11,12,13 and 14 be the responsibility of the Island Council concerned. They would be obliged to set up their own Council employment registers and then to find suitable persons to fill vacancies as notified to them by the Ministry for Trade, Industry and Labour. Details of the scheme needed to be worked out and Council staff trained but the proposal in principle was strongly favoured by delegates (Kiribati Ministry of Trade, Industry and Labour, 1980).

Since the conclusion of the seminar attempts have been made to implement the short-term recommendations, whilst the long-term recommendations are considered to be firm guidelines for future action (Kiribati Ministry of Trade Industry and Labour, 1981a:2). Firstly, family planning has been given greater emphasis, but the details of this, other than the inclusion of family planning in the title of the ministry, is unknown and there is growing evidence (see above) that the impact of family planning programmes is declining. Secondly, the Tarawa Technical Institute is about to establish a Rural Development and Training Centre and, with the Kiribati Protestant Church, established in June 1982 an Institute for Community Development at Abaiang, aimed at training school leavers in activities relating to rural development away from Tarawa. There is no evidence of any development of the USP proposal (Recommendation Six). These developments may counteract the Government's decision to abandon its plans for Community High Schools in favour of the development of a more academic curriculum in Upper Primary Classes (7, 8 and 9), to be followed by an annual examination for 1,600 people from which approximately 40 will go on to the national secondary school (Bamford, 1981:3). The evidence therefore suggests that there will be reduced emphasis on traditional and practical skills in outer island schools; the renewed academic focus will further bias education in favour of obtaining diplomas and subsequent vocational education will be of limited extent, prestige and value. Education, and especially secondary education, will continue to be regarded as superior in Tarawa and the attitudes inculcated in examination-oriented education may influence the success of a variety of other policies.

There is no real evidence of decentralisation of government activities to the district centres (Butaritari, Abemama, Tabiteuea North and Beru, in the Gilbert Islands, Kiritimati and Banaba) nor any indication that it has been possible to expand or develop new job opportunities there. A National Loans Board exists to give financial assistance to new businesses or small-scale industries wishing to establish themselves on outer islands, but it has been almost impossible to identify development opportunities on outer islands. Thus Pitchford recorded that housing subsidies were concentrated in Tarawa, while the National Loans Board, the Bank of New South Wales, broadcasting and most government departments spent more of their efforts on Tarawa (Pitchford, 1981:15). Eighty-eight per cent of all housing loans had gone to South Tarawa and in every way housing policy was working against decentralisation (op cit:14.3-14.12). Pitchford consequently suggested that housing loans be only made on home islands and government houses only be sold to kain Tarawa (op cit:13.11). Overall, the limited achievements of decentralisation are not significantly different from the experience of other countries that have attempted to implement decentralisation policies.

The other long-term recommendations were, firstly, to encourage land redevelopment and increase copra prices. Whilst there is no evidence that measures to encourage land development have been established, copra prices have been subsidised and increased copra production has occurred. The extent to which the relatively small but regular sums of money earned from copra (or other agricultural product) sales will overcome the preference for the large sums earned in wage employment, and thought to be unobtainable on outer islands (cf. Geddes et al, 1979:76) is an open question, but it is the direction towards which policy must be oriented. Secondly, new proposals to resettle the Phoenix and Line Islands were made; these were considered by Pitchford and are discussed in the following section. Thirdly, the use of direct control over migration to Tarawa was deferred as a possible last resort. (In its preliminary proceedings the 1980 seminar had recommended that a maximum time period in Tarawa, such as three months, be granted to outer islanders visiting Tarawa to seek employment there. It also recommended that I-Kiribati employed abroad as seamen be not allowed to stay long in Tarawa). The closest approaches to direct control were one attempt to introduce differential fares to and from Tarawa, but this was apparently unsuccessful (A. Macdonald, pers. comm. 1981), and the attempts to ensure that, in the late 1970s, migrants to Kiritimati had return air tickets. The cost of such tickets and the status of Kiritimati as a 'closed district' appears to have reduced speculative migration (R. Bond, pers. comm. 1983). As the evidence from Papua New Guinea indicates (see Country Report No.14) direct control is a very poor and extreme solution to the problems of population migration.

In many respects there have been, predictably, greater achievements in implementing the short-term recommendations. The first of these, on the more equitable distribution of government and quasi-government jobs through three year contracts, has been effectively established. This has been reviewed extensively elsewhere and recommendations have been proposed for the continued and improved operation of the scheme (Connell, 1983). Contract employment is allocated by island according to quotas based on a combination of population size, population density and copra production (tonnage per acre); this procedure is therefore oriented to giving a larger quota to islands like Tarawa, where population size and density are high and copra production potential is low, compared with smaller, less densely populated islands where copra production potential is higher such as Kuria. The quota system therefore discriminates in favour of the islands where development opportunities appear least. Government policy is thus aimed at returning to 'circular migration', alongside developing the outer islands, associated with the view that work in Tarawa is 'fun but foreign nonsense' and the 'real work' is in the villages (J.Pitchford, pers. comm. 1981). The other short-term recommendations necessitate what is effectively a much more rigorous control over migration especially to the copra plantations of the Line Islands and Nauru so that a three year maximum is adhered to. (As in urban government employment however this refers only to unskilled employment). The effect and success of this will take time to evaluate. Secondly, recruiting to the Marine Training School and the Police would be carried out in home islands and the only applicants recruited in South Tarawa would be those (kain Tarawa) whose home island was South Tarawa. Both of these appear to have been achieved so far. Recommendation 15, on copra cutting expeditions, essentially to the Phoenix Islands, appears to have been deferred until it becomes viable to find and finance shipping transport. Available information on the allocation of government job vacancies (Table Seventeen), from March 1981 to June 1983, indicates that there has been a reasonably equitable distribution of employment, especially in the Police, but the extent to which this varies from an earlier situation

Table 17. Contract Labour Allocations, March 1, 1981-June 24, 1983.

	Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Works & Energy	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Natural Resources & Development	Ministry of Health & Family Planning	Ministry of Home Affairs & Decentralisation	Ministry of Communications	Public Utilities Board	Shipping Corp. & Atoll Companies	Plant & Vehicle Union	Air Tungaru	Total	Te Mautari	Police	Marine Training School	Nauru Phosphate Corp.	Others
Makin	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	3	11	6	-
Butaritari	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	3	16	6	-
Marakei	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	3	1	2	20	7	-
Abalang	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	4	2	19	6	-
Terava N.	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2	3	4	18	6	-
TUC (Teinainano)	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	4	2	1	11	6	-
BFC (Betio)	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	2	1	11	5	-
Maiana	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	3	1	2	13	5	-
Abemama	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	24	5	-
Kuria	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	3	-	2	8	6	-
Aranuka	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	3	1	2	9	5	-
Nonouti	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	3	-	2	11	6	-
Tabiteuea N.	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	-	2	23	5	-
Tabiteuea S.	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	4	-	3	7	5	-
Onotoa	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	4	2	1	8	7	-
Beru	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	1	2	18	6	-
Nikunau	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	4	1	2	17	5	1
Temane	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	3	1	3	10	6	1
Aroise	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	2	3	13	6	1
Christmas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	3	3	4	1	7	1	12	9	3	11	3	57	24	43	270	109	3

Source: Ministry of Trade, Industry and Labour, 1983.

is not known. Data on the home islands of all civil servants, at least in 1979, suggest that civil service positions have been distributed with reasonably equity in the past. The basis has thus been set for a controlled allocation of new employment opportunities, both in unskilled, short-term employment and in skilled employment (in the Police and Marine Training School) where access to new jobs can be regulated. This relates well to a strongly maintained I-Kiribati egalitarian ideology and is in accordance with the principles of earlier migration to Nauru and Banaba (see above), is not difficult or expensive to implement but cannot provide new employment opportunities. None of the new approaches to development appear to have actually generated new jobs and only the reduction of the retirement age to fifty can produce new job opportunities (but only by removing old ones).

The issue of who is a 'true Tarawa' (kain Tarawa) person is of some importance in Kiribati. In 1973 only 22.7% of those enumerated in South Tarawa claimed that this was their 'home island', defined for the purposes of the census as 'the place which individuals regard as their true home to which they will one day return' (Gilbert and Ellice Islands, 1974:ix). Even this figure is probably high because 'fears of repatriation are likely to have caused a certain number of people to have claimed Tarawa as their home island without a firm basis' and others have been recorded because they were born there. It was estimated that less than one person in ten in the urban area of Tarawa can be said to have a true traditional affiliation with that island (*ibid*; cf. Walsh, 1981:173). The number of Tarawa people in Nauru (Table Thirteen) appears to have increased unusually rapidly in recent years suggesting that some migrants there may also have reclassified themselves. There is no desire for decentralisation amongst those who already have formal employment.

In the past two years there has therefore been some movement towards the implementation of a series of policies relating to decentralisation and outer island development and greater control over the contemporary migration situation. Although data on these policies and their effectiveness is incomplete it is possible to review some aspects of the policies. Firstly, the series of tentative proposals in the Development Plan and the recommendations of the unofficial seminar constitute a significant attempt to produce a comprehensive and integrated development policy related to all aspects of population migration and development; whilst the population problems of Kiribati may be worse than those of other states in the South Pacific region this is nevertheless an important achievement. Secondly, in a period of only three years since the completion of the Development Plan and in a post-Independence period when the loss of revenue from Banaba was a major constraint to development it is unlikely that there would have been major achievements. Thus whilst there have been achievements in some directions (e.g. the greater control of short-term and unskilled job opportunities) these have been partially counteracted by failures in other areas (e.g. the failure of government and quasi-government organisations to decentralise their own activities and hence related jobs).

Many of the current policies and recommendations are not new but have evolved from earlier attempts at encouraging rural development and controlling migration. For example, in some places, the considerable fragmentation of land tenure, following subdivision of holdings, hampers land development. Yet fragmentation provides a choice of residential sites and possibly both 'high' and 'low' land areas whose productivity will vary. For almost thirty years the administration have been attempting to encourage land consolidation but without much success. In 1959 the administration formulated a Neglected Lands Ordinance whereby neglected lands would be

compulsorily purchased for sale to needy families and was aimed especially at Kuria and Aranuka (Bedford, 1967:26-27). Thus land reform, in some form, has been recommended for many years; in 1967 Bedford commented that the problems of implementation of land reform were so great that 'it has been necessary to implement other solutions: redistribution of the population, external resettlement, birth control and exporting a labour force' (1967:35). With this historic context there is little reason to suppose that the present proposals, involving giving control over rural development to Island Councils, are likely to be more successful. Ten years ago Fox suggested that agricultural land be taxed to penalise absentee owners who had left their land unused and unattended (1976:58). Although this suggestion was initially made by I-Kiribati it appears to have never been locally considered.

A large number of factors discourage decentralisation, many of which are certainly not specific to Kiribati. Firstly, it is notoriously difficult to decentralise government and quasi-government institutions, in part because of the high level ties between government departments but also because of the unwillingness of senior government officials to move away from town. For example, when Fox suggested in 1972 the possibility of decentralisation of secondary schools, if only to North Tarawa, he prefaced this with 'at this late date' (1976:58). Inertia is quickly established. Most local wage employment opportunities on outer islands are provided by government departments, local government and government sponsored cooperative society activities; other sources of employment are few in number and poorly paid (Geddes et al, 1979:83). However whilst there are government posts on each island they cannot usually be regarded as home island employment opportunities since most departments have operated a policy of not posting employees to their home islands, firstly, since it is difficult for government employees to resist social obligations and, secondly, there is sometimes resentment of the authority exercised by government officials in their home islands (ibid). Consequently even the expansion of government employment in the outer islands contributes to further migration. Moreover, for many government officials, there are also social problems in living on outer islands (op cit:105). Whilst recent success has been claimed for the policy of decentralisation of university graduates to work as council clerks on outer islands, in the past, when bonded medical graduates were located on outer islands, they often became disenchanted and simply dropped out of the workforce. Secondly, there are extremely restricted amenities, infrastructure and employment opportunities on outer islands, even on those that are district centres; the cost of establishing an infrastructure that would enable decentralisation on a significant scale is extremely high (cf. Watters with Banibati, 1977: 211; Green et al, 1979). Whilst the bureaucracy remains in Tarawa there are certainly substantial agglomeration economies. Thirdly, there are few obvious possibilities for economic development in the outer islands; unless economic development does occur there all development in the outer islands will have to be subsidised from the centre. Fourthly, there are a number of basic development problems in South Tarawa (such as inadequate sewerage facilities and school places) that inevitably result in substantial attention being given to these problems, attention which improves the welfare status of residents in South Tarawa and hence discourages decentralisation. Fifthly, for these kinds of reasons there have sometimes been doubts about the cost and value of decentralisation; for example, in 1979 a consultancy report rejected previous plans to relocate the capital on Abemama or at least decentralise government functions (Green et al, 1979). The will, finance, manpower and capacity to maintain a policy over a long time period are not surprisingly sometimes lacking. Whilst trade unions in

the past have argued for the rotation of skilled workers to enable all to have an opportunity of urban employment (Knudson, 1981:98) increasingly they have supported the interests of those already in wage employment resulting in a wider gap between the employed rich and the unemployed poor (Kiribati, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Labour, 1981b:2). Since urban jobs are increasingly scarce and most unions are urban based there is little reason to expect union pressure to decline, or those with formal jobs to be so supportive of decentralisation. Finally, the original population of Tarawa, kain Tarawa, have formed an association Wakin Aan Tarawa (Development and Progress on Tarawa) which is designed to pressure the government for improved conditions for the original inhabitants (Talu and Tekonnang, 1979:169). Thus, without more direct control over migration, some of which were being suggested as early as 1972 (cf. Fox, 1976:58), liberal policies involving limited decentralisation, agricultural development and controls on unskilled workers are unlikely to be highly effective. In particular circumstances direct control has worked well, for example during the 1977 cholera outbreak and its aftermath, controls over population movement were effectively prolonged for more than three months to discourage migration to Tarawa (K.Knudson, pers. comm. 1981). In a democratic state, with limited yet rising expectations, more rigorous controls are almost impossible to implement. Exactly a decade ago Pitchford commented wryly: 'only a Police State could relocate the population to the appropriate subsistence areas' (1972:30). However the limited success of the pre-war resettlement scheme and other minor post-war successes ensure that this extreme has not yet been chosen!

Resettlement

Recognition of population pressure in the 1930s prompted the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony administration to consider the possibility of resettlement. A series of distinctive schemes occurred, firstly, the Phoenix Islands resettlement scheme of 1937, secondly, the post-war attempt to induce Aranukans to settle in Kiritimati and, thirdly, the post-war settlement of Niulakita in Tuvalu (see Country Report No.19). These were matched by a series of external schemes, firstly, the resettlement of islanders from Banaba and Vaitupu (Tuvalu) in Fiji and, secondly, the resettlement of Phoenix Islanders and others in the Solomon Islands.

The most extensive resettlement scheme was the Phoenix Islands Settlement Scheme. All the Phoenix Islands were then uninhabited but only the three southernmost islands - Gardner (Nikumaroro), Hull (Orona) and Sydney (Manra) - were considered to have a climate and vegetation cover appropriate for settlement. Between 1938 and 1940 729 colonists were transhipped to the islands, of whom only 7 returned home. The war disrupted supervision of the resettlement and numerous land problems occurred but at the time of the 1947 census the three islands had a total population of 903. It was not difficult to find volunteers, who were to be taken as family groups, and 'while a large percentage of migrants were land-poor and probably on the young side - given the preference for people in excellent health, the population of migrants did represent a cross-section of Gilbertese society vis-a-vis social status and knowledge of Gilbertese culture' (Knudson, 1977:209). Thus the two basic problems were, firstly, communications with the Gilberts Group and the outside world generally, which limited social ties, copra marketing and raised the cost of administration and, secondly, land tenure. These were exacerbated by other problems, firstly, droughts and secondly, some problems of land suitability for taro and babai and pandanus production. These problems eventually

resulted in the removal of the settlers who were subsequently resettled in the Solomon Islands (see below) and after the early 1960s the Phoenix Islands have not been occupied. The second resettlement prompted an assessment of the scheme as a failure although it had proved that resettlement of a small population in the Phoenix Islands was physically possible if with some economic and social difficulties (cf. Maude, 1952; Bedford, 1967). These disappointing results prompted Bedford to conclude, 'Whatever use is made of the Group in the future, it is unlikely that another attempt will be made to establish self-contained settlements in the Phoenix Islands' (1967:81). Yet time and population increase have dictated otherwise at least in terms of policy formation (see below).

At the time when the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, Fiji and Solomon Islands were all administered within the British Western Pacific High Commission there were possibilities for resettlement outside the GEIC. In the 1940s the Administrations of the Southern Line Islands, Tonga, the New Hebrides (Vanuatu), Western Samoa, Tokelau, Cook Islands, Pitcairn Island, French Polynesia and North Borneo were all approached as possible sites (Bedford, 1967:82); eventually resettlement occurred in only two states - Solomon Islands and Fiji - in both cases on high islands. The resettlement schemes in Fiji were unusual in that, with the exceptions of Banabans on Rabi, they were initiated and directed by individual island communities rather than the colony administration; the principle resettlement in Fiji was that of Vaitupu (Tuvalu) Islanders to Kioa (see Country Report No.19) although the people of Arorae made an attempt to purchase land at Navua (Bedford, 1967:xli). Resettlement in Fiji has been important principally in the rather unusual case of the movement of Banabans to Rabi (Rambi), a small island off the south-east coast of Vanua Levu. The destruction of Banaba by phosphate mining resulted in the purchase of Rabi in 1942 by the British government, using invested phosphate royalties. When the war ended in 1945 the Banabans agreed to go to Rabi on a trial basis and in 1947 decided to stay there whilst maintaining their rights to Banaba itself. Following the completion of phosphate mining on Banaba some Banabans have returned to Banaba but the majority have remained in Rabi, where there are perhaps 2,000 Banabans who are Fiji citizens, most of whom appear unlikely to return to Banaba or to play a significant part in the activities of Kiribati, preferring to remain separate and distinct (cf. Kituai, 1982).

In 1945 the first proposals had been made for the settlement of I-Kiribati in Solomon Islands but it was not until 1954, when the Phoenix Islands scheme appeared to be a failure, that a site at Gizo was inspected for settlement. The first settlers, most of whom were from Sydney Island and the remainder from the Southern Gilberts, arrived in Gizo in mid-1955. More settlers arrived in 1956 and 1957 (including two from Niutao in Tuvalu) and in 1958 the entire remaining population of Sydney Island left for Gizo. In the early 1960s the population of the other two Phoenix Islands was resettled in Solomon Islands at Wagina Island. Despite early difficulties on all these schemes few settlers returned to Kiribati and return migration from Solomon Islands now seems extremely improbable as also does further I-Kiribati settlement in Solomon Islands (see Country Report No.16).

Resettlement from the whole of the Gilbert and Ellice Island Colony to Fiji and Solomon Islands resulted in the movement of around 2,700 Micronesians and Polynesians (of whom about 150 were Vaitupuan in Kioa, Fiji).

'This represents a loss to the theoretical total population growth of the Colony from 1931 to 1966 (including those who had emigrated) of 15.2 per cent, a surprisingly low proportion considering the emphasis that had been focused on resettlement as a solution to population pressure' (Bedford, 1967:109).

The intention of the formal resettlement schemes was principally to benefit the more densely populated and drought-prone southern Gilbert Islands, especially Tamana, Arorae, Onotoa and Beru. These four islands plus the three other southern islands - Beru, Tabiteuea and Nonouti - were the principal sources of Phoenix Island and hence Solomon Islands settlers; however there appear to be no records of the actual numbers from each island (op cit: 111) hence the particular significance in each island is unknown. The small numbers migrating have inevitably limited the direct value of resettlement and the expense was considerable. Most important, however, is the fact that from around the mid-1960s there has been no prospect of further resettlement from Kiribati, or Tuvalu, because of migration controls in Fiji and Solomon Islands and no prospects of resettlement elsewhere, including the metropolitan countries (see below). There is some interest amongst individuals in some parts of Kiribati in migration to Solomon Islands to join relatives there but no apparent prospects of this occurring. Thus the various external schemes, whilst delaying the onset of more extreme population pressure in the southern Gilbert Islands, have been a brief episode in the migration history of Kiribati and have little relevance to contemporary population problems.

In the 1940s the southern Line Islands were considered as possible sites for settlement, although Malden and Starbuck were considered too drought-prone and Vostok too small, but by 1949 it was generally considered that since it would be impossible to settle more than very small populations on the two islands of Caroline and Flint, the expense of settling such remote islands could not be justified. The islands have subsequently been worked as copra plantations without a permanent population (Bedford, 1967:xxxii).

Whilst studies of early resettlement schemes, notably the Phoenix Islands scheme, were far from conclusive about their value as means of reducing population pressure on resources in Kiribati, the alternatives of family planning and improved agricultural development in Kiribati have generally proved to be of such limited effectiveness that, towards the end of the 1970s, as Independence drew near, and in the early post-Independence years the possibility of further resettlement, both in the Phoenix Islands and Kiritimati was increasingly being reconsidered by the administration and the new government of Kiribati. The 1979 Development Plan gave some consideration to resettlement and stated that the Government's aim was 'to undertake a resettlement programme where practical and viable opportunities exist either on presently uninhabited islands or on inhabited islands which could support larger populations' (Kiribati, 1979:126). High priority was given to the resettlement of Nikumaroro (Gardner), Caroline and Kiritimati and it was intended, but never implemented, to establish a pilot settlement scheme on Nikumaroro in 1979-80. A consultant's study of resettlement (Green, 1979) was followed by a detailed and comprehensive review of the whole basis of resettlement (Pitchford, 1981) which was both extremely pessimistic and realistic over the potential.

The Pitchford Report suggested that some of the Phoenix Islands and northern Line Islands had theoretical potential for resettlement in that they could support an additional or a new population based on the potential carrying capacity of those islands. Pitchford's conclusions on the potential population of those islands, although never explicitly stated, were based on the previous settlement history and the known development potential (soils and rainfall) of those islands. The report suggested that Fanning (Tabuaeran) could support an extra 10,300 people since the island was free of droughts and the land older and more fertile, Washington (Teraina) could support an extra 2,600 and Kiritimati, even with very low rainfall, an extra 8,735. The forthcoming Development Plan even suggests an eventual population of 60,000 in the Northern Line Islands. By contrast the Phoenix Islands could support a population of little more than a thousand: 400 on Orona (Hull), 300 on Manra (Sydney), 250 on Nikumaroro and 100 on Kanton (Abariringa). He explicitly excluded Flint and Caroline, in the southern Line Islands, from consideration, noting that the Development Plan was entirely unrealistic especially because of the cost and difficulty of providing any services to those islands in a situation where even the two islands nearest to Tarawa, Abaiang and Maiana, could not be adequately served (Pitchford, 1981:6.10). The islands had also been leased out for 25 years from 1964. Thus the only two areas that appears to offer a possibility of development were the Phoenix Islands and the northern Line Islands.

For the Phoenix Islands Pitchford concluded that resettlement possibilities were extremely limited, and that the social and geographical limitations of small islands with small communities were extreme and had been romanticised by earlier European District Commissioners (op cit: 6.6). The report concluded that the principle difficulty to resettlement was the cost and organisation of providing basic needs in such remote and isolated islands (ibid). However three of the Phoenix Islands were occupied by almost a thousand people for around twenty years and, in some respects, this was a success since the communities did manage to overcome the occasional droughts (Maude, 1952). Moreover the depopulation of the islands was in part a result of the colonists believing that they could obtain superior land in Solomon Islands and hence, when an official inspection party arrived, they stripped the coconut palms and polluted the wells to ensure a favourable outcome. Whilst this can obviously be regarded as an expression of discontent with the islands, in later years Sydney (Manra) was 'remembered by its former inhabitants as a delightful place to live and one where money, though still necessary, was relatively unimportant in life' (Knudson, 1977:213). Whilst this too is certainly partial romanticism it is true that the Phoenix Islands can support a settler population. However when the costs of transportation are rising steadily, contemporary communities demand greater levels of material welfare (and hence opportunities to earn cash) and, elsewhere in the South Pacific, small, remote islands are slowly losing their population, the possibilities for resettlement in the Phoenix Islands are poor. Moreover any population group decentralised to the Phoenix Islands would find that remoteness seriously limited their ability to influence government policy. Pitchford concluded, firstly, that any decision on the resettlement of the Phoenix Islands should be deferred but further information should be collected on the potential of all the islands and, secondly, that the best use of the islands was to produce copra from plantations there, since the value of copra production offsets the value of diversion of ships to collect the copra and short-term employment can be provided there for copra workers and their families (Pitchford, 1981:6.6-6.7). It therefore appears probable that the Phoenix Islands could only be repopulated if conditions seriously worsened in

Kiribati whilst the government was able to divert revenue to provide, and probably permanently subsidise, settlement there for what would never be more than around 500 people, allowing for natural increase there. These conditions seem unlikely to be realised.

The only area able to make a substantial impact on population decentralisation in Kiribati is therefore the northern Line Islands only one of which, Kiritimati, is currently owned by Kiribati. In 1949 a scheme to resettle Aranukans on Kiritimati was proposed since Aranukans (alongside Kurians) in many instances had limited land areas and thirty-six men, who were later joined by their families, went to Kiritimati to work on the plantations and establish their own land. However they found considerable difficulties in establishing areas of babai or breadfruit and this, alongside a severe shortage of rain in 1950, discouraged the Aranukans who demanded repatriation in 1951 (Bedford, 1967:xxii-xxiii). Thus the earliest attempt to resettle Kiritimati from the Gilbert Islands was a definite failure. The principal constraint to development is the distance of the group from Tarawa (although the current international air-service through Kiritimati, if it can be economically maintained which must be regarded as unlikely, offsets this distance). Since both Tabuaeran and Teraina are better supplied with material infrastructure - housing materials, water supplies, rainfall - than any of the Gilbert Islands and are able to support larger communities, the material and socio-psychological problems of resettlement would be fewer there than anywhere else in the country (Pitchford, 1981:6.11). By contrast there are doubts about the rainfall of Kiritimati and there is no housing material so that the costs of providing permanent roofs, downpipes and tanks would be considerable (ibid). However the discovery of a much larger supply of underground water than anticipated, in mid-1982, may well reduce those problems. Each of the islands has an airstrip, some other infrastructure and lies close to main shipping routes between Australia and U.S.A. hence their isolation is potentially much less than that of the Phoenix Islands. As Pitchford records, the most significant achievement in decentralisation since Independence is the transfer of the Ministry of the Line and Phoenix Islands to Kiritimati (1981:18.1). Whilst the relocation of the Ministry of Natural Resources Development to the Line Islands would be of value, it has proved exceptionally hard to decentralise other government departments, who consider themselves too important to be located in the periphery (op cit:18.10). Decentralisation is certainly likely to result in some of those decentralised being disadvantaged relative to those who have the resources to remain close to the centre. Nevertheless the islands have resettlement and development potential in the future; present indications are that the costs of physically transporting more than 10,000 I-Kiribati to the northern Line Islands are so great that this potential is unlikely to be realised for some years.

Although there is some scope for redistributing population within the Gilbert Islands this has not been welcomed on those islands with low densities, because of fears of social friction and because of the importance of land ownership (McCreary and Boardman, 1968:9). Island Councils, where the population complained 'of lack of labour to work the land, hastily changed the subject when the suggestion was made that people from other, overcrowded islands might be indentured to help' (Pitchford, 1972:30). Since then the possibilities of internal relocation have become even less likely.

Conclusion

According to all conventional measures of economic and social development Kiribati is extremely poor and undeveloped and is, by most criteria, one of the poorest countries in the South Pacific region. Basic needs, such as education, health, sanitation and water supplies, are generally satisfied to a lesser extent than in other countries in the region and compare unfavourably with some of the poorest countries in the world. However the distribution of basic needs varies significantly from island to island and although most needs are less well satisfied on outer islands, and have therefore resulted in some migration to South Tarawa, the problems caused by congestion in the urban centre are considerable. Opportunities for economic development are better only than in the very smallest atoll states, such as Tuvalu and Tokelau. As a recent study of agricultural development concluded,

'It is clear that few choices are open to the people of Kiribati. External assistance in the form of budgetary aid may be necessary for a long period, perhaps indefinitely. In the absence of any outlets for significant emigration, either temporary or permanent, acceptance of a relatively low level of monetary income may be necessary' (Ward and Proctor, 1980:366).

Kiribati (and Tuvalu) 'present one of the most limited resource bases for human existence in the Pacific' (Geddes et al, 1979:1) and in Kiribati the limitations of the land resources are compounded by high population densities and often inadequate rainfall, away from the northern Gilbert Islands, and by massive problems of communication even within the Gilbert Islands group. Since the closure of the phosphate workings in Banaba at the end of 1979, not only has domestic revenue substantially declined but also a large number of formal sector jobs disappeared; no new significant income source has subsequently been identified and nor has any source of jobs. The only significant source of export earnings is copra production and dependence on this very limited and variable source of revenue presents its own particular problems. Whilst fisheries provides future development potential it is limited in its availability to also provide employment whilst, overshadowing future trends in employment in Kiribati, is the certainty that in about a decade over 1,000 migrants in Nauru, about 400 of whom will have been employed there, will return to Kiribati. This means the loss of jobs, and substantial remittances, and a significant increase in population pressure on resources in Kiribati. Thus not only are the contemporary problems of economic development in Kiribati greater than anywhere else in the South Pacific region, with the possible exception of Tuvalu, neither are they obviously being reduced and nor are there obvious ways of substantially developing the economy. Simultaneously, as elsewhere in the region, expectations are slowly rising and greater demands are being placed upon the economy by I-Kiribati, demands which are increasingly difficult to meet. A detailed and still valuable review of socio-economic change in Kiribati concluded, 'the future appears to lie in maximising returns from existing resources, the export of labour, import substitution, the careful control of government spending and...the development of the resources of the islands without indigenous populations' (Geddes et al, 1979:4). This is scarcely a prescription for self-sustained economic growth and development and yet is a realistic conclusion.

In the early 1970s it was apparent from a survey of labour use on four quite different islands in Kiribati that considerable surplus labour existed on those islands that could be used in productive economic activities and

that the availability of labour was not a constraint to economic development (Geddes *et al*, 1979:80). However, since those surveys were undertaken, there has been continued migration to Tarawa, an indication that surplus labour is not being used in productive economic activities. This combination of factors, alongside declining job opportunities outside Kiribati, the lack of expansion of new job opportunities in Tarawa and, even now, the preference of most I-Kiribati to remain on their home island, demonstrates that the major task of development planning in Kiribati is the identification and expansion of income generating opportunities in the outer islands. These are most likely to be found in activities related to copra production and fishing and will necessitate improvements in marketing and hence communications. Transport is quite crucial yet increasingly expensive:

'In the non-phosphatic future, if shipping costs become too high to make production for the Tarawa market economic even on the closest Outer Islands the present pronounced economic dualism and gap between them and South Tarawa will become quite irretrievable and they will be forced to lapse into subsistence, with copra and remittances from exported labour providing the only sources of cash' (Geddes *et al*, 1979:94).

Indeed there is already evidence that these processes are now at work. Nevertheless the basis of economic development in Kiribati must still be considered to be copra production on the outer islands.

In 1981 Love concluded that the fundamental employment problems in Kiribati, as revealed from an analysis of the 1978 census (Love, 1983), were not fundamentally different from those apparent from an analysis of the 1973 census (Fairbairn, 1976). Fairbairn's summary of the main problems facing both Kiribati and Tuvalu almost a decade ago is worth reprinting in its entirety:

- (a) A relatively high rate of population growth - at 1.6 per cent per annum - and the consequent need to promote employment opportunities to absorb new additions to the labour force (and possibly to make fuller use of those in the existing labour force who may be under-employed or even unemployed in the conventional sense).
- (b) Limited employment prospects offered by the domestic economy. This arises from the unusually restrictive economic environment characterized, for example, by poor soils, poverty of other exploitable natural resources, other than marine resources, geographic fragmentation, distance from large overseas metropolitan centres, and the small size of the local market.
- (c) The unpredictable nature of overseas employment outlets for GEI seamen, craftsmen and labourers.
- (d) A continuing shortage of trained and skilled manpower particularly at the professional and senior administrative levels.
- (e) The imminent problem of the productive redeployment of a large number of workers presently employed on the phosphate venture on Ocean Island (Fairbairn, 1976:1).

Since then the situation in both countries has effectively worsened, primarily because of the return of the phosphate workers from Banaba, since in none of the other areas has the situation apparently improved. The closure of Nauru is still to come. The dependence of Kiribati on work opportunities beyond its control or influence is apparent.

In comparison with almost any other part of the South Pacific region the data on migration and development in Kiribati has been exceptionally detailed at least until towards the end of the 1970s so that there is a reasonable understanding of the structure of migration. However, firstly, there is little information on the return migration of Banaba workers, in terms of the extent to which they stayed in Tarawa, returned to their home island or took up formal sector employment; secondly, there is very little data on motivation for migration and the extent of circular migration, although general conclusions on at least the first of these issues have been possible. The only survey of migration in Kiribati was carried out by Bedford in 1968 hence many current assumptions may be invalid (Tetinaniku, 1982:5). Thirdly, there has never been any analysis of manpower in Kiribati, other than belated examinations of census data (e.g. Fairbairn, 1976; Knowles, 1982) and the categories used in the census, which do not separate private and public sector employment, must be employed for this. In a situation where jobs are scarce and the regulation of employment opportunities critical this is obviously inadequate. Fourthly, since 1978 very little data has been collected and made available on the structure of the Kiribati economy, employment or population situation; this has been particularly unfortunate in view of the considerable changes in the economy and the difficulties experienced by the Kiribati economy in the post-Independence years. This limits the validity of the conclusions that can be made on the basis of generally out-dated data, and prevents any real possibility of evaluating the success or failure of development policies. Fortunately new statistical procedures are likely to be implemented soon, an employment survey is underway and the 1984 census will provide important population and employment data. There are a number of basic population and employment related areas where data are urgently required, including immigration data, family planning statistics (and also health statistics). The 1980 UNFPA mission noted that few studies made by visiting scholars were available in Kiribati (and there was little control or direction of the work of visiting scholars) and what was available was often extremely 'academic' and of limited value for development (UNFPA, 1980:62); the Victoria University of Wellington survey has, however, made an important contribution (Geddes et al, 1979). Nevertheless Kiribati is no more poorly served than most countries in the region and better served than any in Micronesia.

The disappearance of job opportunities in Banaba, and the stagnation of job expansion in Tarawa has put considerable pressures on the economy of Kiribati and especially on South Tarawa as its pre-eminence increases, to the extent that urban jobs are increasingly scarce and the extent of circular migration from urban Tarawa is declining as jobs become careers. In a decade all employment in Nauru will also disappear. This has resulted in considerable pressure on the Government of Kiribati, firstly, to consider the rotation of urban job opportunities, secondly, to reconsider the possibility of more extensive resettlement of the Line and Phoenix Islands, thirdly, to emphasize the extension of family planning, and fourthly, to seek out other overseas employment opportunities, primarily for seamen.

The emerging evidence on the rotation of jobs suggests that some achievements have been made and that unskilled employment is being rotated equitably between islands and between households in need. Some problems in the organisation of this have been discussed above, and especially the problem of definition of kain Tarawa, an increasing problem as greater numbers of children are born in town. This is further examined elsewhere (Connell, 1983). A more fundamental problem is the fact that increasing proportions of jobs demand specialist skills; 'one does not maintain medical skills with intermittent application and successful clerks and

administrators are successful at least partly because they have been on the job for many years. In short, experience is an important factor in the kinds of employment found on Tarawa' (Knudson, 1981:94). The number of jobs that demand skills (and experience) is likely to be greater than the number of unskilled jobs. This has two effects; firstly, pressures to gain access to skilled jobs intensifies and the minimum requirement for entry increases, hence pressures on the education system increase and a 'diploma disease' becomes established with access to jobs strictly organised by examination. Secondly, a dual employment system emerges with rotation, circulation and low wages in the unskilled sector and permanency and high wages in the skilled (and private) sector. Not only is this likely to produce significant socio-economic stratification in a society hitherto characterised by a high degree of equality, at a time of urban wage restraint and increases in the cost of living index, but it is likely to result in a reduction in the level of remittances from these permanent migrants alongside pressures from them, and their unions, to strengthen urban amenities and pay no more than lip-service to decentralisation. Thus rural-urban differentiation is likely to be strengthened (without decentralisation or rural development) and an even more parasitic form of urbanisation come into existence. The evidence suggests that this is already occurring (cf. Geddes et al, 1979:124). In itself circulation of some workers will actually minimise the impact of this division, which effectively results from extremely limited urban economic opportunities.

Attempts to redress the imbalances caused by excessive urbanisation, 'over-centralisation and over-urbanisation' (Watters with Banibati, 1977:210), have resulted in increasing attention being given to the possibility of resettlement of the Phoenix and Line Islands. As Walsh notes, 'in the present circumstances, Kiribati has to seriously consider resettlement as part of its population policies' (1981:166) and yet all the evidence suggests that the cost of resettlement is excessive and that alone this ultimately does no more than transfer part of a dependent peasant economy to an even more remote location. Interest in resettlement has been maintained for half a century to a much greater extent than anywhere else in the South Pacific, and is a direct indicator of the massive development problems that exist in Kiribati. The potential for resettlement in the northern Line Islands is real, despite the necessity to purchase two islands and physically transport settlers over 3,500 kms., but for economic reasons cannot be seriously considered at the moment. However, it is apparent both that no other islands within Kiribati have significant potential for resettlement and also that there are unlikely to be any further resettlement opportunities overseas; consequently the potential of the northern Line Islands is relatively very great. Resettlement may eventually be necessary (although the availability of unused land in the Gilbert Islands suggests that it is not now), and the renaming in 1982 of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Decentralisation suggests renewed emphasis in this direction. It is apparent that the extension of family planning is now even more important and might best be achieved through an extensive programme of population education (cf. Geddes et al, 1969:28-29) which would provide a much cheaper solution to the basic problems of population and development. The Pitchford report on decentralisation (Pitchford, 1981) is an outstanding report on development in Kiribati and one of the most useful contemporary studies of any part of the South Pacific region, and yet within a few months of its completion it was virtually unobtainable even in Tarawa; it would be extremely valuable if this report could be reprinted and made widely available, not only throughout Kiribati. Further evaluation of the new policies of the past couple of years now seems necessary.

The extremely limited economic opportunities in Kiribati and the minimal prospects of future development there suggest that there would be widespread demand, at individual and national level, for potential emigration opportunities. The settlement of the Phoenix Islands before the war, current migration to Nauru, the slow growth in population of the Line Islands and the extremely limited return migration from Fiji and Vanuatu all indicate that almost any available migration opportunities would rapidly be taken up by I-Kiribati. Taking no note of political realities Trumbull concluded his account of Kiribati (and Tuvalu),

'The limited economic expectations on their tiny, sparsely endowed islets, coupled with expanding awareness of a larger world unquestionably dictate a steady emigration of the young to lands of greater economic opportunity' (1977:250).

A recent survey of employment in Kiribati by Knowles commented on the problems resulting from migration in the context of Mediterranean countries (e.g. loss of agricultural labour force, increased import dependency, high dependency ratios and the decline of traditional cultural values) but observed that these problems occurred in countries which had resources to develop and export markets to exploit, a situation that was manifestly non-existent in Kiribati. Since emigration would therefore enable I-Kiribati to be materially better off but at the loss of cultural identity and (a degree of) independence Knowles concluded, again without recourse to the political situation, that emigration of young men would be increasingly likely (Knowles, 1982:3-4). Indeed this corresponds with I-Kiribati expectations; as early as 1972 Pitchford noted,

'Loss of family income from Ocean Island, and later Nauru, is confidently expected to be compensated for by remittances from other overseas sources such as the South Pacific Marine Service Scheme, the New Hebrides or Solomons. Outer islanders show great faith in foreign employers and cannot accept that developments outside the Colony threaten migration and employment prospects overseas. The powerful money element rests on these remittances. Therefore, it stands to outer island reason that the more sons that can be produced the more money will come into the family' (1972:11-12).

Moreover a survey of 90 outer island residents in 1971 recorded that fully 75% wished or were willing to resettle overseas, primarily to obtain employment, and every Island Council wished to see a scheme for the export of female labour similar to that available for men (op cit:26-27). The Asian Development Bank review of agriculture in the South Pacific region concluded that Kiribati exemplified the dilemma of development 'in its starkest form. Even with the most optimistic view of the possibilities for fishing or further development of the coconut industry, the conclusion must be that continued economic growth from its own resources is impossible', (Castles, 1980:135). Consequently this suggested 'a policy of unrestricted temporary or permanent migration of people' to the metropolitan countries; 'unfortunately it is a policy which depends on decisions which Pacific Island governments can seek, but cannot make' (op cit:136). There is little doubt then that a consensus of opinion not only regards migration from Kiribati as beneficial but seeks to increase it.

At different times there have been specific suggestions for particular forms of migration to employment (or resettlement) overseas; in 1971 Island Councils were interested in promoting female job opportunities overseas (Pitchford, 1971:27) and an Oxford University team actually recommended that

girls might work as 'au pairs' in the United Kingdom (Farquharson, 1978:9.15). More recently the decline of overseas employment and the improbability of another resettlement scheme like that in Solomon Islands have prompted considerations of more widespread emigration; Pitchford more recently suggested that all possibilities, for changes in overseas immigration quotas should be checked (1981:6.14) and both Fox (1976:58) and Geddes *et al* (1979) recommended that the government seek out further job opportunities overseas. However the small number of I-Kiribati overseas means that any existing quotas would be extremely small and could not accommodate many I-Kiribati. Consequently real overseas migration employment opportunities essentially demand migration to 'new' areas; some have therefore contemplated the migration of ex-phosphate miners to new Australian mining ventures. Ultimately new overseas opportunities will result from political decisions made outside Kiribati and the prospect of these is very small whilst it is 'taboo to talk about overseas settlement' (T.Tekanene, pers. comm, 1982). Kiribati has asked New Zealand to consider issuing work permits but so far without success.

What then are the real prospects for emigration overseas on a permanent or semi-permanent basis? Both in the 1940s and 1950s proposals were made for resettlement in the New Hebrides (Vanuatu); eventually these proposals were not developed since it was found cheaper to obtain land in Solomon Islands than in Vanuatu. However at the end of the 1960s the possibility of resettlement there had not been completely abandoned (Bedford, 1967:xxiv). A small number of I-Kiribati are effectively permanent residents in Vanuatu, where they are principally employed as plantation workers, and as many plantations in Vanuatu are short of labour the possibility of some further migration to Vanuatu, although improbable, is perhaps more likely than to any other state within the South Pacific region. There is one other local alternative: the Marshall Islands. Although the overall population density in the Marshall Islands is very high, and indeed similar to that of Kiribati, population is growing extremely quickly and prospects of development are little better than in Kiribati (see Country Report No.8) other considerations; firstly, a basic nucleus of I-Kiribati already exists in the Marshall Islands; secondly, there are close social and language ties between the two island groups, thirdly, I-Kiribati would be willing to work at relatively low wages, lower than those preferred by Marshallese (although they would have limited skills to offer compared with the present Asian workers there) and, fourthly, and perhaps most important, under the terms of the Compact of Free Association Marshallese have rights of free entry into the United States. Should Marshallese take up these rights, and there is every reason to think that they will do so and at a steadily increasing rate, then present constraints to I-Kiribati migration may eventually be reduced. Indeed it is not improbable that some I-Kiribati may themselves choose to use this route to America. Already a small number of I-Kiribati have become Mormons and moved to the United States, at least temporarily. Other possibilities within the South Pacific region include other parts of Micronesia, including the Federated States of Micronesia, who may also lose population to the United States, and Palau, if projected large-scale agricultural developments materialise and the more distant islands of Polynesia - such as Niue and the Cook Islands - that currently have a declining population. So far however neither of these two latter countries have given much indication of welcoming migration from elsewhere within the South Pacific, rather being pre-occupied with retaining their own indigenous population. The remaining solutions are the metropolitan countries on the fringes of the region; as Knowles (1982:4) points out the United States could absorb the whole population of Kiribati and Tuvalu with no significant problems. Much the same is true of Australia but unless the governments of

Kiribati and Tuvalu exert strong pressure on those countries (and pressure on New Zealand has produced only two work permits) the prospects for migration to the metropolitan countries are currently poor. If there is an upturn in the global economy the prospects will be better. Eventually, despite current political realities, the prospects for a new migration outlet are greatest in one of the metropolitan countries.

Attitudes to emigration and resettlement overseas have substantially changed. The settlers in the Phoenix Islands and then Solomon Islands, 'in earlier days...were called the land-hungry people; they were the unfortunate ones who did not have sufficient land. Now our values have changed. Settling overseas, beyond the ocean of our islands, is something to be sought after. Why? Because our population is still growing...those who have resettled will not face the problems that we will face in the future. So now many consider them, the resettled ones, as the fortunate ones and they consider us to be the unfortunate ones' (Schutz and Tenten, 1979:127).

In many respects all domestic policies that consider decentralisation, resettlement in the Phoenix and Line Islands and the rotation of labour are trivial because they cannot generate new employment and they cannot transform the peasant economy of Kiribati. The prospects of significant resettlement and economic change in the development of Line Islands appear to be illusions rather than reality, deriving from a period when, as in the Phoenix Islands settlement, land was all that people hungered for. They are little more than indications of the dire structure of the Kiribati socio-economy. Kiribati and Tuvalu are the two countries in the South Pacific region where the social and economic justification for increased levels of emigration (temporary or permanent) is readily apparent, yet outside Melanesia, they are also the two countries in the region where the opportunities are not only the least but are also contracting. In those circumstances, whilst continuing to seek out overseas opportunities, Kiribati has no alternative but to attempt to achieve a greater degree of self-reliance.

Self-reliance is slipping away from atoll communities as residents demand more imported goods, welfare support, commodity price subsidies, higher wages and so on; that is they demand comparability with more distant places. Even in much larger countries attempts to achieve self-reliance often appear no more than reflections of the aspirations that must suffice if growth cannot easily be achieved; as Joseph puts it, in the Nigerian context, self-reliance is 'little more than a ritual for exorcising the devil of dependence' (1978:223). The problems involved in changing the whole trajectory of development are more than apparent. It is improbable that Kiribati can ever achieve a significant degree of self-reliance (unless, like Nauru, it discovers new sources of mineral wealth), yet it is capable of moving away from the present massive dependence on aid. The elements of such a policy redirection are clear : agricultural development policies that stress diversification and food crop production (whilst simultaneously encouraging the extension of new coconut varieties and replanting schemes, to ensure some necessary cash income); land tenure reform and the taxation of unused agricultural land; increasing concentration on the exploitation and development of the marine resources that are the only obvious base of both export growth and improved nutrition; transport and energy policies that move away from the use of non-renewable

resources (and may incorporate differential pricing); further job decentralisation and allocation (perhaps including sabbatical years for public servants); improved infrastructure (wharfs, aid posts, etc.); increased emphasis on family planning, and so on. Self-reliance then entails reducing dependence on imported 'necessities' including foods, oil products, capital equipment and also expertise; this involves changing consumption patterns as well as increasing local productive capacity. Policies would be needed to change living styles at given income levels - using taxes, price policies, advertising and perhaps rationing. This also involves increasing national ownership of assets and improving national capacity for negotiating with trans-national corporations and metropolitan countries especially, in this context, those with fishing fleets (cf. Seers, 1977a). In short, self-reliance entails a more selective approach to external influences of all kinds. In keeping with this orientation is the idea that factors that were previously regarded as 'obstacles' to development, such as nationalism, separate languages, traditional customs and so on, appear now rather as shields against the expense and inappropriateness of modern consumption styles and technologies (Seers, 1977a). The extremely limited number of I-Kiribati who go on to secondary education, the limited opportunities for formal sector employment even after secondary education and the current belief that education is aimed at preparing children for off-island employment suggest that, to a greater extent than elsewhere in the South Pacific region, a more vocational education would be of greater relevance to the future situation in Kiribati. This has been examined in some detail in earlier studies which cautioned against vocational education, both because experts on traditional skills were unlikely to be willing to participate (since this would undermine their prestige and the 'social security' value of such skills) and because the value of vocational education would be questioned by parents (Geddes *et al*, 1979:116), but also indicated that modern, practical activities, such as book-keeping, mechanical training, some aspects of agricultural development and also the Gilbertese language could be more easily incorporated (*ibid*). Given the paramount importance of fisheries in Kiribati it might, for example, be possible to make fisheries a compulsory subject in school syllabuses or, as in the Maldives, to institute a Fisheries Day, as a public holiday for honouring fishermen (which would also result in one genuinely national holiday, rather than the more colonial public holidays that are currently celebrated). Despite the problems of achieving self-reliance there seems little real alternative to a future of economic and cultural dependence that would result from fluctuating strategies, alternating between different ideologies and different internal and external sources of support, which are a function of the democratic process. The paradox is that many of these changes must be associated, at least initially, with foreign aid inputs and are not readily compatible with emigration nor with some present policies. As Pitchford records, in posing the question 'Is Kiribati viable?':

'to talk about problems of survival when the country is buying a 727, a High Commission overseas, the Betio-Bairiki causeway and electricity in South Tarawa villages does not make sense. People are basically optimistic; most data is suspect in Kiribati and who can envisage the future in ten years?' (1981:15:1).

Yet whatever strategies are ultimately chosen the future socio-economic development of Kiribati will always be limited.

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