



Te Ope Whakaora

Social Policy & Parliamentary Unit

Working for the eradication of poverty in New Zealand

Unit Brief **October 2019**

From the Director

Your Kingdom Come!

The Christmas season is now underway and we sometimes find ourselves caught up again in an intense mix of crass consumerism—a superficial focus on giving and receiving things—as well as the beautiful gathering together of communities and families. A celebration of life!

The amazing story of a God who would come to earth to as a Saviour and live amongst us will sadly be lost on increasing numbers of people in New Zealand.

For the SPPU, the engagement with life on earth as demonstrated by Jesus is actively pursued, among other ways, through an intentional involvement in the democratic process. With 2020 looming as an election year there is a need for Christians to see citizenship as an integral part of their discipleship. Think of the social issues at stake: high rates of poverty caused through a lack of housing and adequate income as well as trying to further address sometimes punitive welfare and justice systems. This, along with wealth inequality and the huge disadvantage minority populations are exposed to, point to the need for a more dynamic response if we are to seriously address these important issues. And all this goes without mentioning the three very important and potentially divisive issues heading for inclusion in referenda—drug reform, euthanasia and abortion.

Taking up the responsibilities of citizenship is a significant part of the incarnational discipleship that a follower of Christ might see as part of his or her mission. Some would say a loss of the sense of social responsibility associated with that of an involved citizenry is one of the key maladies of our age. The kind of servant-like attitude is arguably missing what President Kennedy famously called for in his inaugural address when he said, ‘ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you

can do for your country’.

To support this kind of active and engaged citizenship, the Unit has decided that in the lead up to the election next year we will provide information highlighting the issues at stake for New Zealand and its people, along with providing opportunities to discuss them. Look out for this information later in 2020.

In and through this all, the Unit will continue to work on the issues that we have been highlighting in this year around crime and justice, debt-vulnerable consumers, inequality and housing; as well as looking to see how we might better engage with Māori outcomes, aspirations, and concerns in our work output in seeking to honour our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

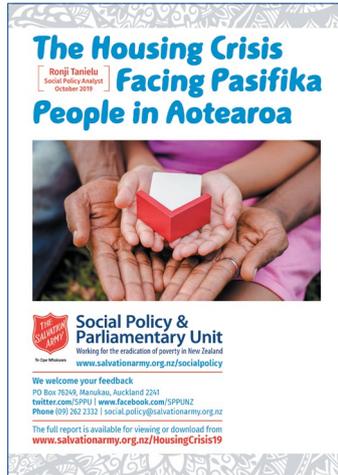
‘Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.’ —Matt 6:10

Lieutenant-Colonel Ian Hutson
Director—Social Policy & Parliamentary Unit



Key SPPU News

- The Unit has been very busy in the last few months. All of these papers, covering crime and punishment, housing and problem debt, are available on our SPPU website. The recent papers were:
 - *Reconsidering the Aotearoa New Zealand criminal justice policy model* (Vincent)
 - *Case resolution and rehabilitation programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Vincent)
 - *The housing crisis facing Pasifika people in Aotearoa* (Ronji)
 - *Debt collection and repossession in Aotearoa* (Ronji).
- Also, keep a look out for the other reports we're releasing in the next few weeks:
 - *Progress towards equality* (Paul)
 - *Refining criminal justice outcomes: An evidence-based programme for reform* (Vincent).
- The Unit also farewelled our 2020 intern Corallee Collins-Annan. Corallee recently wrote an article reflecting on her time in the Unit—salvationarmy.org.nz/article/policy-reform-intern-reflection. The Unit acknowledges the work Corallee has done this year and wishes her God's richest blessings for the next phases of her life!



Just Action



We hosted about 200 people from all over the Pacific at our biennial Just Action conference in Wellington on 1–2 October. Speakers from a wide range of spiritual, political, and academic perspectives spoke about the wellbeing challenges facing our country and what we can do to improve outcomes for our whānau. A good report on the event can be read [HERE](#). Our next social justice conference is likely to be held in 2021. If you have ideas about what you'd like to see (or if you'd like to help organise it), drop us an email!



Out & About

Speaking/Presentations

- **17/10** Presentation and discussion with Mindanao Philippines Young Leaders training, Victoria University—Paul.
- **29/10** Speaking at Recovery Church, Auckland—Ian.
- **17/11** Ronji preached at the Pukekohe Corps service. It was a blessed time of fellowship with Ted, Aram and the Pukekohe whanau. Ronji taught from Matthew 7:13,14.
- **21/11** Panel member at the Inaugural Pacific Island Lawyers Association Conference, held in Auckland—Ronji.

Submissions

- The Unit has continued advocating around some of our recent key submissions, including the Online Gambling Review and the Kainga Ora Homes and Communities Bill. The Unit has also tried to support the advocacy around the recent Abortion Legislation Bill and End of Life Choice Bill, which has been led by MASIC.

Government

- **15/10** Attended NZ Homelessness Action Plan South Auckland Hui—Ronji.
- **23/10** First meeting of the Sector Experts Group on the NZ Homelessness Action Plan led by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development in Wellington—Ronji.
- **6/11** briefing from Ministry of Social Development on Household Incomes Report 2019, latest poverty, hardship and inequality data.
- **08/11** Met with Matt (Housing Policy Analyst) from the Ministry of Pacific Peoples to discuss the Pasifika housing report—Ronji.
- **25/11** Attended Progressive Home Ownership workshop with MHUD and community representatives—Ronji.

Stakeholder Meetings

- **9/10** Welfare advocacy collaborators group planning meeting—Paul.
- **10/10** Phone meeting with the Christian Savings bank around housing—Ronji.

- **16/10** Attended FinCap Trust board meeting in Wellington – Ronji.
- **19/10** Community Organising training attended by Vincent.
- **21/10** Auckland City Housing Trust—Ian.
- **25/10** Meeting with the Quaker Criminal Justice Committee—Vincent.
- **25/10** Meeting with TEAR Fund—Ian.
- **29/10** Meeting with Sr Lee Tan of the Josephite Sisters—Vincent.
- **29/10** Meeting with representatives of the Middlemore Foundation—Ian.
- **04/11** The Unit hosted Michael Ward from Christians Against Poverty at our Monday morning team meeting.
- **05/11** University of Otago & Salvation Army partnership meeting—Ian.
- **18 & 19/11** Attended the FinCap Trust regional hui for financial mentors and budgeters in South and West Auckland—Ronji.

Media

- **02/10** Vincent spoke on Rhema Radio about Just Action.
- **06/11** Vincent spoke on Mike Hosking Breakfast and Rhema Radio about his criminal justice research.
- **06/11** Comments to Stuff.co.nz on hardship grants figures—Paul (read [HERE](#)).
- **11/11** Panel member on the AM Breakfast Show on TV 3—Ronji.
- **21/11** Radio interview with Pacific Media Network for Pasifika Lawyers Conference—Ronji.

Community Advocacy

- **14/10** Attended Mangere Housing Regeneration Group meeting with Kainga Ora Ministry—Ronji.
- **24/10** Ronji brought his friend Rev. Justus Miwanda from Uganda to visit the Manukau CM. Justus is an Anglican Reverend who leads a large Christian ministry called International Needs

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Uganda that works in church planting, running 4 schools, HIV prevention, healthcare and livelihood and women's programmes.

- **04/11** Met with Rouruina Brown, CEO of the Cook Island Development Association NZ, to discuss the Pasifika housing report—Ronji.
- **08/11** Vincent attended a meeting of the Royal Society Te Apārangi Equity Panel of which he is a member.
- **11/11** Met with Mary Aue from Coconut Wireless to discuss community advocacy about urban redevelopment projects.
- **11/11** Te Ohu Whakawhanaunga sponsoring organisations meeting—Vincent & Ian.
- **12/11** 'Tax on Tuesdays' discussion series including political party panel on hosted by the Institute Governance and Policy Studies (Victoria University), Public Service Association, and Tax Justice Aotearoa (visit them [HERE](#))—Paul.
- **18/11** Whakamana tāngata: Where to from here? - Child Poverty Action Group Welfare Summit 18 November in Wellington - <https://www.cpag.org.nz/news/cpag-summit-puts-the-spotlight-on-welfare/>—Paul & Vincent.
- **22/11** Attended Youth Homelessness Symposium—Vincent.
- **25/11** Meet with Dr Michael Kwok from the Billy Graham Evangelical Association (Australia office)—Ronji.

Internal Salvation Army

- **26 & 27/10** Northern & Midland Division Māori Ministry Hui—Ian.
- **08/11** Salvation Army Social Programme Director's meeting—Ian.
- **08/11** The opening of the Te Hononga Tāngata Salvation Army Royal Oak social housing—Ian.
- **12/11** Mihi whakatau for Envoy Anihera Carroll to the Midland Divisional HQ—Ian.
- **12/11** Met with staff from Royal Oak and Northern DHQ to discuss credit issues, legal representation etc—Ronji.
- **16/11** Māori Ministry Council Hui—Ian.
- **17/11** Mihi whakatau for Ken Te Tau the Māori Ministry Cultural Advisor to the Central Division—Ian.

We welcome your feedback

PO Box 76249, Manukau, Auckland 2241

Phone (09) 262 2332 • social.policy@salvationarmy.org.nz
twitter.com/SPPU • facebook.com/SPPUNZ

