**SIGNIFICANCE TO NEW ZEALAND**

**A negative consequence for New Zealand society was that the protests polarised the New Zealand population. The outburst of violence and confrontation pushed thousands of New Zealanders onto the streets in a debate that divided the nation. Each New Zealander had to decide, eventually whether he or she was for or against the tour. Every time one of the 15 games of the tour was held, rugby fans filled the grounds while sizeable protest crowds showed their opposition outside on the streets.**

**Brent Edwards, a reporter from the Otago Daily Times in 1981, claimed that the tour was a time when New Zealand “lost its innocence”. The image of New Zealand as a cosy little rugby-mad country had been shattered. The significant impact for New Zealand society was the fact that New Zealander turned on New Zealander. Tolerance became a forgotten word, and the tour forged a deep division in our society, a split that did not allow for neutrality in families and communities.**

**Later in 1981 there was a General Election in NZ. Muldoon’s support of the Tour had won him support in Provincial NZ but he had lost some support in the cities. The Muldoon government was re-elected in the 1981 election, but its majority was reduced from four seats to just one.**

**The issue of Race Relations in New Zealand was highlighted. After 1981, race relations was more openly discussed and increasingly race relations issues in NZ were dealt with, with greater urgency.**

**The Police had used much violence against ordinary NZers. Even though there was much sympathy for the Police being “caught in the middle”, many people increasingly viewed the Police with distrust.**

**Some rugby players retired from rugby eg All Black Captain Graeme Mourie. The image of rugby had been tarnished. Some parents were reluctant to allow their children to play rugby. Rugby playing numbers began declining, while the numbers playing alternative sports, such as Soccer, began increasing.**

**The NZRFU constitution contained much high-minded wording about promoting the image of rugby and New Zealand, and generally being a benefit to society. In 1985 the NZRFU proposed an All Black tour of South Africa. Two lawyers successfully sued the NZRFU, claiming such a tour would breach the NZRFU's constitution. The High Court stopped the All Black tour. The 1981 Springbok tour of New Zealand could arguably have been stopped by the courts: it is interesting that protest groups did not attempt such a remedy within the "system" in 1981. The All Blacks did not officially tour South Africa until after the fall of the apartheid régime in the 1990’s.**