

# The S-Factor: Taha Wairua

## The Dimension of the Human Spirit

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This paper has been prepared for the Royal Commission on Social Policy on whether planners and policymakers need to care about:

1. anything more than the sum of body, brain and breath in the case of the individual person;
2. - or anything more than the sum of the population in the case of society;
3. or anything more than the usefulness to the human species of other species and of matter, in the case of the environment.

The paper posits, that there is something more, which, though it defies measurement, has such reality and importance that to discount it is perilous and that to provide for it is good. The paper names this something: the S-Factor. The purpose of the paper is to challenge the belief-system of social scientists, planners, and policymakers who discount the reality and the importance of this dimension to society and to the individual, and to make practical recommendations on how they can take the S-Factor into account.

### Clarifying the Indefinable

#### The Transcendent and the Immanent

*Ah, mokapuna, but your life began even before you were born in Waituhi . . . ara, you have eternity in you also.*

## WitiHimaera, The Matriarch

*The great spirit has made everything beautiful in its time and also has put eternity into the minds of humans.*

## The Beginning and the End

*I am aged in aeons, being Te Po, the Night, that came from Te Kore, the nothing ... in my womb lay Papatuanuku (the Earth) who was conceived in Darkness, born into Darkness—and who matured in Darkness, and in Darkness became mated with the Sky. Then Papatuanuku too conceived, and bore many children.*

## Patricia Grace, Wahine Toa

*Quite unexpectedly the top blew off: And there, there overhead, there, there hung over ... There in the starless dark the poise, the hover, There with vast wings across the cancelled skies, There in the sudden darkness the black pall, Of nothing, nothing, nothing—nothing at all*

## Archibald Macleish, Poems, 1924-1933

### Communication of Mystery

*As you do not know how the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not understand the work of the spirit who is the source of everything.*

## Ecclesiastes 11.5

*These great summary symbols that refer to the totality of being, to the transcendent dimension of reality, and the differentiated terminologies which have grown up around them, cannot be dismissed as "subjective" just because they are not in a simple sense "objective" in their reference. They are neither objective nor subjective, neither cosmological nor psychological. Rather, they are relational symbols that are intended to overcome precisely such dichotomies of conceptualization and bring together the coherence of the whole experience.*

## Robert Bellah, Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World

There was a famous experiment in which human babies were well-fed, well-clothed, and well-provided for in every material way— but with the minimum of handling, and without relationship and human inter-reaction. The babies all died, for no apparent reason.

What did Americans respond to in the Te Maori exhibition that other art exhibitions or anthropological displays had failed to elicit? What was the reality being manifested when kaumatua insisted that the taonga 'be kept warm'?

Why is the old puhutakawa tree near the glass and steel tower in which the Royal Commission is located of more value left standing, than chopped up for firewood, timber, or pulp?

When the Victorians built Coronation Streets to house the poor, the poor often still achieved community richness and family togetherness in their 2-up, 2-down dwellings. So why, when twentieth-century planners stacked the poor vertically in high rise estates with better heating, plumbing, etc., were the poor unable to achieve community identity and cohesive social functioning?

And when one compares a corpse with someone in a coma, what is it that is present in the latter that has departed the former? Neither manifests intelligence or consciousness; so what dimension of reality gives worth and value to the person in the coma?

When a suicidal individual asks you, 'what is the point of going on?' how do you answer? Do you remind her of her financial assets; her family ties; her job, her status and possessions; her stake in this country's forests, mineral resources, land, waters; and her physically healthy body and her brain potential? A relatively pathological society (New Zealand's levels of domestic violence, rape, incest, prison populations, mental sickness and adolescent suicide are abnormally high) has asked this Royal Commission, "What is the point?" How can this question be answered without including the dimension of the human spirit—the S-factor?

The S-factor stands for something real—something witnessed to and experienced since pre-history. Maori people sum up this something as the taha wairua (literally, the side, or aspect, of flow that is deep, insubstantial, and spiritual). Religious people in the Graeco- Semitic traditions talk about the soul's quest for God. Humanists talk about human potential and centering. Psychologists talk about the psyche, the mind, consciousness, mental health. New age people talk about wholeness, the holistic. Materialists name what they deny the existence of: spirit. Whatever. I summarise all these and more, as the S-factor, and in doing so, acknowledge that it has no boundaries.

### [A Reality](#)

People whose background is in the social sciences are often frightened of the word 'spirituality'. For a start, they define it very narrowly as meaning 'religion' or 'belief in God, Soul, afterlife' or 'worship and ritual'. They fear that to admit that there is any reality behind the word is to open a chink in the armour of secular society through which will rush the hordes and fanatics of theocracy, divine-right monarchs, priestly princes and potentates, and blood sacrifice.

Yet the word is necessary to define a reality much larger than any organised religion or cult. Every primal society has been so permeated with this reality that there are often no words to describe its aspects. Early anthropologists

sometimes described a society as having no religion: only to realise years later that every waking action was experienced as spiritual and that to belong to the society could not be separated from belonging to its religion. Each pre-European Maori tribe was such a society: every mountain, river, living thing had spirit and every person, every relationship, every skill, every human activity had a spiritual dimension: the taha wairua.

The current myth in western culture is that it is secular and that the only place left for God is to be God of the gaps. Yet while organised religion for many has become marginalised, spiritual experience has not. It has simply been renamed. The soul has become the psyche. The minister has been replaced by the psychologist and the social worker. The male god in the kirk has been replaced by polytheism: the goddess of the beauty contest or the movie screen; the god of the Senate, or the sports stadium, or the local guerilla movement; and the age-old gods of money, body, sex, love, and war. People are still devotees of these gods, and rituals abound.

And for those who have been abandoned by or have abandoned all gods including the I-Thou that the theologian Martin Buber finds in relationship and defines as God, for them there are the age-old symptoms of spiritual malaise: alienation, sickness, non-coping, cynicism, apathy, rage, despair, suicide, war.

There is something in the human person that responds to, and seeks and craves, much that is intangible and cannot be perceived by any of the five senses. It takes a unique form in each individual; to equate it with personality however is reductionist, for the experience of empathy is that it has a transcendent collective aspect as well. Yet to equate it with culture is also to be reductionist for then the uniqueness of each person's psychic perception and experience is discounted. And to equate it with values, ideas, or abstract principles, e.g., of beauty, truth, and justice, is to overlook its personal aspect and its relational aspect.

That 'something' in the individual is most simply termed 'spirit' and in society is most simply termed 'spirituality': and the forms each takes are myriad and unlimited. Organised religion is only one form that the word 'spirituality' can take, and the Christian concept of a soul to be saved is only one form that the word 'spirit' can take.

As for the word 'God': that too is a concept that takes more forms than can be easily be listed. Some definitions from theologians like Feuerbach, Tillich and Buber are the collective projection of all that is of value; the courage to be—existential courage, the ground of being (also found in early woman mystics);

that which is between I and Thou; that which created everything and sustains everything that is (Hebrew theology); whatever is ultimate for someone; that which constitutes identity and connectedness (primal religions); that which is in the quantum leap, which transforms in time and space (process theology); that which affirms self-love and validity (feminist theology); that which frees and empowers (liberation theology).

You may not understand these cryptic definitions but that does not mean that the experience and orientation they attempt to describe are not embedded in your mental furniture. And even if you think this is not so, the majority of people in the world still consciously believe in Spirit in its sense of Universal Divinity. And the majority of wars (and therefore the goal of much economic production) have a basis in religion.

The S-factor then encompasses spirit, spirituality, and the Spirit, be this monotheistic or polytheistic. Or you could simply accept that the S-factor is the Something-factor: 'Something' representing that which defies being placed into the categories of ethics, psychology, medicine, and sociology.

If the S-factor is so vast, so diverse; so unique to each person, each society, each age; so impossible to describe fully or measure; what relevance does it have to those who govern us, who plan directions for our future as a nation? Is it not enough to legislate for freedom of conscience and religion, and freedom of worship, assembly, speech, and thought?

The simple answer is no, this is not enough. People need inspiration: if they do not perceive the S-factor in the framing of legislation, the functioning of government, and the outcomes of social policy, they will question the validity of these and will not cooperate. Ultimately they will withdraw their mandate.

Economic policy without the S-factor is seen as soul-destroying. Social work and delivery of social welfare services without the S-factor are seen as cold charity, or bureaucratic and impersonal. Housing without the S-factor is not conducive to home pride and community formation. Health care without the S-factor treats symptoms mechanically, leaving profound malaise to produce other symptoms.

Transport without the S-factor neglects important community links, aesthetics, and individual empowerment. Education without the S-factor gives a new generation no *raison d'être*, no choice, no self-love, no altruism, no creativity, no criteria for morality, no hope. Prisons without the S-factor can only punish; they cannot transform or rehabilitate. Mental hospitals without the S-factor cannot heal or cure or comfort as they should.

Most important of all, when people are being appointed to positions of power as planners and policymakers and bureaucrats, they need to have an appreciation of the reality of the importance of the S-factor in themselves and in those they serve. If they haven't, they are very very dangerous people and likely to be tunnel-visioned, shortsighted, or indeed blind.

### **The Conflict in Methodology**

To omit the S-factor is easier than to include it if one has a measurement-based approach to social realities. What can be measured is automatically respectable, valid, and authoritative. Correspondingly, what cannot be measured is suspect, dangerous, and less likely to find acceptance.

Social policymakers often attain their decision-making status and power on the basis of qualifications in the social sciences, e.g., education, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and history. For decades, those in these disciplines have trained students to aspire to pseudo-scientific respectability by a heavy dependence on statistic producing research, and to avoid reliance on anything that smacks of the subjective, the emotional, or the intangible. The terms 'hard' and 'soft' have emerged to describe what is admirable and acceptable and what is not; the phallic connotations of the choice of terms is no accident, for the former academic approach has been developed in a context of patriarchal control of academia, and the critique of this approach has been led by feminist thinkers.

The submissions to the Royal Commission from individuals have tended to use the 'soft' approach to communication. Group submissions, and the contribution of experts and consultants will have tended to prefer the 'hard' approach. The trouble is that people feel apologetic about tending towards the former. I have heard in meetings, from people struggling with profoundly felt experience and aspirations, statements such as this: 'I can sound awfully airy-fairy about this, and I don't really want to.' Or, 'We've got to have a definition of social welfare that feels hard, not vague and waffly and fuzzy round the edges. What does it actually mean to New Zealanders?' (What it actually means is diverse, often contradictory, emotionally expressed and spiritually perceived; no wonder the speaker felt intimidated.) Those whose methodology is figure-based (measuring, quantifying, producing compartmentalised paradigms) have an advantage over other contributors in that they can produce, relatively easily, obviously authoritative and intellectual, position papers.

Those whose approach to understanding and generating decisions is based on lateral thinking, intuition, maverick creativity, religious insights, emotional

subjectivity, life experience, and common sense are correspondingly disadvantaged. What they end up producing is not so obviously respectable and authoritative. It can more easily be discredited or discounted using patrist, cerebral criteria. Yet the soft approach can be a better method, leading to truth and good sense, provided it is rigorous and honest.

The hard approach is limited because of its built-in necessity for omissions and for ordering in priority. This necessity automatically blocks out possibilities. Sifting is an either—or process: to include this item, that item must be omitted. Once an item is omitted, it cannot be developed or held in reserve to reappear when new circumstances make its validity more obvious.

If the Royal Commission uses a hard approach to its task, it will use rational, linear thinking and number-based data-processing rather than intuitive or lateral thinking and multivariant dataprocessing. The former or hard approach will do head-counts of who wants what, and will sift and synthesize so that contradictions are eliminated. The latter or soft approach will be aware of criteria that may give more value to a minority view than to a majority view, and will retain contradictions and work creatively with them so that options and alternatives are produced rather than ultimatums and a single order of priorities.

In trying to come to terms with the S-factor, hard methodology is unsuitable: only soft methodology is likely to provide an entrée.

### [The Terms of Reference of the Royal Commission](#)

The terms of reference of the Royal Commission on Social Policy have a spiritual content and specifically mention many matters that belong to the dimension of the human spirit. The following paragraphs examine some of the actual words and expressions used, and indicate their links with the S-factor.

*fair, just, humanitarianism, values, identity, cultures, understanding, respect, diversity, desirable, responsibility, commitment, equality, partner and act in good faith fairly and reasonably towards each other.*

All these words and phrases used in the Royal Commission's terms of reference belong to the dimension of the human spirit.

*Dignity for Individuals, Families, and Communities ... a recognition of the uniqueness and worth of each.*

What constitutes this uniqueness: has difference of personality no spiritual dimension? What constitutes worth: has difference of contribution and dependency no spiritual dimension?

*Self-Determination for Individuals, Families, and Communities ...the right to make decisions for themselves.*

What are the criteria of decision-making—merely material self interest? If decisions are to include ethical and moral considerations, what is the touchstone for determining the nature of good, the undesirability of evil? Is this not spiritual territory?

*a sense of belonging*

One can meet and mix with other New Zealanders as one of them, yet be very lonely in the crowd. Clothes, food, participation in activity, house, possessions, job status, income, access to services: all these can pass as average, normal, acceptable. But what of the inner feeling of belonging or of alienation—has this not a spiritual dimension? Why do so many dropouts, protestors, radicals, alternative life-stylers, prophets, contemplatives forsake all the material trappings of belonging to witness to something else again that ferments in them for better or worse (e.g., Mother Teresa, Charles Manson)?

*to develop their potential*

Is this merely potential to be a cog in the workforce, a statistic, a producer and consumer, a reproductive agent, a conformer, a performer? Or does not a human being have a potential for spiritual experience also?

*to lead a life that is personally fulfilling*

Have not millions expressed their quest for personal fulfilment primarily through tribal, world, or personal religions—or the modern substitutes for these in the human potential movement? Real spirituality is not icing on the cake, it is not a once-a-week exercise: it permeates every second, every place, every relationship. Social services cannot exist in isolation from it; providing houses, hostels, hospitals, hospices will not contribute to the personal fulfilment of their occupants unless the S-factor is taken into account by architects and administrators.

*wealth and resources of the nation*

Cash income, valuable assets such as property, stocks and shares, household goods, business assets; forests, soils, rivers and mineral deposits, schools, hospitals and roads': all are mentioned in the terms of reference before the people, information, knowledge and qualifications'. But the wealth and resources of a nation are more than the sum total of all these parts. Locked in the language of a people are time capsules called 'words' that are shorthand for experience, much of its spiritual, e.g., in the Maori word 'hau' or the Maori words



'tapu', 'mana', 'ora' and 'ao'. Expressed in the artworks of a people—the carvings, the paintings, the dances, the embroidery, the writings, the proverbs—is the S-factor. And the worth of each art work or form is in proportion to the depth of S-factor present. No one can measure or quantify the wisdom, or shared history, or shared aspirations, of a nation. There are lenses that all of the nation's people view life through that are unique and profoundly spiritual

### Reporting the S-Factor

The following passage summarises the relationship between the existence of the S-factor and social wellbeing. It has been drafted in a form that would be appropriate for inclusion in the Royal Commission's report.

Many members of society in New Zealand, both non-Maori and Maori, regard spirituality or the taha wairua, as a major dimension of social wellbeing, which cannot ever be fully defined, and which resists measurement- biased evaluation by social scientists.

No definition of social wellbeing which excludes this 'S-factor' can be considered adequate. The corollary is that social policy makers who ignore or deny the S-factor endanger social wellbeing.

Either for this reason, or because of the expectation and belief-systems of the common people, the final report of the Royal Commission should make a place for acknowledging the S-factor and for recommending that impacts of social policies and programmes in terms of the S-factor be considered from the outset of planning, monitored throughout implementation, and reviewed after completion. (See Figure 1 for suggested checklist for social policy makers and planners.)

### Links Between the S-Factor and Social Policy:

- Freedom of conscience, belief, religious adherence and practice, and worship.

- Preservation of sacred places, buildings, objects, customs, and literature.

- Access to wellsprings of empowerment and affirmation, e.g., wilderness, distant horizons.

- Access to people with mana, spiritual experience, and spiritual skills.

- Access to spiritual communities and meeting places, and freedom of assembly; the right to live in an open or closed religious community, e.g., a monastery.

- Opportunity to give and receive childhood S-factor education especially:

- criteria for morality; -
- motivation for altruism;
- empowerment for fulfilment of potential;
- and - grounds for personal and collective hope.

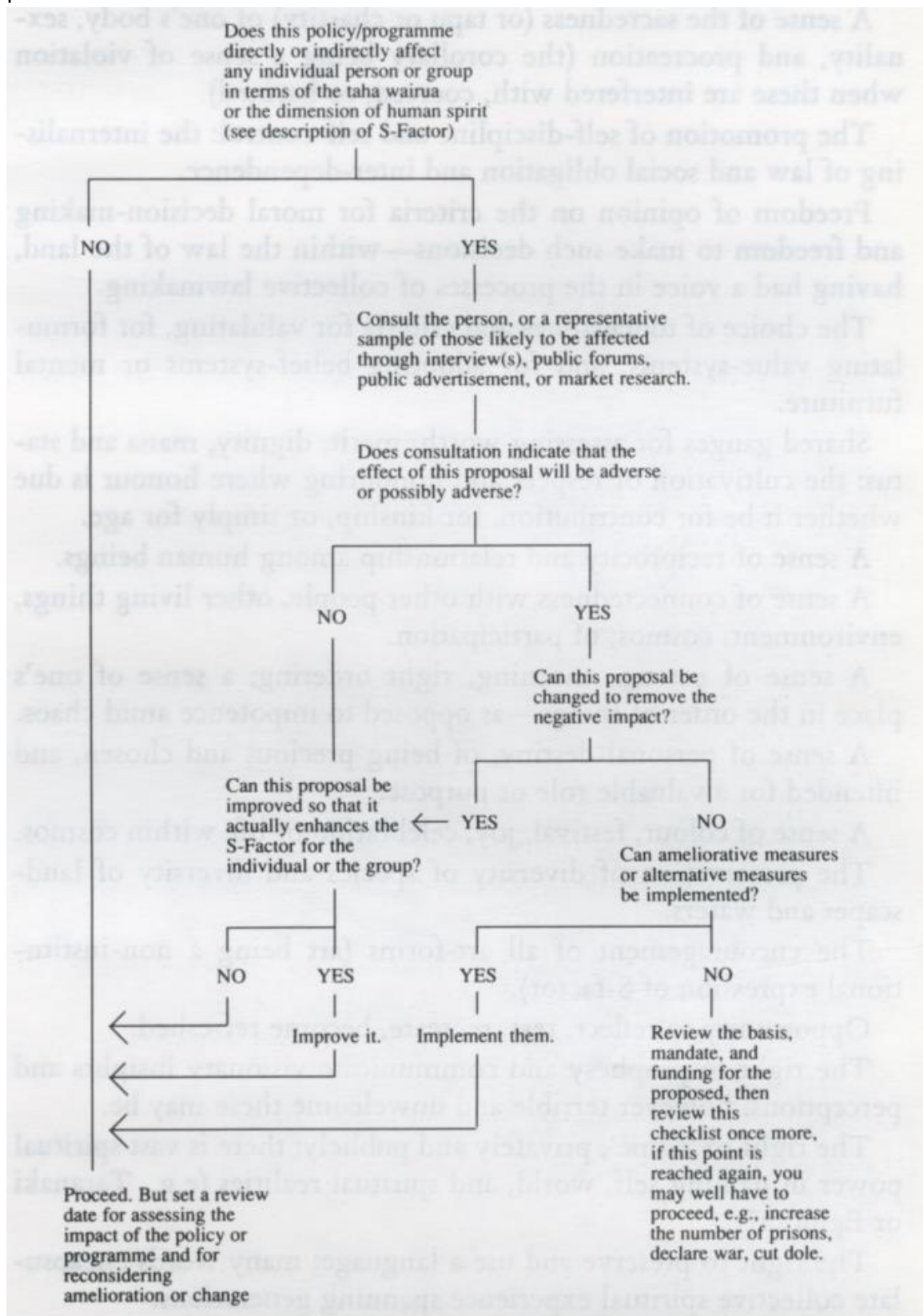
Access to pastoral care and the opportunity to minister spiritually to others and to transmit received and inspired wisdom.

Freedom to respond to the sense of duty and to fulfil moral, spiritual, religious, and relational obligations.

A feeling of having roots, turangawaewae, belonging to motherland or fatherland, feeling bonded to, and nurtured by Aotearoa/New Zealand, whether non-Maori or Maori, whether iwi or tauiwi, tangata tuatahi or tangata tuarua.

Access to at least a subsistence level of economic and physical wellbeing, which is a precondition for spiritual wellbeing.

FIGURE 1: Suggested checklist on S-Factor for social policy markets and planners



Note: When checklists based on other criteria (e.g., Women's needs, Maori values) reveal adverse impacts, the above checklist should also be referred to.

A minimal level of freedom from household violence; street violence; civil, international, or global war and the prospect of continuing peace, justice, and freedom.

A sense of the sacredness (or tapu or chastity) of one's body, sexuality, and procreation (the corollary being a sense of violation when these are interfered with, coerced, or harmed).

The promotion of self-discipline and self-control: the internalising of law and social obligation and inter-dependence.

Freedom of opinion on the criteria for moral decision-making and freedom to make such decisions—within the law of the land, having had a voice in the processes of collective lawmaking.

The choice of touchstones and criteria for validating, for formulating value-systems, and for adopting belief-systems or mental furniture.

Shared gauges for assessing worth, merit, dignity, mana and status: the cultivation of respect and honouring where honour is due whether it be for contribution, for kinship, or simply for age.

A sense of reciprocity and relationship among human beings.

A sense of connectedness with other people, other living things, environment, cosmos; of participation.

A sense of pattern, meaning, right ordering; a sense of one's place in the order of things—as opposed to impotence amid chaos.

A sense of personal destiny, of being precious and chosen, and intended for a valuable role or purpose.

A sense of colour, festival, joy, celebration of life within cosmos. The preservation of diversity of species and diversity of landscapes and waters

The encouragement of all art-forms (art being a non-institutional expression of S-factor).

Opportunity to reflect, rest, recreate, become refreshed.

The right to prophesy and communicate visionary insights and perceptions, however terrible and unwelcome these may be.

The right to 'name', privately and publicly: there is vast spiritual power in naming self, world, and spiritual realities (e.g., Taranaki or Egmont?).

The right to preserve and use a language: many words encapsulate collective spiritual experience spanning generations.

Protection of the intellectual from persecution, censorship, and the crushing of curiosity.

Protection for the sensitive from brutalising.

Encouragement, not clobbering, for 'tall tulips', for those with talent and vision, for entrepreneurs, for initiative and creativity.

Protection from being spiritually diminished and coerced by structures, processes, and institutions, e.g., being identified by number not name.

Jobs, housing, services, city planning and management, land use, etc., which does not diminish the S-factor.

Opportunity in terms of land allocation and housing flexibility to live in an extended family (based on blood or choice or both, e.g., Centrepont).

Access to adult status (often denied to those who are never employed, never educated, or handicapped).

The fostering of, and transmission of, skills of parenting, homemaking, peacemaking, reconciling, mediating, facilitating, and building community.

The countering of materialism and consumerism.

An understanding of what causes inhumanity and what promotes humanitarianism.

A tenderness and compassion for the weak, the foolish, the losers, the dependant, the handicapped, the deprived, the imprisoned, the refugees, the marginal, the oppressed, the victims, the maimed, the ill, the dying: a commitment to share, heal or support, encourage or empower.

Especial consideration of the S-factor in questions of mental health care and institutions.

Access to healing for psychic disorders and spiritual malaise, which can be manifested as mate Maori, musu, apathy, fatigue, addiction, violence, fanaticism, despair and suicide.

The ability to achieve holistic health, autonomy, and psychic maturity and coping.

The right to struggle against spiritual barriers or tangible barriers that impede the flowing and flowering of the spirit.

Faith in virtue, honour, and trust; hope for self, family, community, iwi, society, world, other species, and the future; love for self, family, community, iwi, society, world, other species, and future generations as yet unborn.

A sense of contact with Source, God, Matrix, Ground of existential courage, Universal Spirit, or Multiple Deities.

## Conclusion

To accept that the S-factor is fundamental to the Royal Commission on Social Policy's terms of reference is to lay the basis for a holistic, cohesive approach to social policy. It is the S-factor which is the glue binding together all the self-interest, all the diversity, all the contradictions and clashes. It is the web in which each element can have a place, it is the circle that surrounds, it is the ground that supports, it is the illumination.

Acceptance of the S-factor affects the way the Royal Commission operates as it works towards its report, affects the form and presentation of the report, and affects the status of the report.

To reject the S-factor is to fragment what should be whole and to obscure what should be clear. If the Royal Commission tries to see its task through shattered lens it will not see so clearly.

The social scientists of our so-called secular age have tried to ignore the S-factor, explain it away, and redefine it using pseudoscientific cerebral terminology—primarily because it resists measurement and manipulation. In as much as they have done this, they have been divorced from reality.

And the technocrats, atheists, agnostics, humanists, and cynics who believe that total secularism has been achieved or is achievable are as much locked into an idiosyncratic, unprovable belief-system as are their adversaries. Their attempts to eliminate the S-factor; bypass or repress it; or restrict its meaning to piety, religiosity, and superstition—are wilfully reductionist. Beyond the reach of the human brain and the microscope or telescope is the Tao. You can gild the cage of the well-fed nightingale, but you can't make it sing.

And you can't stop the common people continuing to experience and believe in the S-factor, and behave accordingly. Social planners and

policymakers who refuse to admit this may well encounter passive resistance, blocking, failures of schemes and projects, and even rebellion.

It is true that the vocabulary available to work with the S-factor is contentious and at times polluted with religious fervour, sentiment, and prejudice. But administrators, teachers, medics, architects, social workers who have an awareness of, a respect for, and a commitment to the enhancement of, the human spirit will find words to communicate their perception.

And then we might find we are a people of vision, a people of wisdom, whose cities have faces, whose cultures have heart and compassion, and whose offspring have heritage and hope.

Further Reading Johnson, Roger A. et al., *Critical Issues in Modern Religion*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1973. 466 VOLUME III

Appendix A Head of State's Observations on the Operation of the S-factor in Government and Society 2300 years ago.

I, the author, have been a King. And I applied my mind to seek and to search out by intelligence all that is done under the sun. I searched with my mind how to cheer my body with alcohol—my mind still guiding me with intelligence—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for human beings to do during the few days of their lives.

I made great works, I built houses and engaged in horticulture; I made gardens, parks, orchards, pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. I had many employees; also great possessions of herd and flocks; I also gathered for myself silver and gold and treasure; I got entertainers, both men and women, and many lovers.

So I became great and surpassed all who were before me; also my learning remained with me, And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them; kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. Then I considered all that my hands had done and all the effort I had spent in doing it, and decided it was utterly pointless, a waste of time, futility.

For I have seen the business that Divinity has given to human beings to be busy with. Divinity has made everything beautiful in its time and also has put eternity into the minds of humans.

Human beings cannot find out what Divinity has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live, also that it is Divinity's gift to human beings that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their work. I know that whatever the Universal Spirit does, endures for ever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it, the Universal Spirit has made this so, in order that the human beings should respect the domain of the Spirit.

Again I saw all the oppressions that are practised under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On the side of the oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them—Moreover, I saw under the sun that in the place of justice, even there, there was wrong. I said in my heart, there will be a reckoning for those that do good and those that cause harm, for the Spirit has appointed a time for every matter and for every work.

Sweet is the sleep of a worker but the surfeit of the rich will not let them sleep.

And again I saw what a waste it is when a person who has no one, no child or family, works without ceasing yet his eyes are never satisfied with riches and he never asks, 'For whom am I working?' This is an unhappy business. Another evil I have seen under the sun, and it lies heavy upon people: people who were given wealth, resources, and status, so that they lacked nothing of all they desired, yet God does not give them power to enjoy these. It is a sore affliction.

Again I saw that under the sun the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to the intelligent, nor favour to men of skill.

I have seen also this example of wisdom under the sun, and it seemed great to me. There was a small country and they were attacked by a super power. But there was found in the small nation a poor person who was wise and by their wisdom the small nation was saved. Yet no one remembered that poor person. But I say that wisdom is better than might though it be despised and words not heeded. The words of the wise heard in quiet are better than the shouting of a Governor among fools. Wisdom



is better than weapons of war. One fool or corrupt person destroys much good.

No human being has power to retain the spirit, or authority over the day of death. There is no discharge from war. Nor will corruption save those who are given to it.

I said in my heart with regard to the human species that the spirit is testing them to show them that they are but one species among many. For the fate of the human species and the fate of all the other species is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all had the same spirit, and the human species has no advantage over the others. To think otherwise is vanity. Who knows whether the spirit of a human goes upward and the spirit of an animal goes down to the earth? So I saw that there is nothing better than that each human should enjoy their work, for that is their destiny; who can bring them to see what will be after them?

Author's adaptation from Ecclesiastes

The Last Word on the Measurement of the S-factor

Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurement— surely you know—Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together?

Have you commanded the morning since your days began and caused the dawn to know its place? have you entered into the springs of the sea or walked in the recesses of the deep? Have the gates of death been revealed to you? Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth? Where is the way to the dwelling of light, and where is the place of darkness, that you may take it to its territory and that you may discern the paths to its home? Which is the way to the place where light is distributed or where the east wind is scattered upon the earth?

Has the rain a father, or who has begotten the drops of dew? From whose womb did the ice come from, and who has given birth to the hoarfrost of heaven? Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades or loose the cords of Orion? Do you know the ordinances of the heavens? Can you establish their rule on the earth? Who has put wisdom in the clouds or given understanding to the mists? Who can number the clouds? Who has put

wisdom in the inward parts, or who has given understanding to the heart?  
Shall he that contendeth with me instruct me?

Author's adaptation from Joab.