

STATE OF OUR NATION WAITANGI DAY 2009

Abstract

The NW Waitangi Whangarei application states the following purpose for the State of the Nation addresses on Waitangi Day: “Looking to our country’s history with an eye to what the future may hold”, “to contemplate the full meaning of the concept of partnership with one nation, two partners, and many cultures”.

My intention is to use my PhD research to present two concepts – that of Pakeha in conversation with Maori over time, and that of Pakeha changing by taking steps from a position of indifference towards a listening relationship. I address a form of cultural racism, and invite responses from Pakeha as individuals and as groups. My calls are for funding for civic Treaty education, and for Treaty training for journalists & media.

Kia ora everyone.

People in each generation look at their legacy and reflect and ponder – have we done everything we could in our time in history to make our world a better place for everyone? What is left undone? What is there still to do for future generations?

So, halfway through my life as a New Zealand-born child of Dutch immigrants, I am taking this opportunity to ponder on how we are doing as Pakeha, the Treaty partner named in the preamble to the Treaty on behalf of ‘those who would come later’ – on behalf of all immigrants. What do I think of how Pakeha have done?

To answer this question for myself, I did a PhD. I’m a community psychologist, so I looked at how the history of Pakeha/Maori relations might be seen as a conversation between two communities of people. I asked - How have Pakeha conducted ourselves in that conversation? What do our responses look like, in relation to our widely held Pakeha values of decency and fairness?

What I found can be illustrated by some examples from our New Zealand history:

A ‘conversation’ between Treaty partners

Initially, Pakeha engaged respectfully with Maori (albeit with the settlers determined to disrupt the sovereignty of a numerically dominant indigenous population). The relationship was not yet colonial, but rather one between two parties considering each other as political equals, as sovereign nations. The British acceptance of the Declaration of Independence and of the flag of the Confederated Tribes demonstrates this. And the Treaty that followed was, again from the preamble, intended for Maori and Pakeha to live here together, in a peaceful way.

However, as we now know, the Treaty signing was seen by the British as a cession of sovereignty - even though, as we also know, the text that Captain Hobson signed that day was a Maori text, *te Tiriti o Waitangi*, in which no sovereignty was ceded. It can

be useful when considering how settlers and Maori proceeded after 1840, to imagine that the English and Maori texts of the Treaty of Waitangi could be said to express, respectively, a colonial view and an indigenous view of the intended relationship between the parties.

So, what has been the communication from Maori in this conversation between Treaty partners?

Within a year of being the first to sign the Treaty, Hone Heke had cut down the flagpole he had gifted to the Governor, considering that the Maori flag should fly side by side with the Union Jack – that is what *te Tiriti*, the text he had signed, implied to him. Since that first symbolic communication, Maori challenge, protest and argument about the dishonouring of the Treaty of Waitangi has been continuous.

The injustices of colonisation, the settler's control of land, economy and institutions have been topic of heated discussion on marae since then and continues today. These sentiments have been communicated to Pakeha through armed resistance, unarmed resistance, court cases, petitions and submissions, land occupations and media statements. There is no doubt that Maori have communicated their views of the injustices of colonisation over the past 170 years.

And how have we replied? This is the question today. How have we conducted ourselves in that conversation?

In 1860, when land sales dried up, our engagement with Maori shifted to one of hostility. With the British army retired from the field, and population levels even, Pakeha could, and did, use the methods of majoritarian democracy and legislation to assert their view of a “civilised” society. There are, as we now know from the historical research of the Waitangi Tribunal, many examples of colonial brutality. But you could also see the Pakeha position during the century from 1860 to the 1970s as one of brutal **indifference** towards our Treaty partners. To illustrate this colonial indifference, let me remind you of some samples of the ‘conversation’ between Maori and Pakeha in that century.

In the early 1850s, in a move considered by some scholars to be the primary breach of *te Tiriti*, the British unilaterally established a “Responsible settler government” through the New Zealand Constitution Act, 1852 (McLintock, 1958). Maori were not explicitly excluded but there was no provision for Maori political and territorial authority, which left most Maori disqualified from participation. The settlers took for granted their right to land for their profit and agricultural systems, and their right to assimilate the native population into the settler's way of life, language and institutions. The settlers consistently perceived the negative effects of such aggressive colonisation as confirmation of the ‘natural’ superiority of Pakeha.

In 1858, Wiremu Kingi, as senior political leader in his area, told Governor Gore Brown he opposed the sale of Waitara by his nephew. In reply, Gore Brown ‘waived’ or declared unimportant Kingi's right of chieftanship over his nephew. As we know, his nephew sold the land, resulting in the Taranaki land wars, and the ensuing atrocities.

In 1881 King Tawhiao of the Kingitanga and four other leaders travelled to England to petition Queen Victoria about Maori self-government, as provided for in the 1852 Constitution Act, since they were excluded from voting and parliament. The delegation was snubbed and referred back to the New Zealand government. And what did our government say, 5 years later when they eventually replied? They dismissed as “unreasonable and absurd” Tawhiao’s petition for a Maori Council to administer Maori rights under the Treaty of Waitangi. In 1882, a Ngapuhi deputation to England appealed to the Queen a Royal Commission to investigate and rectify laws that contravene the Treaty, and permission to establish a Maori Parliament. Again, the deputation was snubbed, and belittled locally.

It goes on, with Maori ‘speaking’ through the Kingitanga, the Kohimarama covenant about the Treaty and at Parihaka, and Pakeha ‘not listening’.

In 1894, at the time when the Maori population census was at its lowest, Hone Heke, grand-nephew of his namesake, presented his Native Rights Bill in Parliament to give a Maori Parliament power to govern Maori. Pakeha MPs streamed out of the Debating Chamber to prevent its discussion.

Coming into this century, in 1920, Wiremu Ratana began his mission of pursuing political objectives for Maori through a religious vehicle, and announced as he travelled to England: “I will shake hands with King George and lay before him the Treaty of Waitangi and I will ask him: is this the Treaty you made, what do you think of it? He will not be able to deny it” (Simpson, 1979, p. 227). When the British Crown ignored him, Ratana returned to organise a mass petition, with 30,000 signatures, to have the Treaty embodied in statute, gaining over. When the first Ratana MP, Eruera Tirikatene, presented the petition to the House in 1932, he began his maiden speech with: “My policy is to stand for the rights and privileges of the whole Maori race as embodied in the Treaty of Waitangi...” (Simpson, 1979, p. 229). But, having seen the petition tabled for all to see, and having accepted the considerable constituency Ratana brought with him, the Labour government of the time delayed for 13 years before considering it. The response, when it came, was the government instruction to hang a copy of the Treaty in every school. In fact, it was during these years, as Ratana’s submission lay unread by our Parliament, that Pakeha speechmakers at the 1940 centenary of the Treaty, spoke of the “best race relations in the world”.

I concluded in my research that that century’s conversation was one of callous indifference by Pakeha towards Maori .

So, did anything change for my generation, who were teenagers and 20 year olds in the 1970s?

In the 1970s a new generation of Maori began to use protest methods readily broadcast by modern media, such as marches and occupations. The ‘new’ activism, expressing what had been said on the marae (and to the settler Parliaments and British monarch) for generations, was reported by the media to a Pakeha public. For instance, the stories of Bastion Point and of Raglan Golf Course and many other local occupations. It was through these protests and occupations that the longstanding Maori critique of colonisation first became audible to the Pakeha civilian world. For

the first time in colonial history it received an organised response from some Pakeha citizens.

So how did we respond, now that some of us were hearing Maori speaking? A scattering of antiracism groups formed in the 1960s and 70s, some churches took stands against racism and in support of Maori. Some Pakeha joined the Maori Land March in 1975, and supported the land occupations in the later 1970s. With protests by Maori now growing at Waitangi itself, and the Hikoi ki Waitangi starting up in 1983, there was by 1984, for the first time, a call and response about the Treaty of Waitangi between Maori and Pakeha – for the first time, a **conversation** between Maori and Pakeha about the Treaty.

A major hui was called at Ngaruawahia in September, 1984, by Te Runanga Whakawhanaunga i nga Hahi o Aotearoa (Maori Council of Churches) to discuss the “legal, moral, political and historical ramifications of the signing of the Treaty” (Waitangi Action Committee, 1985, p. 1). The hui was the first of a series of gatherings originally proposed as a more conservative alternative to the Great Hikoi Ki Waitangi in 1984 (Te Kawariki, 2000). In that hui, the notion of teaching Pakeha the history of the treaty from a Maori perspective was recorded, to create bicultural New Zealanders. (Waitangi Action Committee, 1985, p. 6-7)

Later that same year, in 1984, Pakeha activists called a major gathering of the antiracism groups now numerous enough to be described as a ‘movement’, near Tauranga. Their publicity stated that: “on the Hikoi Ki Waitangi (and elsewhere) the need has been recognised for Pakeha antiracist groups and individuals to meet and discuss white racism in Aotearoa”. The agenda included: “Pakeha responsibility under the Treaty of Waitangi; Pakeha responses to Kotahitanga; Waitangi 1985 and responses to the Hui at Turangawaewae” (Antiracism & Treaty worker national gatherings, 1984- 2000). Soon after, in 1986, Pakeha groups launched a Treaty education campaign for Pakeha, funded very modestly for 5 years by the Justice Department – *Project Waitangi: Pakeha Debate the Treaty*. Treaty education, as a form of citizen and workplace education, went on into the 1990s and continues today as a user-pays arrangement, whereby organisations pay educators, both Pakeha and Maori.

So, looking back on our conduct in the conversation between Treaty partners, Maori have been speaking to us for almost 170 years about the Treaty we signed with them. On our part, we have used only the past 30 years to even formulate a reply, to engage in an informed conversation (and in fact, we’ve spent only the last 15 years of that considering the Maori text that was actually signed on Feb 6th on our behalf).

Has this conversation made any difference to our posture of callous indifference?

Overall, we can see some positive outcomes:

- The Treaty IS on everyone’s lips, and although negative phrases like ‘treaty fatigue’ and ‘grievance industry’ come into circulation, these come and go, while the Treaty as a focus of discussion continues.
- HAS made a public conversation possible about the Treaty between some Maori and some Pakeha, depending on the sector – the greatest uptake of Treaty education was in the social services, health and community sectors and led them

to focus on Te Tiriti, the Maori text. Government services have been more ambivalent, with their concern for the English text. The commercial sector has had the most limited penetration by education about the Treaty.

- HAS made a relationship of trust possible between some Maori and some Pakeha groups who work towards a common goal – it might be a community's development, providing health care, or co-stewarding a natural resource.
- Many community and social service organisations have made significant changes to their institutional policies around staffing and clients
- Some NGOs have made structural and constitutional changes to their organisations.

BUT the pushing through of the Seabed and Foreshore Act in 2004, 20 years after the conversation about the Treaty began, has again showed the callous indifference on the part of our government to the most reasonable and diplomatic calls by Maori for 'a longer conversation'. The fragility of the conversation is shown by the ease with which the government was able to persuade many Pakeha citizens that it was necessary to confiscate a Maori Treaty right to the seabeds and foreshores of the country.

You may ask, well then, what does learning more about the Treaty actually achieve? Can it change that callous colonial indifference?

So, I'd like to offer something else from my research, about the actual processes of Pakeha change.

I visited 50 experienced Treaty educators in their groups from Whangarei to Otepoti/Dunedin, and facilitated the recording of theories of how Pakeha change from these experienced people. There were a number of theories recorded, but I'll highlight one that is particularly useful as we consider our conduct in the conversation between Treaty partners.

Pakeha change in stages

One theory was that Pakeha as a dominant group have continued to be most comfortable with the state of colonial affairs, a state of indifference to native affairs. We theorised that this comfortable state is closely tied to a state of ignorance about the events of history, and ignorance about the guarantees in both texts of the Treaty. Many Pakeha remain firmly in this state all their lives, and with the confusion, misinformation and fear about the Treaty broadcast by many media and implicated in government policy, it is quite possible to do so (e.g. 'Maori signed away their sovereignty', so 'Maori only have themselves to blame', 'Maori need to catch up to us more civilised Pakeha'...). We considered this state of *ignorance* and indifference the starting stage for Pakeha change processes.

So what happens next? What prompts us beyond this stage?

When we first hear or learn something that is at odds with our indifferent colonial worldview (which could be stories of Maori experiences, learning about the Treaty promises, or colonisation), we go through stages of response. We experience a shock to our belief system ('I didn't know that Maori made continual trips to the British

Crown about honouring the Treaty, or made continual appeals to the nation's and British courts ...I thought they just kicked back and played their guitars and ate watermelons'). We called this second stage of change *awareness and awakenings* from colonial indifference.

This second stage of change can be shocking as well as inspiring, and energising. It includes coming to realisations about some dearly held, and often unconscious beliefs: (for instance that 'our [Pakeha] ways are not the norm for everyone?!', we are 'not the centre of the Universe?!', even within this country. One person realised with a shock after hearing more about Aotearoa's history before the Treaty, that actually 'Maori weren't living here for a thousand years just waiting for Pakeha to arrive!' So our shock, as well as our inspiration, is about understanding that there has been a different worldview existing alongside our own all this time, and that our actions appear not at all decent or fair or justifiable in that view.

At any one time, there are Pakeha entering this awareness and awakenings stage, when they first see history and life in New Zealand as not quite the glorious story of the triumph of Pakeha civilisation.

The third stage we called *learning* or adapting, in which people learn more about the true history of the Maori-Pakeha relationship, about Pakeha actions, and their impact on Maori. This is an extremely uncomfortable stage. Every person feels some reaction when longstanding beliefs are challenged. Individuals or groups who thought of themselves as decent, fair human beings have many responses, such as anger ('why wasn't I told about this?'), denial ('it wasn't me!'), guilt and chest-beating, or blame (the government, the media, schools). These emotional reactions can lead in two directions – either getting stuck in cycles of negative emotions like denial and blame ('it wasn't me, and anyway, what can one person do about it? so it's up the government, not me') or leading into a more positive cycle of creativity and action.

Some Pakeha use their feelings of shock, guilt, and anger and so on, to get into a stubborn, frozen state, which leaves them stuck for a lifetime, and retaining the status quo. Staying stuck in those negative cycles, resisting the invitation to learn more, basically continues the callous indifference. As we know, this indifference leads to further colonial abuses, like the Seabed and Foreshore Act. Remember, the response from Maori to that proposed legislation was 'We need a longer conversation'. Continuing with the callous indifference spells the end of conversation with a respected partner.

On the other hand, Pakeha can respond to challenges to their worldviews by feeling empathy with Maori people past and present, and feeling inspired to take some action towards a different, more respectful relationship between us in future. So, some Pakeha use feelings of anger or guilt and responsibility to search out more learning and take active steps towards a more mutually agreeable relationship with Maori in workplaces, communities, organisations and so on.

That takes us to the fourth stage of *action and passion* – usually to speak with others and take a new step, or to organise more learning for a whole group. It involves taking steps towards a more mutually agreeable relationship with Maori. The steps forward

might be in a school, a workplace, or an organisation. No matter where you meet with other Pakeha, in your family, a school Board, in a genealogical society, a garden group there is something you can do to bring you a step closer to a Treaty relationship between Maori and Pakeha. Becoming active in stepping towards the Treaty begins a conversation with a respected partner.

Where to from here, so that we can engage in the ongoing conversation between political equals implied in the Maori text of *te Tiriti o Waitangi*?

John Key's approach to working with the Maori Party as a 'relationship' could be a good start – it could also prove to be rhetoric (although I've always loved Mira Szazy's view on this 'the only thing wrong with tokenism is that there isn't enough of it').

Looking at the four stages of change – IGNORANCE, AWAKENINGS, LEARNING & ACTION, there is certainly evidence that many, many Pakeha are frustrated with remaining in a state of ignorance, are confused by the many debates, and want to be given an opportunity to understand the controversy around the Treaty, and Maori claims. In the series of community dialogues run by the Human Rights Commission all around the country in recent years, the most consistent request at the end of these community discussions was for education about the Treaty.

So a properly-funded effort of education about the Treaty is being urgently asked for - not just a 'historical information-only' approach as adopted by the recent government. New Zealand historians are giving us excellent scholarly explorations of the colonial and Maori intentions in signing the Treaty) - but a chance to appreciate the implications of the relationship we signed up to. While the last government can certainly be applauded for making widely available good summaries of historical information, my research has shown that a dominant group like Pakeha have strong emotional responses to their first experiences of finally hearing the other party's point of view. It is often shocking and uncomfortable, as well as stirring and inspiring. As with most good civic education about a current issue, citizens want to discuss the implications of what they are learning.

So to conclude, I leave you with two calls for constructive actions towards future conversation between Maori and Pakeha:

1. A call for well-funded **non-aligned (independent) civic Treaty education** available to all citizens of this country (there are small innovative programmes already trialing independent civic education and discussion, such as the *Tangata Tiriti* interactive programme, and there is an independent *Treaty Resource Centre* in Manukau. Such funding could come from the commercial, not-for-profit, or government sector.
2. A call on New Zealand media, including the journalism and media training programmes to **inform their journalists, sub-editors and editors much more thoroughly about the Treaty and Maori responses to colonisation.**, so that the public are not maintained in a state of misinformation. Again, there are innovative programmes already tackling the issue of media training, such as Kupu Taea.

Background info from Huygens, 2007

<p>1962 Maori Council formed by government to act as an advisory body on Maori policy. Regional Maori councils followed. Maori Councils developed considerable skill in monitoring Parliament, scrutinising legislation and making submissions to ministers and select committees.</p> <p>The 1967 Maori Affairs Amendment Act seen by Maori as the ‘last land grab’ by Pakeha. It triggered the Maori land rights movement in the next decade.</p> <p>1967 Revival of Kotahitanga Movement Meeting at Otiria Marae, Kawakawa, to revive the Kotahitanga movement. Discussions included Maori self-determination, ratification of the Treaty of Waitangi and a symbolic unity under the Maori Queen.</p> <p>1968 Te Hokioi newsletter published by a radical Maori group in Wellington as a “taiaha of truth” about the role of the Maori trustee in disposing of Maori resources.</p> <p>1968 Maori Organisation on Human Rights (MOOHR) formed in Wellington. They opposed discrimination in housing, employment, sport and politics. Advocated recovering control of Maori reserved lands under perpetual leases to Pakeha.</p> <p>1970 Young Maori Leaders Conference convened by the Maori Council at Auckland University established Nga Tamatoa ‘the young warriors’. They initiated legal aid, an employment office and a nation-wide programme for full recognition of the Maori language in education. Began protests at Waitangi to challenge Pakeha and their own elders about lost rights, e.g. to sell kaimoana under 1866 Oyster Fisheries Act. They raised the cry of “How much longer must we wait?”</p> <p>1975 Maori Land March Te Matakite o Aotearoa welded localised grievances over land loss into a cohesive Maori land rights movement. Whina Cooper elected as president and Titewhai Harawira secretary. Led 30,000 people to Parliament under banner of “not one more acre of land” (to be alienated). Joined by some Pakeha.</p>	<p>1959/60 Protests began against racist selection of sports teams for international competition, including No Maoris No Tour protest in 1972</p> <p>1960 Hunn report gave thorough statistical report of Maori trailing behind Pakeha in most areas. Recommended stepping up assimilation.</p> <p>1960 World Council of Churches established Programme to Combat Racism. Locally, Young Christian Workers (Catholic), Student Christian Movement and church groups became more aware of injustice globally and locally.</p> <p>Early 1960s Citizens for Racial Equality (CARE) founded with Maori and Pakeha members, focused on racism at home. In response to Hunn report, set up homework centres to support Maori school children.</p> <p>1967 Maori Affairs Amendment Act opened up membership of Maori land corporations to non-owners (i.e. Pakeha) and forced land owned by fewer than four people under one title into conversion from Maori to European land.</p> <p>1967 Rating Act subjected land to rates even though not producing income with Maori away in cities. Local bodies able to lease or sell Maori land to recover rates.</p> <p>1970 Halt All Racist Tours (HART) founded Focused on racism abroad, particularly apartheid in South Africa.</p> <p>1973 Nelson Action Group published <i>Justice and Race: A Monocultural System in a Multicultural Society</i> examining structural racism in court decisions.</p> <p>1970s Race Relations Office established</p> <p>1973 Auckland Committee on Racial Discrimination (ACORD) established with past members of Nelson Action Group to draw attention to structural racism. Met with Nga Tamatoa and Polynesian Panthers to develop an educational approach.</p>
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<p>1977 Occupation of Bastion Point began by Orakei Action Committee to expose the dealings of past governments over the 700 acres of Maori land at Orakei declared “inalienable” by the Native Land Court in 1873. Supported by some Pakeha.</p> <p>1977 Occupation of Raglan Golf Course taken under the Public Works/Defence Act, Eva Rickard led.</p> <p>1979 Waitangi Action Committee formed to continue the protests at Waitangi.</p>	<p>1975 Treaty of Waitangi Act established the Waitangi Tribunal and Waitangi Day.</p>
<p><i>Start here</i></p> <p>1984 Hikoi ki Waitangi organised by Waitangi Action Committee and People Opposed to Waitangi (non-Maori) to highlight the dis-honouring of the Treaty.</p> <p>1984 Ngaruawahia Conference called by Maori Anglican Church and the NZ Maori Council considered constitutional questions relating to the Treaty. Followed by conferences around the country and at Waitangi, these conferences asked that Pakeha educate themselves about the Treaty of Waitangi in preparation for dialogue in 1990.</p>	<p>1981 Springbok tour protests supported by Pakeha who were then challenged by Maori to address homegrown racism and their responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi. A separation between Maori and Pakeha activism from here on. NOT a response to Maori, but in that heightened atmosphere, the challenge to Pakeha “What about racism at home?” fell on listening ears</p> <p>1982 Programme on Racism established by the Conference of Churches Aotearoa New Zealand. Initially used confrontational methods, later adult education philosophy.</p> <p>1984 Anglican General Synod established a Bicultural Commission.</p> <p><i>Start here, give some of their wording</i></p> <p>1984 First National gathering of Pakeha anti-racism workers held in Katikati called by Tauranga Men’s Action Collective and Women’s Reflection Action Group.</p> <p>1986 Project Waitangi - Pakeha Debate the Treaty campaign formed by Bob Scott of Programme on Racism, YWCA and trade unions. Taken up by local groups.</p>

Primary reference

Hugyens, Ingrid. (2007). *Processes of Pakeha change in response to the Treaty of Waitangi*. Hamilton: University of Waikato.