

IN THE MATTER OF

The Treaty of Waitangi
Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF

Claims by HUHURERE
TUKUKINO and
OTHERS known as the
HAURAKI CLAIMS

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF
HINE TE AWHIMATE KIPA POUTU
ON BEHALF OF THE CLAIMANTS**

1. My name is Hine Te Awhimate Kipa Poutu (nee Nicholls). People call me Jane Poutu. I am Ngati Maru and Ngati Haua. My marae is Mataiwhetu.
2. I have lived and worked in Thames all my life. For 30 years I worked for Telecom and the last 10 years I've worked through Te Korowai Hauora. I work with kuia and koroua and their whanau of the Hauraki whanui.

3. I think my kuia knew what she was doing when she named me. Te Awhimate is a very fitting name for what I do at Te Hau ora, supporting and embracing the people.
4. I have two beautiful kids.
5. When I and my brother James Ponui Nicholls were growing up, all the Maori in our area worked together for our common community. It is still happening, but not as much now. Then, one Koroua down the road grew potatoes and kumara on his acre of land, another grew cabbages. I remember a kuia who grew onions on her half acre. We grew nearly all our own food and shared it among ourselves. We have always shared the food. When we were young our families were very poor and really needed to gather and grow their own food.
6. Much of our food came from our river Parawai (some call it Kauaeranga today) and tikapa moana. We dried and cooked fish and eels. Most weeks, and for any special hui or tangi or just when it was needed, my brother and I used to go down to the river to get eels. Once a week at high tide the Abattoir used to

drop a bin of offal into the river and the eels would come up to feed. We used to catch large numbers of them. We would catch just enough for our whanau.

7. We also used to catch sharks (pioke) and dry them in the sun. We would tear them into narrow strips and then put them on the fire. This made a bad smell right through the house, like rotten corn, but we got used to it. That dried shark were beautiful though.
8. Once a year or so, we also used to catch herrings. We waited for the best time of the tide then our old people threw a stick of dynamite into the water to stun the fish. Then us kids would gather the fish in kete. Later we gutted the fish, covered them in heaps of salt, and hung them out to dry like chewing gum on the barbed wire fence. After that we could eat them raw or boiled or fried. It probably wasn't a good thing to do that type of fishing, but we did it to survive. I remember we did it when we needed kai.
9. We had to do all these things to keep fed.
10. I also remember when Te Puia put out the karanga (or call) or food. We used to rush out to the beach

and collect pipi and mussels and then send them by the 4 pm train to the Waikato.

11. Everyone in the whanau did their job. I had quite a few responsibilities as the eldest of the kids. I often had to provide the kai. We also used to get spare fish from the fish factory in town. I had to walk the 4 miles to town and then get a whole lot of free fish heads which I threaded on a harakeke (flax) line. I had to get to the factory by 6.30 in the morning and would then walk back home to drop them off before walking off to school. I used to love swinging them fish heads around and around. Sometimes they would break off and the fish heads would go flying in all directions. So I'd thread them back on and try and pick most of the stones from the eyes. Sometimes we got whole fishes and I'd have to hang them over my shoulder. They were quite a heavy load and the tails might drag along the road because I was only a short kid.

12. When I look back, I suppose we struggled for food. Still, I remember a lot of good times and good kai. I suppose our health was not so good though. My brother and I were raised by my nana because my

mum (of Ngati Haua), like so many of us, was sick with TB. My father, Iehu Nicholls, of Ngati Maru, was away working for us. He must have been very lonely and sad without us.

13. When Mum was sick with TB she was kept in isolation in Thames Hospital before she was transferred to Waikato Hospital. We used to visit her at Waikato when we stayed with our Ngati Haua relations. My brother and I used to walk the 5 miles to the bus stop in Morrinsville to catch a bus to the hospital. The bus driver, also a Maori, used to wait for us if we were late. My granny gave him bags of kumara and water-melon because he took care of my brother and me.
14. When I was a kid there were still quite a few tohunga around who knew the old Maori ways of healing and health care. We had our own ways of healing, our own Maori style.
15. My nana used to take me on the bus to see the tohunga. The tohunga was just as interested in my spiritual side or taha wairua as any particular ailment. His medicine focused on spiritual atunement as well

as physical healing. If the spirit was balanced and calm then other aspects such as physical health would follow.

16. The Tohunga could also see aspects of my future or what we call "matakite" in my wairua.

17. I remember once I had a sore on my finger which would never go away. It just kept weeping and opening for months. The tohunga knew it was caused by a makutu and knew how to deal with it in a spiritual sense. He also knew how to deal with the physical side of healing or Taha tinana. He put a poultice made from a particular plant, which I won't name here, on the cut. The cut was gone in a few days.

18. I also remember when I was really young I chewed the phosphorus off every match in a whole matchbox. My kuia quickly gathered some dock leaves and pounded them into a paste which she added to a whipped egg. She spoon fed me this horrible green mixture until I was ill and brought up all the match phosphorus.

19. My experiences of the Pakeha health system were never good. The only time we ever went to hospital was when we were really sick, so we believed that our people only went to hospitals to die. When my nana went to hospital I quietly sneaked in so that I could sleep under her bed. It wasn't easy because my nana was in a room with many other people. Thankfully my nana did come home that time.
20. We were only allowed groups of people to see our ill whanau member when they were close to death. This was never good for Maori healing as we have always viewed the family side or family foundations or taha whanau as important to good health.
21. I have mentioned in passing three sides to Maori health: taha wairua (or the spiritual side); taha tinana (or the physical side); and taha whanau (or the family side). I believe that a further side to Maori health is the taha hinengaro (or the side of our thoughts or self-esteem).
22. When I think of self-esteem I think of my life with my kuia before school. I only remember safety within the whanau and the strength of the elders. I

don't remember any violence, although there were a few members of our whanau just down the road who had alcohol problems. I do remember a few who got boozed a lot.

23. I think things quickly changed once I went to the Pakeha school. It was as if the school was trying to get rid of me, sweep me under some carpet, and make me change into something else. I immediately saw different values in the school and that Maori values were frowned upon. It was in school that my taha hinengaro or self-esteem was beaten up.

24. I didn't have a good start at school. Within the whanau we shared everything. In our whanau we all understood that you only needed what you were using. Obviously, everything else was spare for others. If I was warm I'd take off my jersey and if my cousin was cold he'd put it on. It's really quite simple, but the Pakeha at school never seemed to understand. I had only been at school for two days when I saw my cousin's jersey and put it on to keep warm. Another pakeha kid saw me and told the school teacher I was stealing. After that I was always

branded or known for "stealing". That followed me through my days at primary school.

25. I never went to high school, but I did go to Waikato University part-time in my later life. I have also recently attended some courses at Kura Tini or Polytech.
26. The kids at primary school began to tease me and the other Maori for being different and they teased me for "stealing". So I beat them up.
27. I took a long time to get angry, but when I did, I really did. My kuia always told me never to hit anyone with glasses because you might break their glasses and they could lose their sight. One day after school I got so angry with this girl who was teasing me. She wore glasses so I took them off and the I hit her. Two boys came by and joined in the fight. I gave them both blood noses, and although I got a black eye I walked home as happy as.
28. The headmaster wrote a letter to my kuia about the fighting. My kuia couldn't read English so one of my cousins explained what it was about. We were invited to come down to the school. This was to be

one of the most shaming or whakama experiences of my life.

29. When we got to the school the headmaster took my kuia and me into another room. Inside were all the parents of the kids who I'd beaten up. No one offered my kuia a chair, we just stood in shame while the Pakeha shouted at us. My kuia didn't say a word, she didn't respond at all. We just stood there and felt whakama or highly ashamed. After the shouting stopped she just looked to me and said "haere mai mokopuna" and we walked the 4 miles home in silence.

30. At home we did all the chores in the garden and made the kai. After tea we would normally do our homework. My kuia couldn't help us with that mahi. Lastly, we always finished the evening with a karakia. My kuia asked me why I'd beat up those kids and I told her why. My kuia told me not to look at the "dark side of life". She said I should use my "mauri" in another way. I asked her how and she said I should use my energy for the things I needed to know. I should put my energy into such things as running, swimming and mahi kai (gardening, and

food and kaimoana gathering and preparing). We finished with a karakia where my kuia asked my tupuna to instill in me the strength to always look at both sides of the picture. I went to bed wondering what she meant.

31. In the morning I said, Nan, I know how to do this. My nana then sent me to school , "haere atu ki te kura mokopuna".
32. At school I talked to the other Maori kids who had already heard what had happened and how our kuia had been abused. Many came to awhi or support us and that night many came to my kuia's whare for a korero. The old people came there together and talked.
33. At the korero the kaumatua said that the kids should go to school, but should not beat up anyone. They said we should use our energy to become the best sports persons at the school.
34. And so we did. We became the best at the sports - in netball or in swimming, you name it. We were playing for the whanau. Soon the teachers had to

split us up between teams. They wouldn't let us play together as a group because, as a whanau, no one could catch us.

35. But it was never about winning really. We were always taught that there was no such thing as losing and that in sport everyone was a winner.
36. I have recalled some things about how I grew up and given some examples about how I understand Maori health concepts. However the main thing I've described is how our whanau, and particularly the elders within it, gave us a grounding or foundation for life. When I listened to my kuia and other elders I found self-esteem and good health. Outside the whanau and in the school I experienced different values which did not help my self-esteem.
37. The foundation given to me by my kuia and whanau has been the background from which I have worked at Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki.
38. My work with the people has been centred around the kuia and kaumatua and their families. So much of

the whanau's well-being rests upon the well-being of these elders.

39. I see how many of the elder couples, both Maori and Pakeha, have been in relationships so long that they have become co-dependent. I have seen how an old koroua goes into hospital because of an illness of his taha tinana or physical side. He may have nothing wrong with his mind. But when they are alone after 50 years of relationship neither can cope.
40. It seems so often that one of an elderly couple goes to hospital and he or she dies within 8 weeks and the other passes away within the next 6 months. It just that they often can't cope with the separation after so many years together. It is with a heavy heart and sadness that in my experience this applies most commonly among the Pakeha.
41. In my work I also try to look beyond the physical health of people. For example, when someone breaks their leg and I visit I am interested as to how the family is coping. For example, whether they live alone, whether they have transport, whether they have children depending upon them, or how they will

pay the bills and kai. I am interested in the safety of the person and their basic necessities for survival.

42. I really believe that one's health also includes one's outlook to life. For example, I believe that while a cancer may give you 3 months to live with the right whakaaro you can live for 3 years or more.
43. I believe that while medication is good and whanau support is good, the depth and direction of your own spirituality is the key to your own good health.
44. The journey I am following with Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki is sometimes very sad and challenging, but it is also intensely rewarding and exciting.
45. The rewards are not about me, they are about the iwi. It is not about personal gain, it is about the best possible service to the iwi.
46. Wellness in Hauraki is about the hapu and whanau and wellness is made up of the taha wairua, taha hinengaro, taha tinana, and taha whanau.
47. My kuia always referred me to the words of Apirana Ngata - take the tools of the paheka and use them for

the people. Within Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki I believe we are doing the best with what we have. We are always positive and try to open doors for the iwi, sharing information and utilising and trying to create better health services for Hauraki whanui - Hauraki notion what a healthy nation.