

**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 NGAKOMA NGAMANE ON  
BEHALF OF THE CLAIMANTS**

1. My name is Ngakoma Ngamane. I am a descendant of the tribes of Hauraki. For the last 10 years I have been involved in the area of education as a trustee on the school board, a whanau member of Te Tonga o Hoterini Te Kohanga Reo, a whanau member of Te Kawenga a total immersion Maori language unit at Thames South School and a primary teacher trainee now in my fourth year.
2. This presentation will be based on personal experiences and observations that have been encountered in the establishment of a Kohanga Reo and a total immersion Maori language unit within a mainstream school. The

presentation will reflect aspects that are both positive and negative in that process. I have not been privy to the submissions from other whanau and their experiences and I reiterate that which is contained in this submission is a personal perspective.

3. Our Kohanga Reo, Te Tonga o Hoterini, was established in Thames in 1991 by a small group of whanau who felt that the Kohanga Reo movement offered an opportunity to provide an educational start for their children which was not available to themselves. I will not go into detail but suffice is to say that in 1990 the opportunity of a premises on the grounds of Thames South School ("T.S.S.") became available.
4. At that time the T.S.S. Board of Trustees ("B.O.T.") had co-opted two board members. The approach was made to the B.O.T. for the establishment of a Kohanga Reo on the school site. The support from the B.O.T. was overwhelming and the steps to establish our Kohanga Reo were put into motion. The first hurdle that arose was the establishment grant of \$5,000, which had been available up until 1990 was withdrawn by the Ministry of Education. The position we found ourselves in was that there was no financial assistance available for the setting up of new Kohanga Reo and that funding for operations was not available until the Kohanga Reo was established and licenced. This is where we started to encounter the difference between the official rhetoric of government support for Maori educational initiatives, and the official barriers put in place to control the development in this, the fastest growing area of education in New Zealand.
4. It was through a personal loan by one of the B.O.T. members of the school, a loan from the school B.O.T.'s, and personal financial commitments by whanau members that eventually got us established and licenced. Without these I am sure we would have fallen at the first barrier.

5. When requesting of the B.O.T. the permission to establish our Kohanga Reo, the seeds were also sown for the establishment of our Maori Language Unit. At a meeting between the fledgling whanau and the B.O.T., the implication that in agreeing to the establishment of a Kohanga Reo, the B.O.T. realised that in a few years there would be children graduating and that the whanau would be looking to the school to cater for their needs by way of a Maori Language Unit.
6. Through the years 1992-93 the school and the whanau worked towards fulfilling the requirement for the establishment of our language unit. I will not go into any detail on this process except to say it was a period of much change and real heartache within the school, the community and the Kohanga whanau.
7. Our total immersion Maori language class, Te Kawenga, started operating on the second day of the school year 1994 with seven enrolments, five from our Kohanga Reo and our teacher brought his two children with him. It was in the six months leading up to the opening of the Te Kawenga that we faced another barrier and that was the scarcity of teachers qualified to teach in Maori language immersion classes. I will refer more to this area further on in the submission. It was after we had been running a couple of months that there was a call from whanau in Paeroa who were wanting immersion education for their own Kohanga Reo graduates. This eventuated in a group of parents committed to the kaupapa (ethics) of Maori language immersion education transporting their children to Thames each day.
8. Over the ensuing 12 months this exercise brought to light again the disparity between the rhetoric and the reality of support offered by government to Maori education initiatives. The scenario was, no school in Paeroa offered, or was intending to offer, appropriate programmes for

graduates of Te Kohanga Reo; Te Kawenga was geographically the closest school offering this option.

9. Applications were made to the Ministry of Education ("M.O.E.") for assistance in transporting the children from Paeroa. The answer we received appeared to be a form letter that literally stated the M.O.E. transport policy which was that they provide travel assistance only to the closest state school to the child's home. They were approached again detailing the Paeroa families situation, their costs and how they had purchased a vehicle. All they were asked for was help with running costs, any help would do. We received again the "form" letter with sympathy for the situation of the families involved.
10. We next petitioned the M.O.E. Maori policy division, and the Minister of Education explaining again our situation. We received from the Minister an acknowledgment and that our letter had been forwarded to the Secretary for Education who replied most apologetically that there was nothing that could be done and attached again was the form letter reiterating M.O.E. transport policy. We felt that our request was not unreasonable as to assistance is available to integrated primary school (religious denominational schools) children who's parents choice was to have them attend these schools. It is also available to high school students whose nearest school is not offering certain preferred subject courses. The only difference appears to be it is Maori that is not catered for.
11. These parents are still fundraising and still transporting their children each day from Paeroa. The years of having to do this take its toll on these families and sadly this has meant that some families have not been able to cope and have had to withdrawn their children and put them into mainstream schools, resulting in the loss of language. In some cases this has developed into an aversion to speaking Te Reo Maori.

9. I would like now to return to the subject of the availability of teachers qualified to teach in Maori immersion classes. The government states in their literature come propaganda that the training of suitable teachers for this education area is a government priority and it has been since 1974 when the Minister of Education Phil Amos tabled a policy statement:

*"That where-ever possible Maori language and culture should be included in all the subjects of primary schools ... and shall be offered as a genuine option in secondary schools. "*

10. With this policy statement, the shortage of teachers to carry out the policy intent was highlighted. With pressure from groups like Nga Tamatoa, who after being refused assistance by government for this purpose started running their own teacher training programme. In response, the Department of Education set up their own 1 year teacher training course for fluent speakers of Maori. The course appeared to have been set up to fail. This is evident from:

- Enrolments being called a few days before the closing date;
- Late applications had a \$20.00 fee;
- Many applications not acknowledged;
- Some late applications refused outright;
- Many outstanding applicants turned down. These included people with teaching experience, a qualified primary school teacher, and a renowned Maori orator with Maori language teaching experience. In total 100 Maori were turned down;
- A number of Pakeha accepted onto the course.

11. The course at Auckland Secondary Teachers College started in March 1974 with 15 students and was touted in the press as a positive response by the Department of Education to the call for Maori language teachers.

12. This information is from a paper co-produced by Nga Tamatoa and C.A.R.E. "Maori Language and the Department of Education" Auckland 1974.
13. The relevance of the intent shown in this case is that some reluctance by the M.O.E. and the training institutions to back up their rhetoric with resources and action is just as evident today.
14. From personal experience, through 1994-95 the principal of our school approached teacher training institutions in Auckland, Hamilton, as well as Massey University, in an attempt to set up a teacher training programme to train those people already working in Maori language programmes in schools. The course was to cater for those people who were unable to attend on campus training. The result being that after two years, a three year Diploma of Teaching course was started in 1996. This course started with 29 students from Turangi, Rotorua, Hamilton and Hauraki and ran to completion last year with 23 graduates. The course was run through Waikato University. The sad part is that despite the extremely low attrition rate; no shortage of applications, and the Minister of Education priority focus for teacher training being in the areas of Maori language education and rural education (of which, by its nature, this course fulfils both criteria), the University refused to continue the programme with another intake.
15. The reality of the shortage of trained teachers for Te Kawenga is that for the past 18 months we have been advertising and networking unsuccessfully to find a relief teacher for our class to release our teachers for professional development and to give them release time to make classroom resources.
16. I could carry on with classroom resources or starting our own Kura Kaupapa Maori, but the scenario is the same, the rhetoric is not backed up with the appropriate action. Meanwhile whanau throughout the country are being worn down by the actions and inaction of the M.O.E. to cater for Maori language education in New Zealand. I believe it is a deliberate

undermining of Maori educational initiatives by the state and the gatekeepers of this New Zealand society.

17. Given the educational history of New Zealand, it is hard to draw any other conclusion.
18. The tone of this presentation may give the impression of doom and gloom, but in the whole process there are successes. To see and hear our children operating to all of those who have supported and helped along the way. With the current economic and social environment in New Zealand today, unless there is a major paradigm shift by government, I do not see Te Reo Maori or Maori knowledge and customs being an accepted part of New Zealand society in my lifetime. My hope is that with the head start our children have had on most of us, that in their life times the original intent of the Treaty of Waitangi will bloom.
19. Te Kohanga Reo in Hauraki have been graduating tamariki into the primary schools since 1982 and to date, 17 years on, there is only 1 total immersion Maori class and one Kura Kaupapa Maori in the district. Those Kohanga Reo have been doing their part in the re-vitalisation of Te Reo Maori only to have the vast majority of the graduates lose their language inside of six months in mainstream schools. This is a testimony to the real intent of the crown to fulfil its obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi. I propose the crown's intent has changed little since it was stated in the 1844 Native Ordinance Trust as:

*"... assimilating as speedily as possible the habits and usages of the native to those of the European population ..."*

## APPENDIX TO SUBMISSION OF NGAKOMA NGAMANE

If I was asked to contribute to the OUR STORY this week at the hearings I would be making the following point.

### **Our Crisis**

It is on record at our kura that, of all our tribal areas, our rohe has been judged to have suffered the most from colonization in terms of our ability to advance our language and culture. This is from the Maori Department at Waikato University and is supported by our Principal, who has had 35 years experience teaching, working and advising Maori communities throughout the North Island on Maori Education.

In fact, he goes on to say that the situation in Hauraki is extreme, mainly due to the glaring lack of teachers from our area who have the ability to sustain or even communicate in Te Reo Maori to their students and this is made worse by the extremely small number of adult Maori in our communities who can do the same.

I believe the past has now put us into a crisis situation. We have only one kura kaupapa Maori and this caters for the tamariki of the settlement of Harataunga (Kennedy Bay). We have just one school catering for our tamariki in full and partial immersion classes, and this with short term teachers who we have pinched from other tribal areas. We have 11 Kohanga Reo in Hauraki some of whom still run a mixture of Maori and English because of our lack of fluent Kaiako. 96% of our parents do not speak Maori, and of the few grandparents who do, they are so tied up with wider Hauraki and other concerns that they neither have the time nor the energy to regularly give to our tamariki.

We are indeed in a state of crisis.