

Talking Cents

March 2018

Talking Cents is an ecumenical group charged by the Auckland Anglican Diocesan Council to promote an alternative to current economic and political thought, and to encourage debate within the church. Ministry units are encouraged to distribute these articles. This article is contributed by Jean Brookes a member of the Auckland Anglican Social Justice Group.

Let's Do It!

Before Waitangi Day, the Prime Minister of Aotearoa New Zealand spent five days with Ngapuhi, Ngati Kawa, Ngati Rahiri and Ngati Manu in Northland. Ngati Hine who guard Te Tiriti played many roles in the five days. This lengthy process of listening and dialogue was a timely signal of respect for mana whenua. As the public events of Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th February (Waitangi Day) unfolded, we glimpsed the possibility of transformed relationships between Kawanatanga(Government) and Maori hapu and iwi around Aotearoa.

On 5th February, for the first time, a woman Prime Minister was invited to speak at the Powhiri. This year it was held on Whare Runanga (Upper Marae). Jacinda Ardern was supported by kuia as she sat on the mahau (porch) of the whare.

That little cameo reminded me how much I learnt from Dame Mira Szaszy and her sister Jean when I became the Vicar of the Anglican Parish of Mangere East in 1981. Mira and Jean were Ngati Hine, and it was from them that I learnt about the 1835 Declaration of Independence (Wakaputanga) and the 1840 Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

In her speech on the Whare Runanga, the Prime Minister said Ngati Manu had taught her the stories of those foundational document.¹

The Press enjoyed the photo opportunity on Waitangi Day when the Prime Minister and her MPs helped cook and serve a barbeque breakfast for several hundred people. But this action was significant at many other levels, including that emerging Maori leaders and supportive Pakeha usually start in the kitchen and may 'progress' from there!

Many people expressed relief there were no protests at Waitangi this year. But this was a superficial reaction to what was happening. Firstly, healthy democracy includes the right to protest about things that need to be changed and where better in this country than at Waitangi? Secondly, there was a small but significant Maori protest near the dawn service. Thirdly, at the Lower Marae camping ground there was a deep sense of betrayal about the government's apparent intention to sign the Comprehensive Progressive Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement on the 8th March.

After days of significant listening and dialogue, Maori will hold the Prime Minister and her cabinet accountable for their commitment to the Declaration of Independence and Te Tiriti. The two documents are central to the addressing of all issues including poverty, education, housing, underemployment and climate change.

[pime-ministers-waitangi-powhiri-speech](https://www.beehive.govt.nz/speech/pime-ministers-waitangi-powhiri-speech)

We need to encourage this Coalition Government as it starts its dual task of dismantling neo-liberal policies and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

This commitment will encourage us all to prepare for Maori initiated Constitutional Change dialogues from approximately 2021.²

Jesus was a Galilean. He challenged the colonising power of Rome and formed a movement that sought ways to re-distribute wealth and power restoring relationships. In Aotearoa New Zealand, and other parts of the world, we are on a similar journey of de-colonisation and justice. We are heartened by friends we find on the way.

Rod Oram of St Andrew's Anglican Parish, Epsom and a few friends went on an early Waitangi Day Pilgrimage through parts of the North Island that he described as 'seeking insights from history and hope for the future'.³

Jen Margaret's essay for Waitangi Day 2017 helps us identify what we (Pakeha, Tangata Tiriti) need to take care of as we unravel our personal prejudices and colonising structures and policies: Ka pu te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi: Change in the Pakeha nation.⁴

2

<http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/MatikeMaiAotearoaReport.pdf>

3

<https://www.newsroom.co.nz/2018/02/03/80409/rod-oram-journeying-in-the-spirit-of-waitangi>

4

<https://groundwork.org.nz/2018/02/05/state-of-the-pakeha-nation>

Margaret Mutu's 2013 Robson Lecture, Te Tiriti o Waitangi in a future constitution commented on historical and contemporary issues.⁵

The Three Tikanga Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia has Social Justice Working Groups who are addressing topics that include refugees, homelessness, poverty and criminal justice.⁶

A three member South Auckland Housing Overview Group has been formed to engage with three local Members of Parliament about pledges they made on behalf of Labour, the Greens and NZ First at the 2017 Pre-General Election 'South Matters' forum in Manurewa. The Auckland Anglican Diocesan Social Justice Group strongly supports this model of accountability between central government and a regional community.

The parish of St Paul's Grangetown, Cardiff has a congregation of 50-60 people. Its church would have cost more than a million pounds to restore. The ministry was about to be closed. But the congregation linked with a local organisation housing the homeless, and twelve affordable homes were built in the nave and aisles of the church and two large apartments on the grounds outside. The congregation developed new ministries and worship in the chancel of the church.⁷

5

<http://www.converge.org.nz/pma/shackles-of-colonisation.pdf>

6

<https://www.anglicansocialjustice.nz/>

7

<https://www.premierpraise.com>

The World Council of Churches and the World Communion of the Reformed Church hosted an Ecumenical School on Governance, Economics and Management (GEM) in August 2017 in Lusaka, Zambia and will repeat the process in Mexico in August 2018. This GEM school brings together many years of ecumenical work on financial instruments and economic policies. The curriculum culminates in sessions on the transformation of neo-liberal processes, points of entry and possible strategies. Topics include growth, poverty reduction, taxation, employment and the role of the state.⁸

Pope Francis calls us to keep focussed: *A youthful heart does not tolerate injustice and cannot bow to a "throw-away culture" nor give in to the globalization of indifference.*⁹

So, let's affirm each other's passionate commitment to justice. Let's learn from each other, as we seek to honour Te Tiriti in everything that we do. We have the commitment and skills among us. **Let's do it!**

[/News/UK/Homes-plan-saves-Cardiff-church](#)

8

<http://httpwww.oikumene.org/en/resources/documents/gem-school-2018-provisional-programme>

9

<https://millennialjournal.com/2018/02/12/quote-of-the-day-447/>