

## Crown Apology to Ngai Tahu

*This apology was delivered to Ngai Tahu Whanui on 29 November 1998 by Prime Minister Jenny Shipley at Ōnuku Marae on Banks Peninsula.*

The Crown recognises the protracted labours of the Ngai Tahu ancestors in pursuit of their claims for redress and compensation against the Crown for nearly 150 years, as alluded to in the Ngai Tahu proverb 'He mahi kai takata, he mahi kai hoaka' ('It is work that consumes people, as greenstone consumes sandstone').

The Ngai Tahu understanding of the Crown's responsibilities conveyed to Queen Victoria by Matiaha Tiramorehu in a petition in 1857, guided the Ngai Tahu ancestors. Tiramorehu wrote, 'This was the command thy love laid upon these Governors ... that the law be made one, that the commandments be made one, that the nation be made one, that the white skin be made just equal with the dark skin, and to lay down the love of thy graciousness to the Maori that they dwell happily ... and remember the power of thy name.'

The Crown hereby acknowledges the work of the Ngai Tahu ancestors and makes this apology to them and to their descendants.

The Crown acknowledges that it acted unconscionably and in repeated breach of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in its dealings with Ngai Tahu in the purchases of Ngai Tahu land. The Crown further acknowledges that in relation to the deeds of purchase it has failed in most material respects to honour its obligations to Ngai Tahu as its Treaty partner, while it also failed to set aside adequate lands for Ngai Tahu's use, and to provide adequate economic and social resources for Ngai Tahu.

The Crown acknowledges that, in breach of Article Two of the Treaty, it failed to preserve and protect Ngai Tahu's use and ownership of such of their land and valued possessions as they wished to retain.

The Crown recognises that it has failed to act towards Ngai Tahu reasonably and with the utmost good faith in a manner consistent with the honour of the Crown. That failure is referred to in the Ngai Tahu saying 'Te Hapa o Niu Tireni!' ('The unfulfilled promise of New Zealand') The Crown further recognises that its failure always to act in good faith deprived Ngai Tahu of the opportunity to develop and kept the tribe for several generations in a state of poverty, a state referred to in the proverb 'Te mate o te iwi' ('The malaise of the tribe').

The Crown recognises that Ngai Tahu has been consistently loyal to the Crown, and that the tribe has honoured its obligations and responsibilities under the Treaty of Waitangi and duties as citizens of the nation, especially, but not exclusively, in their active service in all of the major conflicts up to the present time to which New Zealand has sent troops. The Crown pays tribute to Ngai Tahu's loyalty and to the contribution made by the tribe to the nation.

The Crown expresses its profound regret and apologises unreservedly to all members of Ngai Tahu Whanui for the suffering and hardship caused to Ngai Tahu, and for the harmful effects which resulted to the welfare, economy and development of Ngai Tahu as a tribe.

The Crown acknowledges that such suffering, hardship and harmful effects resulted from its failures to honour its obligations to Ngai Tahu under the deeds of purchase whereby it acquired Ngai Tahu lands, to set aside adequate lands for the tribe's use, to allow reasonable access to traditional sources of food, to protect Ngai Tahu's rights to pounamu and such other valued possessions as the tribe wished to retain, or to remedy effectually Ngai Tahu's grievances.

The Crown apologises to Ngai Tahu for its past failures to acknowledge Ngai Tahu rangatiratanga and mana over the South Island lands within its boundaries, and, in fulfilment of its Treaty obligations, the Crown recognises Ngai Tahu as the tangata whenua of, and as holding rangatiratanga within, the Takiwa of Ngai Tahu Whanui.

Accordingly, the Crown seeks on behalf of all New Zealanders to atone for these acknowledged injustices, so far as that is now possible, and, with the historical grievances finally settled as to matters set out in the Deed of Settlement signed on 21 November 1997, to begin the process of healing and to enter a new age of co-operation with Ngai Tahu