

completely effective. However, what it does within its programme is a matter for it to deal with domestically. The concept has arisen because, in my view, a number of Maori authorities will have matured or will mature shortly and their only option of expansion is outside the existing legislation. I said to the kaumatua wananga about three or four months ago, "I want to tell you that the concept of Maori International is fully supported so what does it suggest to you?" For purposes of expansion it will of course require legislation in the long term. However, in the short term, those who are wanting to become participants in that company have the right to go to the Maori Land Court and to ask for those orders or those prescriptions within its order. That is the policy as I see it at the present time. I say to you that the overall thrust of *Tu Tangata* must be kept up and maintained."

On education policy, Koro Wetere sounded caution in changing the structure of *te kohanga reo* but was more optimistic about the core curriculum's *taha maori*.

"My colleagues and I were not satisfied with the time constraints in which the previous minister had put the core curriculum and suggested to him very strongly that the period should be extended. The new minister had said that the review would take place at the end of this year and this will give time to our people to make submissions. The questions to which you referred I will be taken aboard by him insofar as the *Taha Maori* is concerned. We will not have any difficulties with that matter at all because there is ample room in the policy to take account of it.

"As we have said TKR needs the sustenance, needs the continuity and also the administration to help it along. It is absolutely necessary not to restructure too much where it could upset this movement. It is fair to say that over the years we have been jolted this way and that way. The people have been left up in the air as to the direction in which they ought to be heading, I didn't want to see that happen, as nor do my colleagues. Because of the way in which our people themselves joined some of those programmes we cannot afford to see some of them disappear. The circumstances in which they were established must nevertheless be continued. Let's continue them and find a sound basis, to assist them and do other things as well. That really is what our concern is — we do not want to see a disruption put our people back further but rather to advance using that philosophical background.

"As I said before employment, housing, education and health are the four areas which have the highest priority, at the present time and that is the programme we will promulgate over the next two years or more. Certainly within the budgeting restraints we have to look at those priorities and address ourselves to them because of the number of people who are out there needing assistance and that is what's more important."

The Minister was questioned about the need for Maori representation on statutory bodies so that Maori opinion was consulted before decision making.

"I will certainly talk with my colleagues and the other ministers about that matter. I do not think we have any difficulties. We have a number of authorities that refer appointments to us. Naturally we have to address all of them. What we do need I think is best personnel for those positions.

"It is not a mere fact of having a brown face on a board or in a position that represents us, it has to be more than that. Unless we have people who can serve in those areas that understand our position impeccably, then it is of little use making those appointments. In my view that is wrong, we ought to be appointing people who have the experience and the knowledge to fit that position efficiently. I can leave that in your capable hands.

"We have already spoken to the president of this council and also the president of the Maori Women's Welfare League and I want a list from your organisations defining their occupations and their suitability to fit into those organisations."

The minister also had some changes in the way of consulting with Maori people.

"It has been announced that Kaumatuas will now be invited to go into the city areas from the various districts. I understand that there is a group from the *Tairāwhiti* in Auckland now. It will be that sort of process that we will start to do.

"I also said last week that instead of convening conferences in Wellington we will now go out onto the *marae*. It is a lot easier for us to go out there on our own ground and consult rather than down here. I hope that message reaches everyone. That is how we intend to consult with our people on their own ground. There will be a need for us to come together from time to time, but I would hope that the greater matters of concern are a matter of consultation on our *marae* outside Wellington."

Koro Wetere had words to say about Maoris and the media and suggested a fresh look at this area.

He was replying in the wake of several successful Maori language radio stations that had been operating the previous Maori language week. The Huirangi he refers to was Huirangi Waikarepuru from *Te Reo o Poneke*.

"This morning I had Huirangi in to see me about his operations here in Wellington. I want to say what I said to him to you — I compliment you on taking those initiatives and in my opinion they are completely laudable. The whole question of communication is important to all of us. Therefore we need to look at how we manage that resource as well. We're not really talking about radio alone we're also talking about television and the other areas of media.

"It is my intention to refurbish the Maori Purposes Fund Board to become a cultural board which will have the responsibilities for cultural activities, and the media activities which will include radio and the rest. That board will concern itself with all of the cultural activities of importance, within the area of Maoridom. However, those various sectors will not lose their autonomy as a result of that board but rather start to put together the machinery so that we can then use all of the expertise that we have at our command.

"Recently I had the privilege of attending the Maori Artists and Writers Seminar at Ratana Pa. There was an amazing abundance of talent at that hui. I think one really needs to have a look at just how our people have gone about amassing all of this experience. That puts us in a very healthy situation, in fact exciting, and we welcome that initiative.

"I can assure you, as I said to Huirangi this morning, it is my intention to have discussions with the minister of broadcasting because he is aware of our views in terms of policy — Radio Aotearoa and also television. But we are also interested in the whole question of private radio and so on, particularly in our areas. It is an important aspect of communication insofar as our people are concerned and we ought not to lose sight of it. Therefore we would need to hold those talks with him as the question of facilities and accommodation could be mobilised."

And Maori language is finally to get official recognition in New Zealand.

"The question of the official status of the language will be recognised by this government I can assure you my colleagues here presented 3 Bills, in the past, and that should give sufficient evidence as to the intentions of this government.

"We plan a piece of legislation that will have regard to the things that you are talking about. You will recall that with regards to the re-introduction of Maori speaking persons when we were last the government, it was for the very reason of holding on to the values and dialectal values of our tribal people. There is no other alternative to that. If that is not reflected then you are not talking about a mature language. That was to lead the re-introduction of that scheme and on that basis there will be recognition."