

# MAORI UNIONS

*"Tukua mai kia piri  
tukua mai kia tata  
kia eke mai  
ki runga ki te  
paepaepoto o Houmaitawhiti e."*

About 700 Maori workers attended the first national Hui a nga Kaimahi o Aotearoa.

The take of the hui centred around how the Trade Union Movement is able to respond to the needs of the tangata whenua.

There was a clear consensus at the hui against the formation of a separate Maori trade union. There was general agreement that Maori workers should continue to work through existing structures. However, if nothing happens in the near future as a consequence of the hui, the possibility of a separate trade union for Maori people being formed cannot be discounted.

Arapeta Tahana, a vocational guidance officer with the Labour Department's Rotorua office, said that the hui should have been held years ago.

"Maori people have been hurting badly, and have been for years. To listen to speaker after speaker outlining the problems facing Maori people was a source of great pain."

He said that coming together and discussing their pain as Maori workers and trade unionists gave real hope.

"We have told our pakeha brothers and sisters in a clear and unambiguous way that something has to be done, and done now."

Arepatu notes that the FOL and CSU have acknowledged that "many deficiencies exist" and that "past promises have not been kept."

Now the ball lies in the FOL/CSU court.

## 1. Hui follow-up

"That the present Maori Trade Union Committee, be renamed *The Runanga O Nga Kaimahi*, and be made responsible for negotiating with FOL and CSU on recommendations of this Hui.

"The Runanga to report back to another Hui of Maori workers next year.

"That this Runanga be increased by nomination from the floor.

"That this Hui demands Maori representation on all Union decision making structures reflecting Maori membership numbers.

"That in consultation with their Maori membership, Union executives draw up and implement Maori policies.

"That Maori women and youth be integral parts of all power structures in all union organisations."

NGA KAIMAHI MARAE  
S. HIHA  
(Maori Trade Union Committee/Wellington Clerical Workers Union)  
**CARRIED**

"Maori Representation as of right on both FOL and CSU executive and management body. Representation to be determined by Maori workers and their central body.

"Similarly union organisations should make structural changes to reflect their Maori membership and adopting a Maori perspective".

NICK TANGAROA  
(Engineers Union Delegation)  
**CARRIED**

"That regions initiate post-hui hui to ensure effective ongoing networking is assured on a regional basis".

NGAHITI FAULKNER (PSA)  
TAU HENARE  
(Clerical Workers Union, Auckland)  
**CARRIED**

"That a Maori Trade Union Hui be held annually".

FRED McRAE (PSA)  
NGAIRE BROWN  
(Kohanga Reo)  
**CARRIED**

## 2. Maori Trade Union – other alternatives

"That this Hui form a Maori Trade Union Movement on a separate and equal status to the FOL and CSU".

TAOTAHU PIHEMA  
(Auckland PSA Delegate)  
AMOKURA PANOHO  
(Auckland Clerical Workers Union)  
**REJECTED**

"That the Combined Trade Unions make bold public announcements to make immediate structural changes to allow for Maori self-determination in the Trade Union Movement".

TAOTAHU PIHEMA  
(Auckland PSA Delegate)  
AMOKURA PANOHO  
(Auckland Clerical Workers Union)  
**CARRIED**

"That in the interim period the FOL immediately incorporate Te Reo Maori into all staff training, service and planning".

TAOTAHU PIHEMA  
(Auckland PSA Delegate)

AMOKURA PANOHO  
(Auckland Clerical Workers Union)  
**CARRIED**

"That a salaried position to be called a Maori Public Relation Officer be immediately set up and that the FOL and CSU provide the budget and appropriate resources".

TAOTAHU PIHEMA  
(Auckland PSA Delegate)  
AMOKURA PANOHO  
(Auckland Clerical Workers Union)  
**CARRIED**

"That this Hui ask the FOL to encourage and promote power sharing between pakeha and Maori workers in all work places within the private sector and Government Departments".

JOHN ANTONIO  
(PSA Member, Registered as a delegate at this Hui)  
**CARRIED**

"That the Maori Trade Union Committee have a 50% representation of bona fide members of the workforce and also 1 representative of the unemployed".

K. JONES  
(NZ Workers Union – delegation remit)  
M. WILSON  
(NZ Workers Union)  
**CARRIED**

"That we support the concept of organising a Maori Trade Union".

AUCKLAND TAITOKERAU  
(PSA Delegation)  
**REJECTED**

"That this conference form a Working Group for the purpose of:

- 1) Producing a paper summarising all the needs and Maori view points raised by this conference.
- 2) Present the paper to the heads of the Trade Unions including all affiliated unions with a view to committing the various Unions to consider the needs in such a way as to provide whatever is necessary to accommodate these views within their structure.
- 3) That a reasonable time be given to the unions to reply to the Working Group with their decision.
- 4) That the interim measure by the Working Group, be the threat of establishing a separate union, and this to be used as an instrument to encourage a speedy and positive response by unions to the needs outlined in the paper".

V.A. WHITE  
(Post Office Union)