



Left: Mrs Violet Pou, President of the Maori Women's Welfare League, addresses this year's conference at the Whakatane District War Memorial Centre. In the background is the League's first President, Dame Whina Cooper, who received her damehood on Waitangi Day this year. Both women are from Ngapuhi. — Whakatane Beacon Photo.

Below: A few of the many young Maori people, male and female, whose presence was a stimulating feature of the conference. There has been a marked increase in recruitment in members of the League among the young. — Whakatane Beacon Photo.

cluding weekend sleep-ins. It was a process of meeting the people; explaining the programme, and assisting to launch them into the Tu Tangata programme. It has required effort, energy, and dedication.

Overseas delegations

Copenhagen, Denmark: 11 July-2 August 1980. Principally because of the stand the M.W.W.L. executive took with the Government that a League representative should be in all future delegations where Maori women were affected, Mrs Pou was chosen to attend the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. Mrs Pou spoke of the hard work involved (sessions started at 7.30pm and finished at 11.00pm), and the experience gained by working in association with the New Zealand representatives and others.

Fiji: 29 October-4 November 1980. This was a conference of Pacific women, intended as a follow-up to the Copenhagen conference. Mrs Pou went with Mrs Maria Tautari of Kawakawa, who represented the Committee on Women. The atmosphere here was different from Copenhagen, with all participants Polynesian or Melanesian. Opinions were voiced freely and without inhibition.

New Zealand Maori Council Meetings

We were invited to have a representative on the N.Z.M.C. Legislative Review Committee, and also to prepare a paper for the M.W.W.L. This has been completed. We will be endeavouring this year to have a representative from the League to attend all Council meetings and we have tried to arrange our executive meetings to suit both organisations. Mrs Tilly Reedy has now joined us on the Executive and her training and acquired skills will be of valuable assistance in the M.W.W.L. meetings and programmes.

Meanwhile the League has been inundated with requests to attend other meetings, conferences and social events, and has had to balance the cost of such attendances against the desirability of maintaining a League presence and keeping communications open. But in all cases a member of the League has been able to attend, and acknowledgement has to be made of their availability despite other commitments.

In conclusion, Mrs Pou said "We your National Executive could not possibly achieve so much if it were not for you



and your good works. Our very existence depends entirely upon you our members. Noreira — Kia kaha; kia toa; kia manawanui. Ma te Runga Rawa koutou katoa e atawhai, e tiaki, i nga wa katoa."

E hoa ma — space does not permit fuller coverage of the President's report. Suffice it to say — keep the good work moving along.

The swift passage of time and the vast bulk of business tabled at the conference gave delegates very little time for anything else. This is as it should be. My tribute at this time, is to the Leagues of Waiariki and especially to Mrs Janet Brown, Waiariki Area Representative: also to the Tangata Whenua, Tuhoe Whanui, from the elders to the small children, every one — for the warmth of your hospitality; for your manaakitanga throughout the conference; for the sweet spirit, for the unobtrusive and quiet manner in which you sustained and comforted each and every one; for the sheer pleasure of sharing with us the gifts, talents and beauty of Maoritanga as demonstrated by the young children. Everything was just beautiful. Whakatane and all those who attended Conference: Kia ora! Tena koutou! Tena koutou! Tena koutou katoa!