

## **"The establishment of this council ought to be proof enough that the policy of integration ... does not mean obliteration of the Maori race."**

**Opening speech by Mr J.K. Hunn —  
Abridged**

"Tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou nga mangai o nga taunihara takiwa o te Tai Tokerau, o Akarana, o Waikato-Maniapoto, o Aotea, o Te Tairāwhiti, o Ikaroa, me Te Waipounamu.

Haere mai ki te pane o te ika a Maui. Haere mai ki te hui tuatahi a te kaunihara Maori o Niu Tirenī. He hui nui whakaharahara tenei. Haere mai, haere mai, haere mai.

"I would like first to pay my respectful tribute to the memory of the late Major Te Reiwhati Vercoe. He will be very much in our minds at this inaugural meeting.

"Most of us were here last year when he presided over the forerunner of this Council, the provisional meeting convened by the Minister of Maori Affairs. We all know the part he played in initiating the move that has culminated in this meeting today.

"No other Maori has served New Zealand as faithfully and long as the late Te Reiwhati. There are not many men of either races who can claim the distinction of having served New Zealand in two wars — beginning at the youthful age of 15 years and serving with such distinction as to win a D.C.M. and be mentioned in dispatches at that young age and in the next World War to have won the D.S.O. and be mentioned in dispatches four times.

"He was not only an elder of Ngati Pikiao and Te Arawa but he was truly an elder of Te Iwi Maori. We will long honour and respect his memory and treasure the friendship that everyone had the privilege of experiencing with him.

"I recall in my short association something which will linger on. I met him quite a number of times and on his own Marae he took the floor against the Minister and myself to question the proposed policy of having land development carried out by the Lands Department.

**"But, after a strong speech he ended by saying: 'However, those are only my views. I may be wrong. If you can show me that I am I will be with you.'"**

"Now what more could anyone ask? In the end I think he was with us but never could we ask more from anybody who doubts the wisdom of what is proposed, than that. "If you can show me I am wrong, I will be with you". Gentlemen, whatever I might say would be quite inadequate to express our real feelings and so I will at this stage invite you to pay your respects to his memory in whatever way you think appropriate.

"Gentlemen, this is your meeting. I am merely a statutory official here, my function is simply, according to the Act, to convene this meeting and to invite you to

elect your President and Secretary but I do wonder on this occasion whether you would grant me the privilege of speaking.

"First of all I would like to add my congratulations to the heartfelt good wishes extended by the Council to Sir Alfred Turi Carroll. It is very pleasing indeed that his long service as a soldier, farmer, administrator and elder statesman have been recognised by Her Majesty. It gives pleasure not only to Maoridom but to New Zealand in general.

"At the same time I would like to mention Norman Perry and the distinction that has come his way. He has thoroughly deserved it. He has given long and valuable service to the Maori people in many ways. Congratulations to him.

**"The Maori people today are on the march and this meeting is a milestone on the road of their progress. It is a goal achieved that brings many other goals in sight and with it there is a rising spirit of hope and confidence right throughout Maoridom today. You can sense it; it is a sort of pulsating spirit and manifests itself as you travel around the country."**

"The campaign for the Maori Education Foundation seems to have fired Maori imagination and rallied them to a common cause as nothing else has for a long time. It is significant of the need that Maoridom has felt for a rallying point. And they now have it in the establishment of this Council, elected democratically from the grass roots to speak for the Maori people with a united voice.

"In that campaign for funds the Maori people pulled their weight magnificently. They have contributed at least eight times their proportionate quota on a population basis. A splendid effort.

"Maoris are certainly pulling their weight in the progress and development of our country. Maori successes are most heartening and this New Zealand Maori Council can do much to inspire the spirit of emulation among the young people.

"To me the emergence of this Council is a very healthy sign. Henceforth the Maori people are committed to think nationally as well as tribally.

"Tribal loyalties are still strong and enduring — may they always be so because identification with a place or a people is a source of strength — but let those loyalties be a tributary to the main stream of national effort on behalf of the Maori people. Maoridom is obliged today to think nationally or even to think internationally. I do believe that this Council will show that it is ready to do so.

"There are two points I would like to make before I conclude. One is that some people sincerely doubted the wisdom of establishing this body.

"They felt a powerful force was being organised that could become an agent for

obstruction or even reaction, but I am glad to know that the authorities had faith in the Maori desire for progress and co-operation and that in proceeding to establish this Council they showed their confidence in the Maori people.

"I have no doubt that Maoridom through the voice of this Council will be strong for the right, always of course for the right as they see it. In this connection I was very glad indeed last year when the provisional delegates here asked of their own volition that the Draft Bill on the Maori Social and Economic Advancement Amendment Act, 1961 — Section 8 include: "(2) Without limiting the generality of the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, it is hereby declared that it shall be a function of the New Zealand Council to consider and, as far as possible, put into effect any harmonious and friendly relations between members of the Maori race and other members of the community."

"This was an unsolicited and statesman-like request. With that spirit animating the New Zealand Maori Council at the beginning of its life, good race relations in New Zealand are assured if only the same spirit be reciprocated. That puts an onus squarely on the Pakeha section of the community.

"The other point I would like to touch on briefly relates to integration. The establishment of this Council ought to be proof enough that the policy of integration as far as the authorities are concerned does not mean obliteration of the Maori race.

**"Integration is different from assimilation which means making everybody the same. Integration means the intermingling of two distinct races, participating together in education, employment, entertainment, transport, social life and all walks of life, but withdrawing now and again according to the tastes of the individual to enjoy each his separate culture the same as we all do in religion, in politics, in our clubs and professional associations."**

"I am sure that the passion for sameness that prevails in this country is not so doctrinaire that we want to eliminate all cultural distinctions. Under a policy of integration all races can preserve their identity and contribute to the national identity.

"Heoi'ra, Ake ake kia kaha."

**"There were pockets of resistance; a pessimist might say pockets of racialism, ..."**

**The speech by the Hon. H.R. Hanan, at the inaugural meeting of the New Zealand Maori Council — abridged.**

"Chiefs and leaders of the Maori people, tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou.

"As I look around this table and realise how many of you I know quite well I realise how worthwhile it has been to get round the maraes where I have met so many of the Maori people.