

# National — Standing Tall Ben Couch

“Te hunga mate haere koutou.

“Te hunga ora tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.”

The future of the Maori lies in increasing self-reliance by marrying the best of the new world to the best of the old. We must make material progress through education and technology, while retaining the spiritual values of our ancestors.

This is the basis on which the Tu Tangata programmes are built; a series of practical programmes designed for the Maori, by the Maori, and carried out increasingly by the Maori. Through these, and allied projects, we are learning to “Stand Tall” in our own eyes, and in the eyes of all New Zealanders.

Through trade and technical training and, increasingly, education for the professions, we are coming to terms with town and city life. At the same time, planned progress is being made in providing more urban marae to ensure that Maori in towns and cities retain their links with their heritage of Maoritanga.

## Spiritual base

The land is our spiritual base; but it can also provide an economic base and this is being expanded by encouraging Maori landowners to use their land to full advantage. Major land development schemes, helped largely by the Government, are providing growing opportunities for local employment, better skills and increasing incomes. Some of these schemes are also introducing Maori landowners to new forms of diversified land use, including horticulture and forestry, which have futures that will continue to expand for many years.

Much of the Government encouragement is by making finance available through the Maori Affairs Department, the Rural Bank and Maori Trust Boards. In the year ended March 31, 1981, \$7.28 million was provided for loans to Maori farmers, and horticultural loans through the Maori Land Board were increased by 60 per cent. Help is also being given for such ventures as rock oyster, mussel and eel farming.

The department is currently developing 118,096 hectares of land under the continuing policy of de-

veloping land which can, when it is economically self-supporting, be handed back to the management of the Maori owners. A great deal has already been done on this, and large areas of good farming land are now being managed most successfully by Maori owners — another step on the road to self-reliance.

## Education vital

Education is vital to the success of these programmes, and special Tu Tangata projects are encouraging Maori parents to involve themselves more with their children's education. Support is being given in homework centres and a 10-year plan to improve the level of education has been started.

After school days, continuing policies are helping to assist less-qualified Maoris to find jobs. The Maori Affairs Department will be directly assisting one-third of all Maori school leavers into jobs and

skill training programmes next year.

Technical and trade training courses are also being increased, and now include agriculture, fishing, horticulture, catering, computer programming, accountancy and Maori language. Successful small business wananga have also been held to provide Maori businessmen and women with the commercial skills needed to run their own businesses.

I believe we Maori, with the help of these Government programmes designed by the Maori for the Maori, are successfully meeting the challenges of today's world. There is much yet to do; but we have the people to do it.

And, under Tu Tangata, the Maori will indeed Stand Tall.

**The maori land march — a thorn in the side of maori politicians, or an indication of the mood of maoridom. Photo John Johnstone.**

