

of stress on their young people and the difficulties of unemployment and poor housing. Another concern was the loss of the training school from Kaitaia Hospital which, as Auntie Amy Tatana said, "had trained and given employment to girls from our own area who were lovely with our kuia and kaumatua. Nevertheless," she said, "they (the health professionals) were really sincere in doing something for our people and we tried to help them along."

Delegates reported that there had been feedback from the professionals within a fortnight and they regarded it as a very successful exercise.

Past National President, Mrs Violet Pou, reminded delegates that the closing date for applications to the Maori Education Foundation for assistance for tertiary students would fall in February. She suggested that it would be a good idea if delegates asked a student who was coping well with his/her university studies to talk to their children about the difficulties they would be likely to experience in their first year at university, and how to deal with them.

Miss Anne Delamere, who over several years has served on the secondary selection panel for the Foundation, told the meeting of her great pleasure at the really good reports on Maori students coming in this year from the schools. She urged delegates to encourage their children to stay on at school. Though further education no longer ensured immediate employment she was sure it would assist the children to cope better with their lives when they left school.

The programme for League conference in 1984 was widely discussed. Employment, housing and health, with special emphasis on stress management, were the themes which recurred in all the comments. The conference theme will be: 'He aha te mea nui, he tangata, he tangata, he tangata.'

Presenting her report to the meeting on Sunday morning the President made the suggestion that an arts and crafts session be incorporated in the conference programme and this call met with a warm response from Taitokerau, where skilled craftswomen abound. The President also asked the women to think about putting waiata to the rhythms used in flax cutting and weaving, waiata which would incorporate the names of the flaxes of their particular area and of the processes used in flax preparation and weaving.

The meeting with Taitokerau Regional concluded at noon on Sunday and after making its farewells, Executive was escorted to Waipuna Marae, Panguru, by the branches travelling north to their homes. There it had been arranged that Executive would meet with League foundation president, Dame Whina Cooper and the branches of North Hokianga, Pawarenga, Motuti, Lower Waihou and Waipuna.

At each of the places visited members had paid tribute to Maraea Te Kawa, and in visiting Panguru the National President was fulfilling a commitment made by the Past National President to Dame Whina, that she would travel on to Panguru after the Executive meeting in Whangarei.

As the meeting commenced, Dame Whina called the President to her and, putting the League's cloak around her shoulders, she said she placed it there to confirm her in her position as President. She exhorted her to be strong to the aspirations of the League.

Dame Whina said that League had been the pioneer in grappling with the social problems of the day and that it must not lose its place in the forefront of efforts to promote the well-being of the Maori people. She saw housing as the greatest need in the area and asked Executive's support in making the government responsive to the community's needs. In Panguru alone 28 applications for housing had been placed, but the cry was the same in all the settlements she visited. The young people wanted to come home from the towns but there was nowhere for them to live.

The National President assured Dame Whina that the purpose of this meeting was to hear the concerns of the people and then to take some action on those concerns.

Local stalwart, Father Tate, said the priorities for development in the district were:

1. The construction and restoration of marae, for the dignity of the people and for the tangi. Half of the tangi held were for people brought home from the cities, hence the need for big marae, such as Waipuna, which could cater for them.
2. Employment. Father paid tribute to the Hokianga County Council for their great effort in supporting and promoting PEP schemes which now provided employment for 60 people in the area, clearing land and improving the marae. In developing employment projects the people were at the mercy of the financiers and were doubly disadvantaged because their land was under multiple ownership. In Pawarenga there was land research being done and it was hoped to put the land into a Trust for the people of the area. In the meantime uses for the land had to be explored. Water had to be found for some areas. Experimental plantings and soil testing were going on. But at present there was just no permanent employment available.

The President said she was a member of the Board of Maori Affairs. The Department was fully committed to the investigation and actioning of development plans and on request an investigating officer would be sent out to help local people.

3. Housing. In the last five years 17 new houses had been built in the area. In Motuti the marae was undertaking the building of 9 two-bedroom homes. The people wanted to come from the cities and make a new start, but there were no houses for them. Yet the community needed the population for its viability. Rural zoning, multiple ownership, the difficulty and expense involved in bringing in building materials, the expense of surveying were all additional complications in the struggle to provide homes for the people.

4. Education. The community was very happy with the Panguru Area School where there were excellent teachers giving extra hours to the children and the community.

Mrs Hilda Wilson, Taitokerau Area Representative, described to Executive the wonderful progress that had been made over the last three years, as witnessed by the magnificent Waipuna Marae in which they were meeting, which Dame Whina had opened just months before. This progress she attributed to the efforts of the people under Father Tate's drive and wise leadership.

On Monday morning Dame Whina took the Executive to Motuti to visit the work skills programmes Father Tate was operating under the umbrella of the Community College. These gave twelve young people training in carving, bone carving, tukutuku work, ferro-cement, sewing, tapestry, screen printing, and fancy cooking. All the skills taught were ones which would be of benefit to the community. The magnificent carvings and tukutuku panels were destined for local marae, the sewing, tapestry and screen printing trainees had attractive, saleable articles ready for visiting tourists and for outside markets, the ferro-cement work had already provided water tanks and could be used in the manufacture of culverts, boats, even houses. Other courses, such as welding and car custom painting were contemplated.

Executive were sad to leave Motuti and turn back towards the city. Although the problems in the area are many the impression was of a community tackling them with purpose and pride — achievement.

Some memories that will linger in the mind of the Leagues city bred, pakeha secretary — the stillness and silence of the evening under bush-clad Mt Panguru; the great green moths and the monster beetles attracted by the light streaming from the door of the meeting house, open to the mild air; flounder, fresh caught and cooked over an open fire crisp and juicy and no relation to city-bought flounder; and everywhere the many moods and beauty of the waiata and the warmth and kindness of the welcome.