

It's been a busy couple of months with a range of issues. There are two I want to comment on, and both affect front country more than the back country. The first follows from train of thought triggered by some work Treaty issues, but is not a Treaty issue, while the second concerns Walkways.

The announcement was made on 23 September 1997 from the Government and Ngai Tahu giving details of the negotiations on the settlement of the Ngai Tahu Treaty Claim. FMC has been discussing aspects of the settlement with the Office of Treaty Settlements and on occasions with Ngai Tahu representatives. These discussions have been on aspects of the settlement, not the whole package. At these discussions I feel that many of our comments on detail have been listened to and picked up.

Free camping on public land

One of the areas under discussion have been Nohoanga. Basically these are designated sites for Ngai Tahu to camp near water bodies. During the site by site discussions I was surprised at the large number where the existing use of the site

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separated from the main Himalayan peaks such as Ganesh I (on the Nepalese-Tibetan border) by the Kyrong Valley, Mt Tsalung is heavily glaciated and would be an interesting challenge to enterprising New Zealand climbers. I am not aware of any climbing trips to this particular area, but you could inquire from various sources.

I wish all Bulletin readers well for an enjoyable summer – when you do venture into the back country, take care and come back safely to enjoy many more years of this unique country of ours. It really is a very special place for many of us!

Arnold Heine

was basically a private use. One was ploughed (with no approval) and others were grassed and grazed. A number are near unauthorised baches. Most of the sites are not in the back country. However, I know many personally, having visited them either in transit to the mountains or on holidays in parts of the South Island. Some are in areas where camping is increasingly being restricted to motor camps.

The old practice of spending the night in a tent next to the river is becoming more and more difficult. One of the first clamp-downs was in the Queenstown area, and other local authorities have progressively imposed restrictions. There are places where free camping occurs, and campervans are often seen around the country, pulled off the road in quiet areas. A lot of people obviously like it that way.

Nohoanga sites will give Ngai Tahu long-term access to camping sites. These will be subject to the RMA but, in fairness, this should only prevent adverse impacts, not camping itself.

The rest of us need to consider, in what circumstances and conditions free camping is appropriate by anyone on road reserves and pockets of publicly owned land? We have a tradition of it in many areas but it is something that is diminishing as New Zealand gets more crowded. There can be undeniable downsides in terms of litter, toilet wastes and charcoal mounds. Restrictions are often introduced to deal with these impacts, and I suspect to encourage use of commercial facilities. If these impacts are dealt with in other ways to ensure low impact camping, then presumably there will be areas where free camping is permissible. It seems to me that the Nohoanga sites provide us with some pointers as to the types of areas where free camping could be acceptable.

What has happened to Walkways?

In many parts of the country the Walkways symbol is falling from view. The Walkways Act provided a mechanism for paths to be developed and maintained over private land

with the co-operation of private land owners. Input for maintenance and establishment is, under the legislation, part of DoC's responsibility. Unfortunately the Department has been stretched and Walkways have not been a high priority, especially those off the Conservation Estate (and despite their value to a pretty large section of New Zealand people).

With the latest restructuring of DoC there appears to be no functional group dealing with Walkways in Head Office, and no regular reporting on Walkway activity. This will lead to further neglect. As reporting and accountability gets more detailed the things that get left off reports for performance lists fall further from priority.

This may not matter but as landowners change some Walkways will inevitably close. In order to maintain a few good walks, new Walkways will need to be opened to replace the odd one that is lost. This is not happening unless a local authority is active about the issue. A re-think on Walkways administration and promotion is needed. Unless this happens we will see more closures, such as Cooks Cove and Anaura Bay which were two of the flagship Walkways on the East Coast (Cook Bicentenary and all that), and not a lot of replacement activity.

Ngai Tahu Settlement

On the 23rd September the Government and Ngai Tahu released details of the Crown's offer to Ngai Tahu for settlements of the tribes grievances under the Treaty of Waitangi. Negotiations began in September 1991 following the publication of the Waitangi Tribunal's report earlier in 1991. There was a pause in the negotiations from 1994 to 1996 when the Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu Act was passed and Te Runanga became the mandated representative of Ngai Tahu.

In October 1996 a Heads of Agreement was signed between the Crown and Ngai Tahu. The 1997 Crown offer fleshes out the provisions of the Heads of Agreement. What has been announced is, in effect, the detail plus the monetary sum which was not

included in last year's announcement.

Ngai Tahu's negotiators now have to take the offer to Ngai Tahu for a vote on whether the offer is acceptable. If it is, then the offer will be signed and legislation will be introduced to the Parliament. The Government intends to refer the legislation to a select committee which will give the opportunity for submissions to the select committee.

FMC has discussed parts of the package with Government. Areas of particular interest to FMC in the package have included the provisions concerning conservation and mountain lands in the South Island, in particular.

Greenstone, Routeburn, Elfin Bay Stations

These stations have high values and long-standing use for tramping, hunting and fishing. These were formerly pastoral leases in private hands. Parts of the stations will be gifted to the nation for conservation land. A large part of the stations will be leased to the Crown in perpetuity for a peppercorn rental and the remaining areas, near the lakes and the valley floors, will go to Ngai Tahu subject to access covenants for the public.

Statutory Acknowledgements and Topuni

These are designed to give recognition to the relationship between Ngai Tahu and specified lands. Topuni cover a range of areas including some National Park lands, notably some of the higher mountains including Mt Cook (now Aoraki/Mt Cook). The provisions of the Topuni allow continued recreational access to the mountains and does not give Ngai Tahu any property rights. DoC will draw attention to the Ngai Tahu values associated with the mountain but there are no new restrictions as a result of the Topuni overlay on top of the National Park status of the mountain.

Arahura

The DoC land in the head of the Arahura Valley will be vested with Ngai Tahu and managed as a reserve.

TRANSCENDS OUR RACIAL ORIGINS

Doug Graham, the Minister in Charge of Treaty Negotiations, said recently that it was difficult "to give recognition to values and traditions which are unique to Maoris in today's world. Let me give you an example. To most of us a river is something to use. We fish in it, swim in it, launch our boats into it, and may enjoy just looking at it flow by. But we don't revere it as Maoris do."

This demonstrated to me that not only is Mr Graham out of touch personally with the values that inhere in the natural world, but also that, on the basis of this, he holds an uncritical and misty-eyed view that most Maoris are in touch and most pakehas are not.

It is nothing less than appalling that a senior Minister of the Crown, responsible in the Treaty of Waitangi area to represent all of us, should hold such flawed and partial views. At the very least, Mr Graham is being given bad advice; at worst, he is being manipulated into a position where he now overlooks the fact that he is negotiating for the Crown – that is, all New Zealanders – and has become chief

apologist for the plaintiffs under the Treaty.

Mr Graham's statement was a personal affront to me and to the tens of thousands of other non-Maori citizens of this country for whom their identity as New Zealanders is rooted in a reverence and love for nature and landscape which, while different, is just as valid and as powerful as the Maori's. I could quote endlessly from literature to illustrate my point, but will speak here only with my own voice and from my own experience.

Nearly 30 years ago I wrote, "My own first encounter with mountains was a vision of spring snow sparkling on a clear night on that river's peaks, a sight still vivid in memory, like any scene or event that moulds one's life. Bewitched and humbled at the same time, I became a child of the mountains and nothing seemed more virtuous or valuable than to explore and understand the face of a high landscape . . . The peaks brought the crystallisation of growing strength and confidence, the slow welding of a bond between myself and the mountains, and an understanding of both."

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Nohoanga – Campsites

There are 72 specified campsites around the South Island on Crown land of differing types which Ngai Tahu will have the right to camp on for up to 210 days a year. These are generally small and many have no particular value for mountain recreation. Access along the side of the nearby stream or lake is not to be affected.

The offer also affects Conservation Boards in the South Island and the Conservation Authority. This not only gives Ngai Tahu a presence on these bodies but also adds Treaty settlement dimension to their existence. Ngai Tahu will receive

title to the Crown Titi Islands which will be managed as a reserve with continued mutton-birding. Codfish Island (or Whenua Hou) will remain with the Crown.

While we are still digesting the offer it looks worthy of support. Many of the areas in which last year's Heads of Agreement only outlined and which could have been difficult have turned out not to be problems. There are parts that we will want to discuss. We will send details to clubs but if there are particular questions or concerns please contact any member of the Executive.

Owen Cox

5 What else is to be expected
by a senior W^{tn} public servant!

Judging by the reactions I had to that piece of writing, I spoke for many, many other people who lived in, or visited, or trapped, or climbed in our mountain country.

The greater part of my life's work as a writer and photographer has been inspired by the Southern Alps mountain world in all its multifarious facets, from lowly lichen to icy peak . . .

"Even when they were smothered in storm he always saw them in his mind's eye, obdurate within the cloud, unchanged by thunder or rain or even snow, for the mountains made all these and could not be changed by them; they made the rain and the snow, the water for the rivers, the cold and the heat and the wind, and the land was composed of their dust. They were like gods, grizzled and tawny, ancient and violent, disposing and creating, everlasting. And like gods, they appeared in different guises, inscrutable, always perfect."

I have willed that, when I die, my ashes should be scattered in the place that is my spiritual home.

My feeling for, understanding of, and spiritual identification with the world of the Southern Alps led me to create an entire kea mythology for a place that had scant existing mythology.

And while I always gave regard to Maori place, myth and experience in the mountain world in my writings – whether in novels, children's books, guide books, or other non-fiction books – I rarely encountered Maoris during my travels in the mountains, noticed no significant involvement by Maoris in mountain conservation issues, and certainly never received any Maori comment or response to any of my writings. And here lies the rub. It seems no Maori is willing to acknowledge any pakeha spiritual or emotional connection with the land or, if

there is any form of acknowledgement, it is always qualified as being less or inferior.

It is different, certainly. It is backed by untold centuries of involvement with nature, with gods and myths of forest and sea, with traditions of a natural and symbiotic relationship with the land that draw on cultural experiences and references, exemplified in art and literature, which are much more widely based than the purely Polynesian. The pakehas are the inheritors in New Zealand of a vast weight of myth and tradition.

Recognising the validity of pakeha experience of nature in New Zealand is, of course, politically dangerous. All Maori claims of moral and spiritual precedence and authority are based on the premise that Maoris have been here longer, it is their only home, and therefore must be more important to them and they must have a better understanding of the natural environment.

This premise ignores the fact that New Zealand is the pakehas' only home too, and that they have been here long enough now to have their own powerful and valid relationship with the land.

Just as it is imperative that pakehas properly recognise Maori spirituality, place, and customary behaviour in the New Zealand landscape, so must Maoris recognise the pakeha's. Exclusivity is no basis on which to bring about settlements which are lasting, not just from the Maori point of view, but also from the pakeha's.

Recognition of each other's place in this land is the only way that a full reconciliation and understanding can be reached. Mutual respect and acceptance are something that Mr Graham, as negotiator, should have the wit to recognise and that are essential to the conclusion of any settlement process.

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