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Making a New Zealand Day

THE CREATION AND CONTEXT OF A NATIONAL HOLIDAY[1]

AT WAITANGI in the Bay of Islands on the evening of the first 'New Zealand Day', the sixth of February 1974, a cast of 750 people portrayed New Zealand's history from the arrival of Māori to the 1970s. They were watched by a crowd of about 25,000, including Queen Elizabeth II, Prime Minister Norman Kirk and Māori Affairs Minister Matiu Rata.[2] The performance focused on the migrant origins of all New Zealanders, showing the arrival of 13 different ethnic and national groups, including Māori, Scots, Indians, Danes and Chinese. Set to a pop music soundtrack, it featured the singer Howard Morrison and two choreographed rugby teams, and depicted scenes ranging from a moa laying an egg to the progress of the New Zealand educational system. Earlier events that day included the welcome of Kirk and other government representatives onto the Waitangi national marae, a waka trip by Kirk and Rata to the Queen's yacht, and speeches by the Queen and the Prime Minister. The day was also marked by dissent: a small number of republican and Māori protesters engaged in a variety of activities, including throwing firecrackers, jeering at the Queen and waving placards. Some even attempted to blow up the flagpole at Russell.

The 1974 celebrations marked the first time that 6 February had been a national public holiday. The holiday and the public events associated with it were conscious attempts to deal with crises in the country's national identity. They were also intended to address Māori desire for greater public recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi. The messages sent by New Zealand Day were frequently contradictory, and at times made it clear that the Pākehā-dominated government retained control of the proceedings. Despite this, New Zealand Day also required that New Zealanders grapple with concepts such as biculturalism, multiculturalism and national identity. This article explores the origins and context of New Zealand Day, showing how a regional commemoration became a national day, before analysing how the 1974 celebrations reflected the ideals and contradictions of New Zealand identity and Māori–Pākehā relations in the mid 1970s.

Given that the meaning and status of the Treaty of Waitangi is one of New Zealand's most debated topics, and the huge international literature on commemorations, there has been surprisingly little academic work done on commemorations of the Treaty's signing. Contemporary Waitangi Days have been examined by Patrick McAllister using the anthropology of performance, and by Sue Abel, who focused on media coverage from 1990 to 1995.[3] The Waitangi Days of 1940 and 1981 have also been closely examined, but the ongoing history of the commemorations has only been explored in my doctoral thesis (in conjunction with Anzac Day and two Northern Irish commemorations), very briefly by McAllister, in Claudia Orange's book on the

Treaty, and in a spectacularly inaccurate chapter in an American book on national commemorations.[4] The scarcity of published research has meant that anyone trying to understand Waitangi Day without undertaking extensive research is dependent on news coverage. The news media tends to focus on conflict, and so its Waitangi Day coverage has, since the early 1970s, emphasised protest at the expense of other features of the day. It has usually also been unable or unwilling to fully cover the background to Waitangi Day events, including the reasons behind changes to the ceremonies and the motivations of protesters. As Abel points out, it has also tended to present a Pākehā view of events, marginalising or ignoring Māori voices. So little has been written on Waitangi Day that it is necessary to go into some detail regarding its origins.

After the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840, it drifted into official neglect. By 1877 Chief Justice James Prendergast could declare it a 'simple nullity' in terms of transferring sovereignty, an opinion which remained legal orthodoxy into the 1970s.[5] Despite this, the Treaty became a focal point of Māori politics, and from the 1870s Te Tii marae near the site of the Treaty signing hosted numerous hui on the Treaty and Māori unity.[6] A hall built in 1875, and its 1881 replacement, were named after the Treaty and used for these hui, and a monument to the Treaty was erected.[7] The halls, monument and hui were important precursors to Waitangi Day, reaffirming the importance of the Treaty and Māori commitment to it. Although they were Ngā Puhi projects, they were also an important step in bringing together Māori of all iwi behind the Treaty, and were an attempt to remind Pākehā of the partnership they had entered into.

General histories of the country began to appear from the late nineteenth century, and T. Lindsay Buick's book on the Treaty was first published in 1914.[8] In contrast to Prendergast and other legal thinkers, as well as many academic historians before the 1960s, Buick tended to see the Treaty as the foundation of New Zealand as a country and an example of British colonial benevolence, as did other popular historians such as A.H. Reed.[9]

One of the manifestations of this increased interest in New Zealand's early history was a growing number of commemorations, particularly various centenaries, but also the first New Zealand Day. This was organised by the New Zealand Society in London from 1933, and held annually on 8 February, a date which seems to have been chosen because it marked the anniversary of the first celebrations of British sovereignty in 1840.[10] Speeches made at this event tended to focus on the British link and the desirability of preferential empire trade, although partnership between Māori and Pākehā was occasionally mentioned.[11] Another sign of interest in the past was the campaign for state purchase of James Busby's former residence and its grounds, the location of the first Treaty signing. This campaign was unsuccessful until 1932, when Governor-General Charles Bledisloe bought the property and donated it to the nation.[12] The Waitangi Trust Board was then established, consisting of the Governor-General, several politicians, representatives of Māori and Pākehā, and descendants of Henry Williams, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, and (collectively) the Hone Heke, Maihi Kawiti, Tamati Waka Nene and Pomare families.[13] The property was established as a national reserve, and its dedication on

6 February 1934 — arguably the first Waitangi Day — was the occasion of a huge gathering of Māori, as well as many Pākehā dignitaries.[14]

Six years later the site was used to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the Treaty signing, attended by about ten thousand people, including Governor-General George Galway, representatives of the United Kingdom and Australia, numerous politicians and foreign consuls, as well as numerous Māori leaders.[15] Many more people listened to the nationally broadcast radio coverage.[16] The celebrations were boycotted by the Māori King in protest at the government's refusal to treat him as anything more than a respected private citizen, and statesman Āpirana Ngata made an angry speech in which he pointed out that Māori had lost most of their lands and seen their culture 'scattered [and] broken' since 1840.[17] Several Pākehā speakers acknowledged past injustices, but suggested they were simply misunderstandings which had generally been fixed and anyway should be forgotten.[18] Ngata's speech was reported by most newspapers in a way which made him sound positive about colonisation. These reports, in combination with the Pākehā speakers' platitudes, created an overall message of inter-racial harmony.[19] Meanwhile, a smaller gathering hosted by the Founders Society, a club of early settlers' descendants, was held in Wellington. With Māori apparently absent from the event, speakers could fully express their patriotic and imperialist views of history. Society president Cheviot Bell claimed that the British people 'have always won in the past … [because] it is our invariable practice to fight for what is right'.[20] While perhaps typical of mid-twentieth-century Pākehā patriotism, the statement would have taken on an entirely different meaning if preceded by a speech such as Ngata's at Waitangi. In Wellington, however, the might of the British Empire could be praised without qualification.

Annual Waitangi Days began in 1947, and arose from the Waitangi Trust Board's inability to afford the installion of a new flagstaff.[21] Hearing of this, and with the approval of the Waitangi Trust Board, Captain C.R.V. Pugh, Naval Officer in Charge at Auckland, persuaded the navy to erect the flagpole and establish a ceremony honouring the role in New Zealand's founding of Hobson and other naval officers.[22] The 1947 ceremony became the basis of several decades of Waitangi Day celebrations, although new additions were made on a regular basis. With a naval ship in the Bay of Islands, a naval guard of honour marched through the Treaty grounds to the flagstaff, led by a marine band. Officers representing the three branches of the armed services assembled in front of the saluting base, whereupon Pugh and Commodore G.H. Faulkner, Chief of the Naval Staff, arrived by car. The general salute was given by the guard of honour, which Faulkner then inspected. At 11 o' clock, supposedly the time of the signing of the Treaty, 'God Save the King' was played. The Union Jack was raised while the entire gathering stood to attention. Faulkner gave a speech in which he stated that the ceremony 'symbolised the cementing of Maori–Pakeha friendship'. The crowd was estimated at around 300 by the *New Zealand Herald* and about a thousand by the *Northern Advocate*.[23] Although it shared some features with the 1934 and 1940 celebrations, in many ways it had more in common with the earlier commemorations in London and Wellington. As was the case in those cities, Māori did not participate in the first annual

Waitangi Day, which was subsequently described by George Graham, a Pākehā ethnologist and secretary of the Te Ākarana Māori Association, as akin to 'the Shakespearean play "Hamlet", but minus Hamlet'.[24] The *Herald* reported that the absence was 'the subject of comment by many of the visitors', but that the ceremony was intended 'to commemorate the services to New Zealand of its first naval Governor, and not the Treaty of Waitangi in particular'.[25]

Māori were included in Waitangi commemorations from 1948, and the cast of speakers and participants grew throughout the 1950s, including the Governor-General from 1952 and the Prime Minister on a semi-regular basis from 1958. In 1954 the responsibility for the day was transferred from the navy to the Waitangi Trust Board.[26] The function of Waitangi Day shifted from celebration of the navy's role in early New Zealand to the expression, via the official speeches, of sentiments such as Māori loyalty and friendship, equality between Māori and Pākehā, and the symbolic importance of the Treaty.[27] As in 1934 and 1940, the Governor-General, invariably British-born until the late 1960s, was a major focal point of the ceremonies, and reports of his speech tended to dominate the newspaper coverage. This suggests that the Treaty's importance was seen at least as much in terms of the connection with Britain as the partnership between Māori and Pākehā. From the late 1950s, discussion of race relations became more prominent in Waitangi Day rhetoric in response to, and as part of, the increasing prominence of the issue in general public discourse. Most speakers continued to assert that New Zealand had exemplary race relations, but the tone was now more defensive; the idea of inter-racial harmony was being asserted against claims that it did not exist in New Zealand rather than, as had happened previously, being expressed as if it were undisputed fact.[28]

Increasing numbers of people turned out to watch the ceremonies, with an estimated crowd of 5000 attending in 1958.[29] The ceremony's growth was not reflected in official support for the Waitangi Trust, however, which was underfunded to the point where it was forced to turn the Treaty grounds into a sheep farm.[30] In response to the growing numbers of spectators, the ceremonies were moved to the evening in 1960, and given more of a public entertainment focus. Although popular with holiday-making crowds, until the Queen's visit in 1963 they were plagued by poor organisation and privately criticised as culturally inappropriate.[31] Meanwhile, Māori groups began organising Waitangi Day celebrations elsewhere in the country, with the Auckland events of 1967 being a multicultural occasion featuring a re-enactment of the Treaty signing, a hangi, police dog trials, a parade of national costumes and folk dancing.[32]

The Auckland commemorations and others around the country were part of an ongoing Māori campaign to raise the profile of Waitangi Day and, through it, the Treaty of Waitangi. A major goal was the creation of a Waitangi Day public holiday. One of the first public requests for this was made by Waitangi Trust member James Henare at Waitangi Day 1953. The plea was repeated by Riri Maihi Kawiti on Waitangi Day in 1955, and by Māori MPs in Parliament in 1957.[33] The idea was also supported by some Pākehā, who at this stage seem to have been motivated primarily by embarrassment at the country not having a national day.[34] Labour's 1957 election manifesto pledged that

a holiday would be created, and the recently elected Prime Minister, Walter Nash, repeated the promise at Waitangi Day 1958.[35] New Zealand embassies and high commissions were instructed to celebrate Waitangi Day instead of Dominion Day.[36] In New Zealand, a council and a committee of caucus were set up to investigate the holiday idea, but by June 1958 caucus had decided that Waitangi Day would not become an additional paid holiday, although it might replace the provincial anniversary holidays.[37] In 1960, after much prodding inside Parliament by their own Māori MPs and the National opposition, and outside it by the Māori Women's Welfare League, Labour passed the Waitangi Day Act.[38] This allowed regions to replace their provincial anniversary holiday with a Waitangi Day holiday, which Northland did in 1963.[39]

The Waitangi Day holiday idea continued to gather momentum, becoming increasingly popular during the 1960s.[40] As well as Māori organisations, supporters of a Waitangi Day holiday included most newspapers and local councils, watersiders and paper mill workers (who took unpaid days off on Waitangi Day in the early 1970s) and the Employers' Federation.[41] In 1971 a poll showed that at least 60% of the general population supported replacing the provincial anniversary holidays with a Waitangi Day holiday.[42] Despite this, the second National government, in power from 1960 until 1972, was reluctant to introduce a holiday, or support the private member's Bill on the issue introduced by Matiu Rata in 1971. This was partially because of the loss of productivity a new holiday would create,[43] and partly because, in the words of Māori Affairs Minister Ralph Hanan, introducing legislation would encourage 'certain vocal sections of the Māori people' to agitate for ratification of the Treaty.[44] Most of those in favour of the national holiday did not feel this way, with some arguing that Waitangi Day would unify the country and create a sense of nationhood.[45]

Pākehā advocates of the holiday did not see a Waitangi Day holiday as a celebration of the Treaty as such; rather, most seem to have regarded the signing of the Treaty just as the best available founding moment rather than anything of significance in and of itself.[46] Introducing the New Zealand Day Bill in 1973, Internal Affairs Minister Henry May expressed the hope that the day would focus on nationhood and other principles which he felt were symbolised by the Treaty, rather than on the actual signing.[47] Similarly, Labour MP Anthony Rogers saw the Treaty simply as 'a convenient peg on which to hang some remembrance or significance'.[48] It is likely that if New Zealand had had another, less contentious, founding moment, this would have been chosen instead. Certainly ideas about race relations, while sometimes mentioned, were usually secondary to the need for nationhood.[49] In essence, New Zealanders were to be unified by shared patriotism, rather than support for the Treaty or good race relations. Māori advocating the public holiday also used the rhetoric of nationhood, but were more likely to see the nation, like the Treaty, as a partnership of two peoples.[50] They wanted Waitangi Day to affirm the importance of the Treaty, and hoped the holiday would encourage Pākehā interest in it.[51] Some felt, however, that unless the Treaty was given legal standing, a public holiday would be pointless.[52] When Waitangi Day was made a public holiday, therefore, it was not an attempt to raise the status of the

Treaty, but instead a conscious effort to construct or reinforce New Zealand nationalism.

James Belich has argued that from the 1890s to the 1970s New Zealand was a 'recolonial' nation, technically independent of Britain but culturally and economically still a colony.[53] This was not inconsistent with a New Zealand identity; Belich argues that British and New Zealand identities were generally seen as compatible, with 'New Zealander', like 'Welsh' or 'Scottish', being a subset of 'British'.[54] Britain's growing interest, from the 1960s, in joining the European Economic Community (EEC) therefore caused considerable concern in New Zealand. New Zealand produce had unrestricted access to Britain, its largest market, and EEC trade policy meant that this was unlikely to continue.[55] Perhaps more upsetting for the New Zealand psyche, Britain also changed its immigration policy so that Commonwealth citizens no longer had unrestricted access to the mother country. Although there was some preferential treatment, particularly for those with recent British ancestry, Britain essentially began to treat most New Zealanders as foreigners.[56] Until this time, Pākehā could see themselves as different from the British but as Britons nonetheless; Britain's retreat from empire made this much less feasible.

The sense of dislocation was intensified by New Zealand's changing demography. The number of New Zealanders born on other Pacific Islands or in Asia increased dramatically between the 1950s and 1970s, although they continued to be small minorities.[57] Combined with the increased visibility of Māori, especially in urban areas, it was clear that New Zealanders were not all ethnic Britons any more than they were legal Britons. Belich's recolonisation thesis can be contested, but it is clear that New Zealand's relationship with Britain changed significantly in the early 1970s. Even if this did not cause an identity crisis, it certainly caused problems for Waitangi Day, since many of the national symbols used in the ceremonies — the Union Jack, the national anthem 'God Save the Queen', and the Governor-General — were either shared with Britain or symbolised the British link.

The transformation of Waitangi Day into the New Zealand Day public holiday, and the accompanying celebrations in 1974, were part of a conscious attempt on the part of the Kirk Labour government to create a stronger and more united New Zealand nationalism.[58] Despite the centrality of Britishness to the form of most previous Waitangi Days, it was perceived by many non-Māori as a Māori affair of little relevance to other New Zealanders, particularly those of non-British ancestry. New Zealand Day would, many hoped, have resonance for everyone.[59] Despite these good intentions, the name change marginalised Māori concerns and the Treaty itself. National MP Allan Highet was probably not alone in hoping that the name change would stop the day being 'an occasion for airing Maori discontents … it is far better that we should call it New Zealand Day and try to come together and live as one people'.[60] Many of the groups which had campaigned for the holiday were disappointed by the name change, with the Māori Women's Welfare League and other organisations feeling 'Waitangi Day' to be more meaningful, as it recognised the Treaty's significance.[61]

The changes made to Waitangi Day were part of a wider Māori Affairs

programme enacted by Kirk's Labour government. Matiu Rata became the first Māori Minister of Māori Affairs since Ngata in the 1930s, and was also made Minister of Lands. This sent a clear signal that the government was sympathetic to Māori issues, and indeed it modified Māori land law to give Māori more control over their land and better protection against its loss.[62] This was a major factor in the dramatic slowing of Māori land loss in subsequent years, although it did little to return land already lost.[63] The Waitangi Tribunal was also established to investigate breaches of the principles of the Treaty, and to determine what those principles actually were.[64] This did not have any great effect until the early 1980s when Eddie Durie was made chairperson and issued a series of groundbreaking reports, and further from 1985, when the Tribunal was granted the power to investigate historical claims. The establishment of the Tribunal was nevertheless an important step in recognition of the Treaty, giving it legal status for the first time.[65]

The increased recognition to the Treaty was due in part to an evolution in New Zealand historiography from the early 1970s. Partly as a result of the Māori protest movements discussed below, historians began to pay more attention to Māori perspectives on the past.[66] A particularly crucial moment came in 1972 with the publication of Ruth Ross's *New Zealand Journal of History* article on the Treaty of Waitangi.[67] This drew attention to the differences between the Māori and English language versions of the Treaty and concluded that, because it could mean very different things to different people, the Treaty was of limited value. Ross's point that Māori and Pākehā had different understandings of the Treaty was taken up by numerous activists and politicians, most of whom ignored her conclusion about this reducing its worth.[68] However, her ideas can be seen as contributing in the 1980s to the 'Treaty is a fraud' idea, which suggested that the translation problem was a deliberate strategy to trick Māori into signing the Treaty.

Waitangi Day was changed and rejuvenated in 1974 in part because it had been one of the more high-profile targets of Māori activism earlier in the decade. Māori urbanisation in the post-war period had exposed existing racial inequality and led to increased tensions, which had been an undercurrent of Waitangi Days in the 1960s. The emergence of Māori activism was sparked by the Māori Affairs Amendment Act 1967, which was widely seen by Māori as yet another Pākehā 'land grab'.[69] Protests on Waitangi Day were initially very restrained. In 1968 a small group protested at Parliament against the Act, which they felt would 'enhance robbery of Maori Lands'.[70] The one reported protest at Waitangi that year was a boycott of the ceremonies by Ngāti Hine elder Walter Kawiti. The Tai Tokerau District Māori Council debated whether to follow suit, finally voting to attend with two dissensions.[71] These protests marked an important turning point. Previously, Māori had contested the meaning of Waitangi Day by staying away or making mildly critical speeches as part of the official ceremonies. Explicit Māori challenges to the official messages of Waitangi Day had generally taken place behind the scenes, and this in combination with selective newspaper reporting of Māori speeches meant that a facade of inter-racial harmony was preserved.[72] These protests marked the point at which Māori became willing to publicly contest Waitangi

Day's message of good race relations and benevolent colonisation.

In 1969 official Māori speaker and Waitangi National Trust Board member N.P.K. Puriri asked in his speech if 'there [is] anything in the Treaty today that I can celebrate with you? The answer is "very little", for my people have seen their lands and their fishing rights dwindle before their eyes, their mana, their language and their authority eroded.'[73] The speech seems to have been the harshest Waitangi Day critique of colonisation since Ngata's in 1940. There were limits to how much Māori could do to truly contest the dominant meaning of Waitangi Day, however. Of Puriri's speech, the *Herald* reprinted one quote: 'Together we are witnesses to a ceremony, representing both our cultures and the culture that is the fusion of the two — ours.'[74] The speech was completely ignored by other major newspapers, although the Māori newspaper *Te Hokioi* congratulated Puriri for his 'courageous speech'.[75]

The Māori challenge to the dominant meaning and message of Waitangi Day could not be ignored in 1971, when Ngā Tamatoa staged the first disruption of Waitangi Day. At the evening ceremony they chanted, slow handclapped and performed a haka during Deputy Prime Minister Robert Muldoon's speech. Earlier in the day activists had pulled the white navy ensign off the Waitangi flagstaff and attempted to set it on fire.[76] The group disputed Waitangi Day's message that New Zealand had good race relations. Instead, they argued, it should be a day of mourning.[77] The protests were widely reported, and made it impossible for Pākehā to continue believing that all Māori were happy with the outcome of colonisation.[78]

Because of this background of protest, one of the aims of New Zealand Day 1974 was to create a ceremony which Māori and Pākehā alike could support. In terms of Māori approval, it seems to have been largely successful. The new ceremony drew attention to the Treaty and acknowledged the Māori role in the foundation and building of the New Zealand nation. Although the evening performance mostly emphasised inter-racial co-operation, it did acknowledge past injustices; for example, through the haka *Muru Raupatu*, performed by kapa haka groups from South Taranaki.[79] Behind the scenes there was dissatisfaction that the Queen, although present at Waitangi, had turned down an invitation to Te Tii marae.[80] There also seems to have been an underlying feeling that changes had not gone far enough, a feeling which increased and found expression the following year with the Māori Land March. But in 1974 it seems that most Māori were happy enough that progress was being made, and were prepared to publicly support the celebration. Walter Kawiti ended his seven-year boycott of the ceremonies and accepted a flag from Kirk at the Waitangi marae, citing recent political developments as a sign that 'things are changing to the better'.[81] Ranginui Walker and Witi Ihimaera both argued that the celebrations reflected the myth rather than the reality of a multicultural society. But, they suggested, this conflation of myth and reality could be useful; New Zealand now had to try and live up to the myth.[82] 'The myth has been paraded before us', wrote Walker. 'I for one will work to hold the Pākehā to it.'

Public criticism of New Zealand Day by Māori may have been tempered by the presence of the Queen, for whom most Māori had considerable respect.

The only dissident Māori voices were those of a small number of protesters. However, this was partly because, for the first time since 1947, there was no official Māori speaker. Organisers had said that time constraints meant there could only be two speakers: the Queen representing the Crown and the Prime Minister representing New Zealand.[83] Perhaps inadvertently, this reflected a view of the Treaty which fit neither contemporary nor 1840 understandings: that it was a compact not between Māori and Pākehā, nor Māori and the Crown, but between the Crown and New Zealand. Leaving aside the problem that arguably there was no New Zealand until the Treaty had been signed, this extended the 'we are all one people' ideology to the point where Māori were not even a Treaty partner in their own right. Māori of all backgrounds had challenged this idea since the early 1960s; that it continued to be reaffirmed at Waitangi indicates the control Pākehā retained over the day.

New Zealand Day 1974 involved a much wider range of cultural displays than previous Waitangi Days. The evening entertainment featured a series of musical and dramatic numbers depicting the history of New Zealand from the arrival of Māori to the present, with particular emphasis on the immigrant origins of all New Zealanders.[84] As the scene shifted through the arrival of the missionaries, the signing of the Treaty, pioneering, the establishment of the welfare state and other historical landmarks, a dozen cultural groups performed, representing the arrivals of migrants from an array of places including Germany, Tonga, Denmark, China and India.[85] This marked the first time groups of people who were of neither Māori nor British origin had participated in Waitangi Day, and was intended to reaffirm the principle that people from all ethnic backgrounds were equally New Zealanders.[86] The idea was to emphasise that ethnic and cultural minorities had much in common with other New Zealanders.[87] This was in keeping with the 1970s vogue for multiculturalism, understood here as the idea that all cultures are equally deserving of respect and acknowledgement. In New Zealand multiculturalism has tended to co-exist somewhat uncomfortably both with previously existing assumptions of Western superiority, and with the idea of biculturalism, which expresses the idea of partnership in New Zealand between Māori as tāngata whenua and Pākehā as the majority cultural or ethnic group.[88] Along with the dozen non-Māori culture groups, 15 Māori groups participated; seven from Northland and the rest from around the country.[89] Instead of just constructing a national image as a country in which two people had come together in peace and harmony, New Zealand Day constructed an image of a culturally diverse land in which Māori were recognised as tāngata whenua but in which all peoples — even those not involved in the Treaty signing — were true members of the nation.

Outside of the evening entertainment, however, New Zealand Day's message about nationhood was somewhat confused. The central figure was Queen Elizabeth II, and an obvious reminder of New Zealand's ongoing constitutional links with Britain. Her very presence contradicted the idea that New Zealand had moved on from its colonial past, and her right to be in the country was contested by a small group of republican protesters.[90] The *New Zealand Herald* and *Northern Advocate*, meanwhile, both focused

their Waitangi Day editorials not on nationhood, but on the continued love of New Zealanders for the royal family.[91] The government had attempted to make the Queen's position less of an anachronism by passing a Bill changing her title within New Zealand from 'Queen of the United Kingdom and New Zealand' to 'Queen of New Zealand'.[92] This was signed into law by the Queen herself on Waitangi afternoon, on her yacht in the Bay of Islands. For the first time the flag raised at Waitangi during the ceremonies was the New Zealand blue ensign rather than the Union Jack.[93] These changes, along with the new name of the day, were part of an attempt to transform Waitangi Day from a semi-imperialist to a nationalist celebration. However, the presence of the Queen meant that this was at best a mixed message, and to some New Zealanders the day still emphasised New Zealand's links with Britain and its royal family.

If New Zealand Day sent an ambiguous message about who New Zealanders were, it sent no message about Pākehā, the nation's biggest ethnic group. The previous year, Kirk had asked why Pākehā had not developed a specifically New Zealand culture but, beyond the suggestion that Pākehā were good at living with people of other cultures, no attempt was made to depict or construct a Pākehā culture through the day's events.[94] There were numerous things in the evening performance which could be seen as part of Pākehā culture, such as rugby, the armed forces and welfare, but all of these were depicted by a half-Māori, half-Pākehā cast. It could be argued that this simply meant that Māori had adopted aspects of Pākehā culture, but some of these things had been incorporated into Māori culture to the extent that they were Māori as much as Pākehā property. The section representing education, for example, depicted it as a bicultural process, beginning with Māori learning to read and write and ending with Pākehā learning Māori. A Ngā Puhi spokesman told the *Northern Advocate* that he was pleased with the entertainment because he felt that some of its (supposedly 'New Zealand') themes were Māori themes.[95] Features of the production that were not specifically 'cultural' were intended to represent New Zealand as a whole and, while most of them had European origins, they were also things with which Māori as much as Pākehā identified. Another way of looking at this is to see Pākehā culture as being so omnipresent as to be invisible.[96] These views are not incompatible. If Pākehā culture was dominant, then it would hardly be surprising for Māori to adopt elements of it, and from there adapt them to their own needs. The culture, while still being Pākehā dominated, thus belonged to other people as well. The very dominance of Pākehā culture prevented Pākehā from truly having a culture of their own: you cannot have sole possession of something which you impose on others.[97]

It should be noted at this point that some Pākehā participated in the Māori cultural performances. Several of the kapa haka groups performing at Waitangi had Pākehā members, and group leaders were uncertain as to whether to let them perform at Waitangi. It was eventually decided 'that this question be left to individual group leaders but that any particularly blond members should wear dark wigs and, possibly, body make-up'.[98]

New Zealand Day 1974 was always intended as a one-off event, and control of the commemorations subsequently returned to the Waitangi National Trust. The mood, format and rhetoric of Waitangi Day immediately returned to that of

earlier years.[99] In 1976 the Muldoon government changed the holiday's name back to Waitangi Day.[100] Despite the reversion of the name, which was supported by many Māori, any national identity expressed at Waitangi from 1975 to 1984 was one based at least partially on the benevolence of British colonisation. In his autobiography, David Lange described the 1975 ceremony as 'a peculiar evocation of another place and time with a great deal of military pomp and no real feeling about what it meant to be a New Zealander'.[101] The Governor-General, often decked out in uniform and medals, dominated the evening ceremonies along with the navy, although traditional Māori performances and challenges were also major parts of the occasion.[102] With the exception of the ministerial and vice-regal positions, membership of the trust controlling the ceremonies was usually for life or until voluntary retirement, and some members remained on the board for many decades.[103] The end result was a conservative board, concerned about activist criticisms of Waitangi Day, but reluctant to listen to 'radicals' or make significant changes.[104] The views of more conservative Māori groups such as the Māori Women's Welfare League were also ignored.[105] Perhaps more important than the form and content of the ceremonies was the contemporary political context. Māori anger at the continued lack of significant progress on land and other issues was shown in the 1975 Māori Land March. The Muldoon National government elected that year was hostile to the views of activist Māori. Events such as the eviction in 1978 of the occupiers of Bastion Point, and the 1981 Springbok Tour, created an atmosphere of frustration and anger which inevitably impacted on Waitangi Day.

From the late 1970s Waitangi Day began again to be targeted by increasingly numerous and antagonistic protesters. In the early 1980s they marched under the slogan 'The Treaty is a Fraud'.[106] While protesters of the 1970s had generally called for the Treaty to be better recognised, they now tended to see it as a means by which Māori had been tricked into allowing colonisation. From this perspective there was nothing to celebrate on 6 February, and the protesters therefore attempted to stop the ceremonies. In an effort to return some calm to the day, the fourth Labour government, elected in 1984, moved the 1986 state commemoration to Wellington, with a smaller, Māori-run event remaining at Waitangi. One of the main effects of this was to move the protests to Wellington as well, and widespread criticism of the arrangement led to the following year's commemorations being split between Wellington and Waitangi. At Waitangi the ceremonies were reorganised to allow speaking rights for some of the protesters, who were seated amongst other participants.[107] The expansion of the Waitangi Tribunal's role, to allow investigation of historical claims, also helped reduce the scale and acrimony of protests.

Waitangi Day remained a recurring occasion of protest into the twenty-first century, but never to the extent of the early 1980s. That the day is still known more for protest than nationhood, however, is symbolic of its failure to maintain — or even attempt to maintain — New Zealand Day 1974's delicate balance of biculturalism, multiculturalism and nationhood.

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NOTES

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3 Patrick McAllister, 'Waitangi Day: An Annual Enactment of the Treaty?', *Sites*, 4, 2 (2007), pp.155–80; Sue Abel, *Shaping the News: Waitangi Day on Television*, Auckland, 1997.

4 William Renwick, 'Reclaiming Waitangi', in William Renwick, ed., *Creating a National Spirit: Celebrating New Zealand's Centennial*, Wellington, 2004, pp.99–111; Kayleen M. Hazlehurst, 'Ethnicity, Ideology and Social Drama: The Waitangi Day Incident 1981', in Alisdair Rogers and Steven Vertovec, eds, *The Urban Context: Ethnicity, Social Networks and Situational Analysis*, Oxford and Washington, DC, 1995, pp.81–115; Helen Robinson, 'Remembering the Past, Thinking of the Present: Historic Commemorations in New Zealand and Northern Ireland', PhD thesis, The University of Auckland, 2009; Claudia Orange, *The Treaty of Waitangi*, Wellington, 1987, pp.234–52; Parehau Richards and Chris Ryan, 'Waitangi Day: New Zealand's National Day', in Linda K. Fuller, ed., *National Days/National Ways: Historical, Political and Religious Celebrations around the World*, Westport, CT, 2004, pp.145–57. Richards and Ryan imply that Waitangi commemorations began around the early 1970s, think Keith Holyoake was still Prime Minister in 1980, and declare Richard Prebble to be the leader of 'the Australian Capital Territory political party'.

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