

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

2

POLICIES AND PROPHECIES

Aspects of Government Native Policy in Taranaki

1878-1884

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History
at Massey University

Hazel Riseborough

1987

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the government's reactions to the pacific resistance offered by the resident Maori tribes to the survey for sale and settlement of confiscated lands between Hawera and New Plymouth, on the west coast of the North Island of New Zealand, in the years 1878-1884. Successive governments neglected to honour the promises to make reserves contained in the legislation confiscating the land and, by treating those who protested this neglect as infatuated followers of deluded prophets and refusing to consider their legitimate grievances, helped create in Taranaki a centre of disaffection which they perceived as a threat to the colony. This study looks first at the existing literature on the events in question, and then at the acts and proclamations of confiscation and the promises contained therein. The main body of the thesis, chapters three through seven, is a chronological study of the years from 1878 to 1884. When the government attempted to enforce the confiscation on the Waimate plains by surveying for sale before making any effort to delimit the promised reserves, the resident tribes protested first by removing the surveyors, then by ploughing the disputed lands and finally by fencing across the roads which cut through their cultivations. The government chose to interpret Maori protest as a denial of the confiscation and a challenge to European supremacy. Under intense settler pressure the government responded by arresting almost four hundred ploughmen and fencers and finally two prominent Taranaki chiefs, and passing legislation which enabled them to imprison and hold the protestors without trial for up to two years in South Island goals. The injustice done the Taranaki people stemmed more from a determination on the part of the European to force the Maori to submit to European law and admit to European supremacy, than from a greed for land. The government's aim was to end Maori isolation by settling a close European population on the coast in an effort to destroy Maori separatism and self determination. The stand the Taranaki people took in defence of their rights was finally vindicated, yet the grievances remain, and the events of the 'Parihaka years' are a reminder of the issues which lie behind continuing Maori efforts to have those grievances righted.

CONTENTS

		Page
	Abstract	ii
	Maps	iv
	Preface	v
	Introduction	vii
Chapter One	The Parihaka Years	1
Two	Muru Raupatu : Confiscation	25
Three	The Survey of the Waimate Plains	50
Four	Challenge to the Confiscation	75
Five	Response to the Challenge	112
Six	The Road to Parihaka	159
Seven	Aftermath	220
Eight	A Question of Mana	268
	Bibliography	283

MAPS

	After Page
North Island : Confiscated Lands	24
Waimate Plains	49
West Coast : Plan of the Confiscated Territory	292

PREFACE

A word of explanation is needed on the terminology employed in this study. Taranaki is used in European documentary sources to refer to a wider provincial district rather than a tribal area. It comprises seven main tribes tracing their descent from at least three canoes, yet it has the cohesion of a tribal district, a cohesion which stems from a cause, a grievance: land confiscation. One of the tribes, Te Ati Awa, is always referred to in the documentary sources as Ngatiawa, so this term has been retained. Natives and native affairs are inescapable terms in reference to nineteenth century New Zealand. Not until 1947 was the word Maori substituted for native in all official usage. The emotive terms rebel and loyal native describe the views of the Europeans who bestowed the terms rather than of those on whom they were bestowed. I have refrained from the use of parentheses which might indicate disapproval of the terms but would serve only to clutter the text. I have also refrained from underlining words or otherwise treating Maori as though it were a foreign language. Those who are not yet familiar with basic Maori terminology would be better served by a teacher of Maori language and culture than by a simplistic and possibly misleading word list.

The Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives and the New Zealand Parliamentary Debates are a rich source of information on the period under study, and the reports of the Royal Commission appointed under the Confiscated Lands Inquiry and Maori Prisoners' Trials Act, 1879, are especially valuable. Unfortunately many papers such as police files have simply 'disappeared', and the important Maori Affairs Department files known as the West Coast Papers were destroyed by fire, so a vast body of material has been lost to researchers. What remains is scattered through lands, police, legislative, justice and governors' files in the National Archives and especially in various ministerial papers in the Alexander Turnbull Library. A certain amount of material never published in New Zealand was printed in the British Parliamentary Papers: the Irish University Press series

(here abbreviated IUP since the pagination refers to that series and not to the original) is a useful source of information not otherwise easily accessible.

I wish to thank those many people who have helped in the preparation of this thesis. First, Sir Makere Rangiatea Ralph Love, whose approval I sought before I began this study: *tena koe e koro*: and my supervisors, Dr Kerry Howe, Professor Colin Davis and Professor Ngatata Love of Massey University. I also wish to thank Dr Mary Bitterman, Dr David Wu and the staff of the Institute of Culture and Communication, East-West Center, Honolulu: Professor W.H.Oliver, editor of the Dictionary of New Zealand Biography: Dr J.M.R.Owens and Te Pakaka Tawhai of Massey University: and Karen Puklowski, cartographer at Massey University. I am indebted to the staffs of the Massey University Library, especially Courtney Carpenter: the Alexander Turnbull Library, the General Assembly Library and the National Archives, Wellington: the Hamilton Library, University of Hawaii at Manoa: the Bernice Bishop Museum Library, Honolulu: the Auckland Institute and Museum Library: the Taranaki Library and Museum, New Plymouth: and the Massey University Computer Centre, especially Dr Peter Kay, who was unfazed by my inability to speak computer.

I am grateful to the University Grants Committee, the East-West Center and the New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation for the grants which enabled me to undertake this study.