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(Waitangi Tribunal, 2011c)

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*A Report into Claims Concerning
New Zealand Law and Policy Affecting
Māori Culture and Identity*

Te Taumata Tuatahi



WAI 262

WAITANGI TRIBUNAL REPORT 2011

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Treaty negotiator and leader Sir Ngatata Love (left) and Prime Minister John Key hongi at a ceremony on 30 June 2009, after Parliament passed legislation settling the historical Treaty claims of Taranaki Whanui ki te Upoko o te Ika in the Wellington region.

settlements will be big enough and adaptable enough to deliver the same optimism in the time of our mokopuna as it has for this current generation. It has, after all, been a very human experiment and it would be strange indeed if we did not feel a measure of fear for its future success. Yet the national consensus over the need to address the wounds of the past is so strong that few would say the risk has not been worth taking.

Nation building is nothing if not a constant work in progress and after a generation of hard work, New Zealand is beginning yet another transition. New Zealanders are unconsciously and organically building a new and unique national identity. It will, we suggest, come to be based on two things: the extraordinary natural beauty and wealth of these islands, and the partnership between our two founding cultures. The first basis needs no explanation. The second basis is the human dimension of our identity. Māori culture locates us in the Pacific and gives us our deep roots here. Pākehā culture locates us at the same time in the West and gives us our right to the West's heritage even though, in physical terms at least, the West could hardly be further away. Bicultural fusion gives our

vibrant multicultural reality a solid core with enough gravity to pull later immigrant cultures into orbit around its vision, values, and expectations. A nation cannot sustain itself without that solid core.

Whether that transition succeeds will depend partly on another development. Over the next decade or so, the Crown–Māori relationship, still currently fixed on Māori grievances, must shift to a less negative and more future-focused relationship at all levels. This change is expected and intended. It will reflect growing Māori confidence, driven from continued demographic change and settlement-based tribal economic renewal. It will also provide a more positive platform for jointly addressing current Māori social problems.

Will it be possible to normalise Crown–Māori relations as the architects of the Treaty settlement process intended? What, for that matter, might 'normal' look like?

New Zealand is unique among the post-colonial countries (like Australia, Canada, and the United States) with which we are most often compared in that our Parliament, our courts, and the Waitangi Tribunal conceptualise the relationship between the Crown (as proxy for the State)