

## The Honourable Tariana Turia

*Labour spokesperson on Maori Health and Youth Affairs*

Tena tatau e hui nei I tenei ra. Tena koutou nga rangatira o Waikato. Nga mihi ki a koutou a ki Te Atairangikahu hoki. Tena tatau katoa.

Thank you for inviting me to speak at this Conference. Over the last week or so such has been the activity over what I have been purported to have said or done I have at times questioned the nature of truth. I also questioned hearing, listening and memory. Indeed I was tempted to seek wise counsel and I did think of this gathering this week and the thought did enter my head, that a psychologist just might come in handy. I dismissed the thought very quickly.

I realised that the best counsellors for me are the very supportive whanau I am fortunate to have. A whanau, who in times when my spirit needs nurturing, I can always turn to. I am also always able to tap the resources of the memories and guidance of those who have passed on, to give solace, and to uplift me. It is this whanau of whom I am a member which nurtures and sustains me. It is this whanau which is also a part of the iwi of Whanganui, Ngati Apa, Nga Rauru, and Tuwharetoa who are responsible for my identity, responsible for that security that I have in knowing who I am. What my whanau are not able to provide I will seek in the hapu and iwi. I have numerous choices.

We all know the social structures of whanau, hapu, and iwi are responsible for both cultural reproduction and identity. All of you know these same social structures have demonstrated amazing resilience as sites of resistance to colonisation, but, as you also know, they have been seriously weakened. Given what I have just said you just might have realised that what I wish to address with you today is the phenomenon of colonisation and some thoughts on what the implications may be for psychology. I know Tariana Turia and "colonisation" always attracts attention. Yet I just want us to consider our history as a country and how this history has affected the indigenous people.

How this history has impacted on Maori whanau, hapu, and iwi. I really do believe that mature, intelligent New Zealanders of all races are capable of the analysis of the trauma of one group of people suffering from the behaviour of another.

I can see the connections between "home invasions" which concern many of us, and the invasion of the "home lands" of indigenous people by a people from another land. What I have difficulty in reconciling is how "home invasions" elicit such outpourings of concern for the victims, while the invasion of the "home lands" of the Maori does not engender the same level of concern for the Maori victims. I wonder why this is? A double standard seems to be working here, you as psychologists I am confident will be able to identify and label the double standard, perhaps it is in DSM IV.

With personal identity inextricably tied to whanau, hapu, and iwi identity, indigenous people still have to counter the problems of the conspiracy of alienation, assimilation, and deculturation launched against them well over a century ago. I have been accused in Parliament in the past week of indulging in "sociological clap trap" when linking colonisation to family violence. I can now imagine, after this speech that I will be accused of indulging in "psychological clap trap". I may look to you to defend me against such scurrilous attacks and I suppose I should be grateful the house is not sitting.

What I need to say however is that, as psychologists, you frequently have as your clients, Maori people. The challenge I put to you is – Do you seriously believe that you, with the training that you get, are able to nurture the Maori psyche? Are you able to see into the soul of the people and attend to the wounded spirit? Do you consider, for example, the effects of the trauma

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of colonisation? I know that psychology has accepted the relevance of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) and I understand that much of the research done in this area has focused on the trauma suffered by the Jewish survivors of the Holocaust of World War Two. I also understand the same has been done with the Vietnam veterans. What seems not to have received similar attention is the holocaust suffered by indigenous people including Maori as a result of colonial contact and behaviour. The Treaty of Waitangi Tribunal made such a reference in its Taranaki Report of 1996 and I recollect what appeared to be a "but our holocaust was worse than your holocaust" debate. A debate I must add, I do not wish to enter.

Psychologists, Emeritus Professor James and Professor Jane Ritchie, likewise link colonisation with violence. Native American psychologist Eduardo Duran suggests, referring to Native Americans, that the colonial oppression suffered by indigenous people inevitably wounds the soul. He also says that for any effective therapy to take place the historical context of generations of oppression since colonial contact needs to be articulated, acknowledged, and understood. Professor Mason Durie identifies the onset of colonisation and the subsequent alienation and theft of the land as the beginning of Maori health issues that manifest themselves today. Issues, that have as a result of inter-generational systemic abuse, become culturally endemic. Since first colonial contact much effort has been invested in attempts at individualising Maori with the introduction of numerous assimilation policies and laws to alienate Maori from their social structures which were linked to the guardianship and occupation of land.

A consequence of colonial oppression has been the internalisation by Maori of the images the oppressor

has of them. It is for that reason that I found the negative portrayal of Maori whanau last week to be both spiritually and psychologically damaging. I know the psychological consequences of the internalisation of negative images is for people to take for themselves the illusion of the oppressor's power while they are in a situation of helplessness and despair. A despair leading to self hatred and, for many, suicide. The externalisation of the self-hatred on the other hand, is seen with the number of Maori who are convicted of crimes of violence and the very high number of Maori women and children who are the victims of violence. The film "Once Were Warriors" and the Keri Hulme novel "The Bone People" bring home, all too graphically, the extreme levels of violence which, for many, is seen as culturally endemic behaviour; behaviour which they, and the wider society in which they live, see as 'normal'.

The phenomenon of Post-Colonial Traumatic Stress Disorder and its effects, it appears, are now culturally integrated into the psyche and soul of Maori. It never used to be there. Indeed as Professor Anne Salmond has found, children were indulged and records of early contact show that violence towards children was uncommon, more uncommon than it was in Europe at the same period. A golden age for Maori children it would seem. Maori tribal commentators and Treaty negotiators like Dr Hirini Mead of Te Runanga O Ngati Awa have alluded to the cumulative generational effects of trauma or, as he put it, 'damage' which has been passed down from the period of the Land Wars to current generations. A question Dr Mead has posed relates to the amount of compensation required to repair the intergenerational damage to the people. Damage, the genesis of which resides in the nineteenth century.

The acknowledgement of the holocaust suffered by many Maori tribes during the Land Wars needs to be acknowledged. Only then will the healing for Maori occur. Indeed some of the events surrounding Treaty of Waitangi land settlements have resulted in healing for the whanau of the ancestors murdered by the State in State institutions. The bones of these

ancestors have been taken from the gaols and returned to their tribal homes. The return of these physical and spiritual ancestral remains have resulted in the descendants, who generations before, left their tribal lands in shame also returning 'home'. For these families the healing can now begin. For Maori, indeed for all indigenous people the issue is the identification of the trauma, as Post-Colonial Traumatic Stress Disorder in order to place the issue in its proper historical, political, and economic context. This would also encourage identifying the continuing oppressive effects of colonisation and the various forms it has taken, as Native American academic Ward Churchill says, 'since [the] predator came'. The signs and symptoms of Post-Colonial Traumatic Stress Disorder (PCTSD) with Maori, needs analysis and examination. My challenge would be for the few Maori psychologists amongst you, to lead the discourse on that analysis.

Following are some indicators of the results of post-colonial trauma:

- Subjected to personal, institutional, and cultural racism, have a poor self-image;
- tribe deprived of land by the government dishonesty and theft;
- parents/grandparents beaten for speaking their mother tongue;
- have a tendency to self-belittle;
- unable to identify with tribe;
- identity now based on where they live (urban) and not on genealogy and ancestry, such people are fearful of imprisonment unless cousins are also incarcerated;
- beat up spouse, children, and siblings.

While much of my address to you today has focused on the effects of colonisation and has considered that macro position, at a local and personal level I would like you also to consider the following. Does your training and education address issues like the nature of the Maori kai tiaki, the spiritual guardian all Maori have? What if I told you I have been visited a number of times by my kai tiaki and had carried out a conversation? What if I said to you that my kai tiaki had cautioned me about a particular action? What for

## Making the links

Linda Nikora's address provides a reminder of what has had to be done to place bicultural issues on the agenda of the New Zealand Psychological Society. She then, in examining the steps that have been taken, operates with the same belief as the Minister:

"..that mature, intelligent New Zealanders of all races are capable of the analysis of the trauma of one group of people suffering from the behaviour of another."

She notes, but does not dwell on the failure of psychology to recruit, train and retain Maori psychologists, exploring the potential for change offered by the Rangatiratanga - Kawanatanga dynamic.

Excitingly, the image Nikora has chosen to convey; the necessity of working within this dynamic, alludes to Te Kore - the void from which all possibilities came. In doing so she provides clear guidance for how we, as a profession, can respond appropriately to the questions directed to us by the Honourable Tariana Turia. The two addresses resonate so closely one might believe there had been substantial prior consultation.

Raymond Nairn

example is "mate Maori" (Maori sickness)? What is makutu? What is the nature of the "rau kotahi", the multiple self? Finally, in terms of our world-views, what is the difference between you saying "I think therefore I am" and us saying "We are"?

Kia ora tatau.

## References

- Churchill, Ward. (1997) *A little matter of genocide: holocaust and denial in the Americas, 1492 to the present*. San Francisco: City Lights Books
- Churchill, Ward. (1993). *Struggle for the land: indigenous resistance to genocide, ecocide and expropriation in contemporary North America*. Monroe, Me: Common Courage Press.