

At Whakatu Marae, Nelson, New Zealand

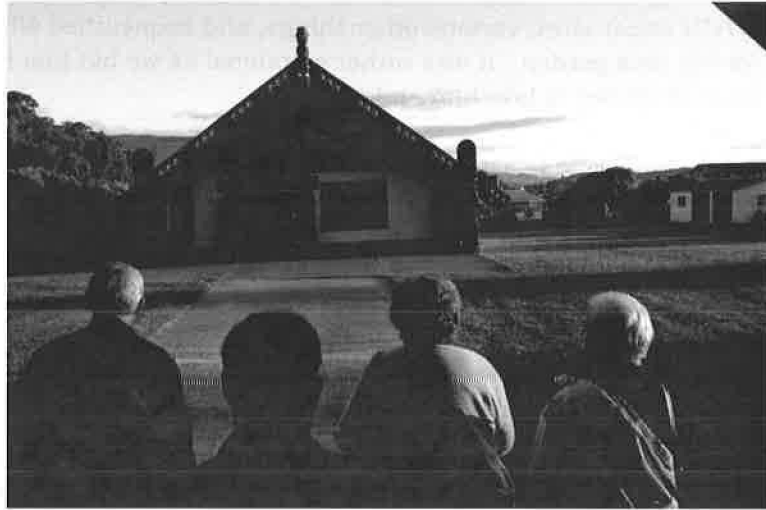
April 12th, 2004

President Staples of the Wellington, New Zealand Mission:

Aloha,

It is so wonderful for Sis Staples and I to be here with you tonight. We have some dear friends with us from Hawaii. We lived in Hawaii for about six years and I served as a Bishop of the Laie Ward and then I served in the Stake Presidency and what a joy that was for us and the friendships we that we made, Carol and Marie lived right under us, almost, at Cackle Fresh and we really built a

friendship there. I used to send my cows down to his farm, and he'd come up and get eggs from my farm. So we reciprocated. And now having this experience in this beautiful land of New Zealand, has been a choice experience for Sister Staples and I. Never could we believe that the Lord would bless us to live in two beautiful countries and lands, one is in Laie, and then to be here in New Zealand, so we thank you for inviting us. As we came in, we appreciate the welcome as we came on to the Marae, it was such a joy to hug and meet with lots of aloha from all those from Hawaii. God bless you in your venture here in Maori land and hopefully you will gain more understanding of these wonderful people here and it can bless your lives as well as they know it will bless the lives of those who are here. I just have to say how much we love the Lord, for what he has done for us, to bring so many people together in friendship and aloha, with the welcome powhiri from this Maori land. God bless each of you. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen



Powhiri at Whakatu Marae, Nelson

Charlie Elkington:

This is my nephew Jim, next to John. His father was one of the twins – he and my father the Elkingtons, my dad, Jim Elkington, was one of those that managed to go to Hawaii to check out the Polynesian Culture Centre two years ago..... the first time I met John's wife Aloha

I'm just going to – on that back wall there – now we've had the powhiri all of you are whanau. That back wall is where our ancestors came on the seven waka, came to New Zealand. The seven waka are depicted on that wall. I'm not too sure which is which, but the central one – this one here that goes right over and down, that's Tainui

and Rotorua was the captain of that waka. On that wall is my whanau. Can you tell me who the other canoes are? Whakatoa. Ae... Ae... Ae... What about Takitimu? Takitimu. Ae... So, they came from Hawaii and came here, our ancestors, so we're all basically related. You'll find this meeting house is a bit different to some of the others. Ngati Toa has two beams, one there and one in the middle, but because, because I'm saying, it may not agree with anyone else, but I'm talking here, this is six iwi's on this one. Now, iwi is made up of whanau – what else, does anyone know? Tribe? Hapu, whanau, and iwi, or six tribes. One of the tribes is, because I'm standing here I'll say, is Ngati Toa, across the water, in the North Island, across the Cook Strait, like where you came today, and you bang into Kiatiawa, they are down this end, Kiatiawa is from Taranaki area. From there Ngati Rarua is coming up towards Nelson, you get to Havelock and that's Ngati Kuia. You come up from there to D'Urville Island and Ngati Poate, D'Urville Island, that's us, and then over the hill you've got Ngati To, in this big bowl. So our ancestors settled up north and then gradually made their way, when Te Rauparaha came down this way. If you have a look to the left of you you'll see Popo there, this is Te Raupriha, next to him is a Ngati Kuia chief, and on that side is Rangi Hiata who was his nephew and opposite him is his sister Topiora, with the four feathers in her hair. So, more or less back to this, that's a Ngati Toa chief... I'm not very knowledgeable about the others, I tell them hard luck, so this is more or less apart from here, more or less is Rotorua, up there is Papuri, and Popo on the top, ah I mean Picton on the top, where you came in is Kapiti, the six iwi all whakapapa back to Kapiti, a nice big family eh! I wonder how many people are here, it's a big family too.

This one here, oh, getting back to what I was saying before, when you come into Kapiti the whole house is a house of learning, this one only has one post on the top. This is Maui/Maori Tikitiki and he looks at you and more or less when you come in and he welcomes you and of course as I stand here talking to you, I am not a fluent Maori speaker. I'm starting to learn. I've been in class for six years now, I haven't advanced very far, but I'm starting to learn, but my nieces and nephews and the little ones are fluent Maori speakers, and more or less what I have tried to pick up is the whanau and how we are all connected and the whanau, our knowledge of one another, and church history right back to – can anyone in here tell me from where? "Porirua." Where? "Porirua." Okay, our Maori/Polynesians go right back to where Hawaii? "Hawaiki." And from there to where? "Hagoth."

I'm fortunate, although I don't speak te reo, I am fortunate and I bear testimony to this to you all who can hear my voice. My grandfather was Stuart Meha, on my mother's side, I was adopted by James Rangitira Huatuaki, and his wife was my grandfather's half-sister. So I was brought up in two wonderful worlds. Those two men who were strong workers and they were strong in the Church and when dad moved to Porirua, Titoki were strong people in the Church too. Johna's aunty is sitting next to him, and she has a young brother called, which we call Junior, for Te Rauparaha, and he was one who was given a blessing by Matthew Cowley, he's 60 now, and he is as active today in the Church as he was when his father was alive. That's Johna's mother's younger brother. I think he's been to Hawaii, has he Johna? "Yes he has."

So basically that's what this whare nui is all about. And I suppose you will have picked it up in Hawaii, what the whare nui represents, yes, it is like us, you and I, it's us, it has a heart, and arms and lips and heart and liver.

Ah thanks a lot, this is more comfortable sitting down.

The powhiri when you come through... when I was growing up in Ngati Toa, we never had the powhiri in the building, it was all done outside. The people that did the karanga you stood on papa tuinuku, just like this is the ground, you stood on your original mother, mother earth and above your head was your original father, sky father, and they helped you with your voice. You could see them, you could see the clouds coming from all over the place and as you stood on the grass and you could feel the grass underneath your toes, and things like that, but as I stand here, sadly, I can tell you all that we don't have anybody older than 45 who can speak te reo. Our paipa is just like these young boys who are sitting here when you came in. We don't have any kaumatua so we've got to go to the Ngati Toa, all the way over there or somewhere else for the stupid problem when we need them. However, they more or less, come down and teach us these various things. Now I bear testimony to this much we may not have any more kaumatua, but they were active in the church, our old people and they left us this beautiful home, this beautiful whare, to help us and remind us where we came from. Just like that there on that wall, to inspire us to remember our iwi.

So you won't have to listen to my voice anymore.

So, I have several friends, do any of you know Percy Te Hira? "Yes." Percy was at the College when they were building the College. That's where I met Percy Te Hira, my dad was building in Auckland, a chapel and one other is Waha (Elkington)..... "He's coming here in June." Is he? Percy? "Yes, you'll have to find him a wife"... "I saw Percy seven days ago and invited him to come with us. He said he's building a new house." I knew he was in Hawaii

(Tape cuts in to another speaker)

....some denomination, now if you go some marae they are Church of England, but this one is Latter-day Saints. The people who set this place up are basically returned missionaries, and most of the buildings that you see around here are all set by our family, a lot of them were Huia's brothers, and, yeah, returned missionaries most of them. A lot of them come from Hawaii, even Johna's dad, Barney came over, and a lot of them and did a lot of work here and Madsen, Chiefy, and a lot of them from the Ben Hippolite whanau. My brother went over there too, Frank Hippolite, he did a lot of work here as well. Another marae is Nuhaka, if you ever go to Nuhaka, that is a member marae as well. As well as Takapuwahia, that's Porirua. That's everyone at Takapuwahia is a member of the Church, and that's very strong as well.

So you can see these popo. Milt's going to come over after, after you have something to eat, and she'll explain them all to you. So I think it's time we make our way across.