THE HOPE OF TE TIRITI

During the many hui that Matike Mai o Aotearoa held, everyone they heard from acknowledged how difficult it would be to effect constitutional change. But nevertheless they remained keen to explore what a Tiriti-based constitution might mean, and in a quite inspiring way they imagined solutions[1] –

> *"My aunties and uncles always talked about the treaty being the only hope they had whenever they had to fight for something. They were disappointed lots of times and had their hopes dashed because the treaty was never seen like this sort of constitution would see it … like the foundation of everything."*
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> *"I was really disappointed but not surprised when the Crown just rejected the (Waitangi Tribunal's Te Paparahi o Te Raki Stage 1) Report … That was really arrogant and flies so much in the face of all the evidence let alone what is right that I wonder how long it can be sustained. I hope that this mahi might help us all move away from those sorts of arguments and accept that Te Tiriti gave us the foundations for a different constitution … a better way of doing things."*
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> *"It's not a valid argument against constitutional change just to say that it won't happen because the Crown is in charge … it's not any sort of argument and doesn't detract from what Te Tiriti says."*
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> *"Normally I don't use words like 'constitution' but I talk about Te Tiriti … and I think that in that relationship between us and the Crown there was never any intention that the Crown would be our sovereign … and without the Crown assuming it's in charge we have the seeds of a much different constitution."*
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> *"I am confident that the only real constitutional solution lies in what Te Tiriti guaranteed, a place for everyone and an absolute place for mana and rangatiratanga … but how to do that in light of our history since 1840 I can only hazard a guess, although for my mokopuna's sake I hope we will try."*
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> *"Our group agreed that this will be really hard because there will be all kinds of practical problems like voting and setting out the different areas of responsibility, but … we agreed that with time and good will, we will get there."*
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> *"It will be difficult to change things but it won't be impossible because Te Tiriti shows us the way … to a different political order where we actually find a better way of making law that benefits everyone. It's an exciting challenge really and the next step in getting the treaty honoured."*
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> *"Te Tiriti has still not been honoured by government, but that doesn't mean its real promises no longer exist."*
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> *"I wish my old people would still be alive if we get there, when we get there, because that would give them hope."*

[1] Sixteenth edited extract from pp. 55 – 57 of He Whakaaro Here Whakaumu Mō Aotearoa – The Report of Matike Mai o Aotearoa