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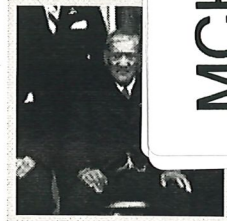
What happened

See historic events for the year by entering the year below. Why not try your

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Kiwi of the Week



Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana

Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana, of Ngati Apa and Nga Rauru, founded the Ratana Church which remains a major religious and political force today

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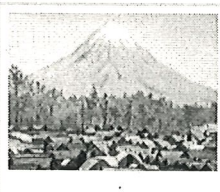
THIS WEEK'S QUIZ

Test your knowledge of NZ history

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Today in History

5 November



1881 Attack on pacifist settlement at Parihaka

Sixteen hundred police and volunteers took part in the attack on Parihaka, a settlement in western Taranaki which had become the symbol of protest against confiscation of Maori land. Its primary leaders were Te Whiti O Rongomai (Taranaki and Te Atiawa) and Tohu Kakahi (Taranaki and Ngati Ruanui). They were joined by Titokowaru in the aftermath of his campaign against the government in the late 1860s. Te Whiti and Tohu were arrested in 1881 and exiled until March 1883.

Te Whiti and Tohu employed non-violent non-cooperation tactics in their struggle against land confiscations. The government responded to their protests by passing laws aimed specifically at the Parihaka protestors and ultimately by imprisoning people without trial.

Parihaka became a concern to the government as it was seen as a place that could reignite Maori opposition to Pakeha progress. The historian Hazel Riseborough wrote that 'Parihaka had become a haven for the dispossessed and disillusioned from the length and breadth of the coast, and as far away as North Auckland, the King Country, Wairarapa and the Chatham Islands.'

On the morning of 5 November 1881 some 1600 volunteers and Armed Constabulary invaded the settlement. More than 2000 villagers sat quietly on the marae as a group of singing children greeted the force led by Native Minister John Bryce. Bryce had described Parihaka as 'that headquarters of fanaticism and disaffection'. A local MP, he had fought in the war against Titokowaru. Bryce ordered the arrest of Parihaka's leaders, the destruction of the village and the dispersal of most of its inhabitants.

The press, banned from the field of action by Bryce, were ambivalent about the government's actions, but the great majority of colonists were reportedly in favour of them. Te Whiti and Tohu were detained without trial for 16 months. The government managed to delay for several years the publication in New Zealand of all official documents relating to these events.

MCH ncl

