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Bill English **6 FEBRUARY, 2017**

Waitangi Day: Speech to Ngati Whatua, Orakei Marae

Honour and glory to God
Peace to the land
Goodwill to all people
Greetings to us all acknowledging Waitangi day
Here with our hosts Ngati Whatua of Orakei
At Bastion Point,
In Tamaki (Auckland)
I sincerely thank you Ngati Whatua for your warm and generous hospitality
And Invite us all to enjoy Waitangi Day.

Can I acknowledge Ngati Whatua, and thank them for their invitation to come here today.

I have come here today with a number of my colleagues from Parliament, Ministers, the council, including the deputy Mayor, and a range of people from the community to help celebrate what has been achieved and take this day to celebrate it.

Can I acknowledge the passing of Ta Hugh Kawharu. I had the opportunity to meet him and talk to him and read his writing and learn from him that you can change the path of your history. I feel it was a privilege on my part to have had that opportunity, as a politician.

Also some other people here who played a critical part in developing the way that New Zealand has come to grips with te Tiriti – my good friend Naida (Glavish), the start of the Maori Party bringing into the core of the Government of New Zealand, te ao Maori every single day.

It hasn't been easy.

In the spirit of tough and decisive women, from Naida, Dame Tariana, Marama, who is with us here today. They never give up. Sometimes I wish they would.

And also my friend Rob Fenwick, one of many Pakeha who have over the years come to see what works for iwi and Maori, works for New Zealand.

So many of them, in fact everyone I have met who has become involved in the organisation of iwi, find deeply satisfying.

1977

English, 2017a

This isn't my first time in this wharenui. I came here last year as the Minister of Finance, not expecting to come back as the Prime Minister

Which is as one of my sons said it to me just proves that in a small country if you wait long enough you get your turn.

I have noticed that since I am no longer in charge of the putea, the number of friends I have seems to have dropped off, and my successor Steven Joyce has become a bit more popular.

The reason I wanted to come here, alongside the generous invitation, was because the memory of Bastion Point is still very much alive for many New Zealanders.

They can remember the pictures, the tension, the police and the Prime Minister of the time.

They can still remember today, in a sense more immediately because it was on TV, the substance of the grievance.

For Ngati Whatua, that history reflects that of many other iwi.

Signing the treaty here in 1840, within a few years the protections of it started disappearing and getting very flexible.

And along the way dispossession, including I noted in a way that shows that nothing is new, 13 acres that were taken in order to install some guns in the face of the coming Russian threat.

Then, of course, the tension over Bastion Point. And isn't it ironic at the time one of the issues was state housing.

And in recent times we have a tension of a different sort with Ngati Whatua over state housing as we set out to redevelop this whole area, which will happen over the next 10-15 years.

We have found ourselves dealing with some tough commercial negotiations, but that's its right kind of tension compared to what was there before.

To move from Bastion Point to today is a marvellous achievement and we are here to celebrate that for the reasons that other speakers have outlined.

Because there is a lot of negative things that go with 140-150 years of grievance, there's the anger and frustration and shame on both sides.

And we owe it to the leaders who came before us and who could see through that cold mist that laid over this place and Ngati Whatua.

People like Sir Hugh Kawharu, and the Hawke family, and on the political side Jim Bolger, Doug Graham and Jenny Shipley.

I can still remember being in Cabinet in 1996 where there was being a big discussion about whether to sign the Ngai Tahu settlement in the face of the election and the

determination of the Prime Minister at the time to ensure that it happened as a demonstration of the direction New Zealand should take.

So we've signed I think something like 66 of the 82 settlements, that have ever been signed.

And one I recall, which I think explained to me the burden of leadership.

I was talking to one of the rangatira, who was mandated to agree to his iwi's settlement, who has now passed away.

He looked a bit tired. He said to me I didn't sleep last night at all. I went out for a walk in the middle of the night.

I said why was that?

He said because I was worried about carrying the burden of saying to my ancestors of the last 140 years, that's enough.

And then being responsible to my descendants for that decision.

And then he said that's why the last step is the hardest.

Like many other iwi the settlement has had a transformative impact in their sense of direction and cohesion.

As it has here. The story of Ngati Whatua is much more successful than most people realise.

Ngai Tahu can't stop telling us how well they are doing.

And they are only like that because they learnt it from Waikato-Tainui.

So as we look to the 200 year anniversary of the signing of the treaty, in 2040, isn't it great to be here at Takaparawhau (Bastion Point), on Waitangi Day celebrating the marvellous achievements of Ngati Whatua in just a short amount time. In just a short time.

You know as well as we do how much more there is to be done.

You are going to have all these discussions around how everyone can benefit from this success. Just like a government does with a country.

About whether you are bringing everyone along and the internal differences over how things should be organised. And in a way that's a bigger challenge than being the victim.

What we should be celebrating today, on Waitangi Day, is what you have demonstrated and that is a group of people who had the leadership, and the courage and the vision to see that path and show it to other New Zealanders.

Because things wouldn't have had to be that much different for us to be here on Waitangi Day not much further ahead than in 1976.

Just a few people with real courage making decisions.

And the great thing is now that because of that achievement, the interests and success of Ngati Whatua is now intrinsically entwined with the success of New Zealand.

Economic opportunities, jobs and incomes for your children are going to depend on the success of the New Zealand economy.

The sense that people belong is going to depend as much on what the Government does as what you do.

So the step taken to make a settlement has pulled us, the crown and iwi, together.

And that's why it's so important to celebrate Waitangi Day this way – so that the rest of New Zealand can see that's what's being achieved.

Thank you.

Bill English Prime Minister

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POLITICS

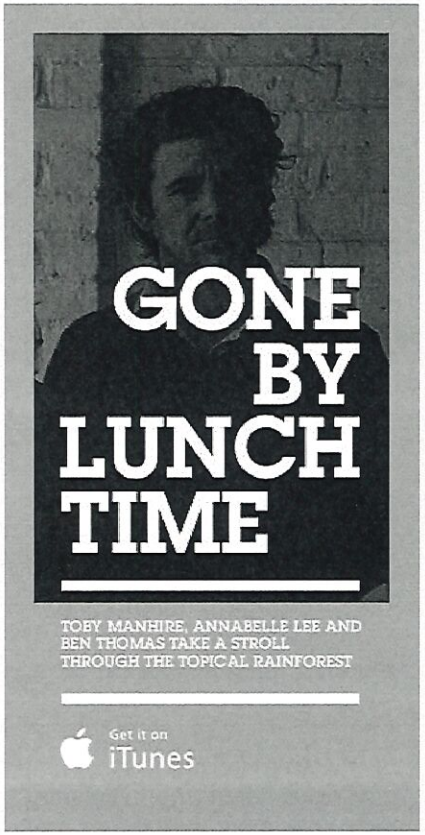
PM Bill English gave two speeches on Waitangi Day. Both were remarkable. Both were almost entirely ignored

By Simon Wilson | Auckland Editor
February 9, 2017

The prime minister spent his first Waitangi Day in office not at the treaty grounds, but at Bastion Point, where Simon Wilson watched him give two of the most surprising Waitangi speeches in living memory.

Did you know Bill English used Waitangi Day to praise the great protest struggle of Bastion Point?

He made two speeches on the marae at Bastion Point that day, both of them in front of TV cameras and other media. Almost none of what he said got reported. Instead, there was a frenzy of excitement over his utterly inconsequential phone call with Donald Trump. But what the prime minister said on the marae at Bastion Point was extraordinary.



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turn to speak during the powhiri, which was held inside the wharenui, he began with a short mihi and then he said, "I want to tell you why I've come here, to this marae."

He said it was because of what had been achieved by Ngāti Whātua and the manner of its achievement. He spoke directly to Joe Hawke, the much-loved Uncle Joe, the man who in 1976-78 led a 506-day protest "occupation" of the very land they were on that day. Hawke sat front and centre across from English, flanked by other kaumātua, many of whom were also protest veterans. He soaked it up.

Hawke is silver haired now, a thin man with the sad eyes of age, but what draws you is the whispery smile that keeps flitting over his face, creasing the skin, puckering the lips, lighting those eyes. He leaves it to others to do the talking, and none of them leaves you in any doubt of their pride at their achievements.

English understood it very well. He told them the modern history of Ngāti Whātua was a story of great success. And he wanted them to know he did not view the protest as an aberration in that story, but as a vital part of it. Later, over breakfast in the wharekai, he built on his theme.

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AT A MEDIA STAND UP ON JANUARY 9, PM BILL ENGLISH EXPLAINS WHY HE WILL NOT BE ATTENDING THE WAITANGI DAY EVENTS AT WAITANGI'S TE TII MARAE.

There was a large audience – Ngāti Whātua, politicians, community representatives and media – and he said we are all engaged in a "great enterprise" of building a country based on "fairness, tolerance and respect". Then he said, "We've all got better at it because of our struggles over the treaty."

"Our struggles." Bastion Point was the biggest and most important Māori land struggle of modern times. Takaparawhā (Bastion Point) was taken by the Crown for defence purposes in 1885 (the Russians were coming, supposedly) and never returned. In 1976 the government announced plans to sell the land for luxury housing and the protest began. It ended in 1978 when the police marched in, tore down the protesters' buildings and other structures and forcibly removed 202 people.

But the sale didn't happen. It was three years after Whina Cooper had led a land rights hikoi from the Far North; three years also since the Waitangi Tribunal was established. After the eviction a long period of negotiations and legal actions

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undisputed ownership of Bastion Point, an apology for historic wrongs and, among other things, compensation of $18 million.

Today, the restored and greatly expanded marae is the heart of a thriving iwi enterprise: there are extensive health, education and other social programmes, including pioneering housing projects. The marae has extensive gardens and a tree nursery that services the whole city. There's a busy cultural schedule and a big raft of commercial activity. Because of the treaty settlement and a smart property investment programme, that $18 million settlement has grown to an asset base of $717 million.

Bill English acknowledged the "massive achievements of Ngāti Whātua in such a short space of time" and said he wanted to "celebrate a group of people with the leadership and courage to make… decisions".

He said he knew what it cost the kaumātua who negotiated treaty settlements. At another iwi, one leader had told him he'd been unable to sleep the night before they signed. "He said he struggled with the burden of knowing he must say to his ancestors, 'That's enough.' And he struggled with the responsibility of saying the same to his descendants."

There are so many ways in which treaty settlements are different for Māori and Pākehā, and that's one of them: Pākehā don't think like that.

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BILL ENGLISH AT THE POWHIRI AT NGĀTI WHĀTUA-O-ŌRĀKEI MARAE ON WAITANGI DAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2017.

English also said, "Ngāti Whātua's future is New Zealand's future." It wasn't a mere platitude about diverse peoples coming together in national unity. He was pointing specifically to the economic and cultural importance of iwi to whole country.

"In the regions," he said, "and I include Auckland in that, I would say that almost without exception the organisations that are most committed to development are the local iwi."

That's another remarkable thing for him to say. Iwi are economic powerhouses in the regions and major agents of social cohesion. Despite what Don Brash and his band of Hobson's Pledge ostriches might want us to think, they're not stripping the country of its assets and infrastructure – they're building them.

"But," English added, speaking not just of iwi but of the government and the country as a whole, "much as we have good intentions the truth is we have not met our aspirations."

of failure."

Which is why, he said, Whānau Ora is important. Whānau Ora, which empowers iwi and smaller communities within them to develop services and direct them where they are needed most. Whānau Ora, said English, "represents the best and truest chance of the next 20 to 30 years".

The takeaways were provocative. First, have we ever before had a National Party prime minister who speaks so unequivocally in support of Māori agency – and of Māori activism that lays the foundation for Māori agency?

Second, if the Bastion Point protest was historically invaluable, what does that say for other protest movements today – inside Māoridom and more widely?

Third, if English will say these things on the marae, will he say them in Parliament, and in the regions, to business groups and to his own party – will he say them to audiences who are not already primed to agree? He's a diffident leader, a quiet explainer more than an engaging winner of hearts and minds, and he's as liable as most politicians to duck the difficult issues when it's hard to stand up for them.

Mind you, he probably thought he was saying all this to a wider audience because he probably assumed his Waitangi Day speeches would be reported. Especially as he made it clear he knew Ngāti Whātua's achievements were founded on that great protest occupation. Audrey Young in the *Herald* covered some of it; almost no other media mentioned

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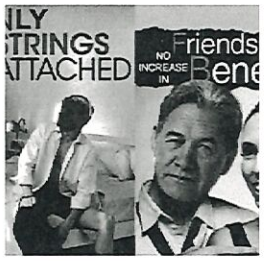

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