The alliance between the Rātana Church and the Labour Party was cemented at an historic meeting between Tāhupōtiki Wiremu Rātana and Prime Minister Michael Joseph Savage.

In 1928, 10 years after his first religious visions, T.W. Rātana announced his intention to enter politics, referring to the four Māori seats as the 'four quarters' of his body. He aimed to win these seats by harnessing the voting power of his followers, who by 1934 were said to number 40,000.

In 1932, Eruera Tirikatene became the first Rātana MP when he won a by-election for Southern Māori. He was instructed to support the Labour opposition. Rātana favoured the Labour Party because it had consulted his supporters when devising its Māori policy. When Labour won a landslide election victory in 1935, the Rātana movement took a second seat, Western Māori.

In 1943, the Rātana–Labour alliance succeeded in capturing all 'four quarters' when Tiki Omata defeated Sir Apirana Ngata in Eastern Māori. Labour was to hold all the Māori seats for the next 50 years.

Read more on NZHistory
Tāhupōtiki Wiremu Rātana
Change in the 20th century – Māori and the vote
Rātana on the road – Māori and the vote

External links
Māori Political Parties (1966 encyclopaedia)
T.W. Rātana (DNZB)
Rātana (Wikipedia)
Enduring attraction of Rātana (NZ Herald)
Rātana Church (Te Ara)