

Rātana and Labour Party commemorate alliance

5:22pm, Friday 22 April 2016. By [Harata Brown \(/news/reporters/harata-brown/\)](#)

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Members of the Rātana Church strolled through Parliament today to commemorate an alliance formed between the church and the Labour Party 80 years ago. Te Kāea looks back on the significance of this day for the two parties.

It was the spirit that brought the members of the Rātana Church to Parliament.

"It's the sign of remembrance 80 years ago. That's what brought us here today," says Ranea Aperaŋama.

Apotoŋo for the Hāhi Rātana, Wairua Andre Mason says, "Arepa, Omeka, Piriwiritua, the spirit within, and the words of the Rātana Prophet led us both today."

Prophet Taŋupotiki Wiremu Rātana forged the alliance between the Rātana Church and the Labour Party in 1936 when Labour leader Michael Joseph Savage was Prime Minister.

Today Labour Party leader Andrew Little says that the relationship between both parties needed to be re-forged today.

"The issues today might be different, but the objective is still the same. Creating a country, creating communities where everybody has a chance."

Te Tai Hauāuru MP Andrian Rurawhe says, "This is a very special day for Rātana and for Labour, I think it's an opportunity to remember the past, and commemorate what happened, but also to look to the future too and how that might look for all of us."

The alliance was seen as a means to advocate for Māori issues and the Treaty of Waitangi. Every year, politicians gather to Rātana Pā to commemorate the Prophet's birthday. But Mr Little says he wanted something more formal to recognise their relationship.

"So having a commemoration of this important event is a start, there will obviously be some korero between Labour's Maori MP's and Rātana over the next few months," says Little.

The Labour Party Leader says he hopes to be at Rātana Pā in October to discuss specific policies with Rātana leaders that are important for Māori and NZ.

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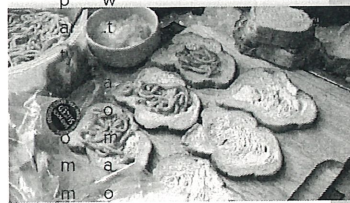
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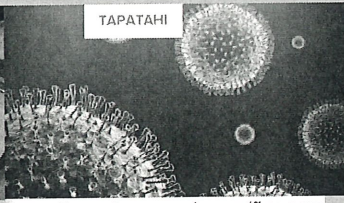
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