

the board to accept it as a draft proposal and to commit it to widespread discussion both within the school, in the Catholic maori communion, and in maori communities generally. I hope for widespread discussion, and its eventual adoption and endorsement as the school's commitment to the development of the maori side of our character. We have enough time to discuss this proposal fully and to implement it by 1986 if we are prepared to make the commitment and accept it within the next twelve months.

Progress to Date

This language development proposal was presented to the board in July, 1983. It was discussed at that and subsequent board meetings, and by the staff in the school. In December 1983, a discussion paper was presented on the proposal by a subcommittee of the board, convened by Victor Mokaraka. This discussion paper outlined how the parents, teachers, old-boys and church authorities should be appraised of our proposal and it presented a timetable for action. In December 1983, this discussion paper was approved by the board and is now being considered by our people on their many marae, in their homes and at their workplaces. It is the board's wish that when a decision is made later this year to go ahead with a total immersion programme in 1986, all interested people and organisations will have had time to consider it and its consequences.

So far, the initial proposal and the discussion paper have been received favourably, and in respect of parents and old-boys, very enthusiastically. Perhaps you might argue that it is an idea that has been around for a long while and its time has finally come. Whether that is so or not is not important. What is important is that within the college, and at other colleges such as Queen Victoria and McKillop (Rotorua) similar proposals are being considered and will get underway.

As the initiator of the proposal, and a parent's representative on the board, I feel confident that our community will come in behind us and support our endeavours. I look forward to the next few years with great enthusiasm. I am confident that our immersion programme will get underway in 1986, and that by 1990, the whole school will be maori speaking. To me that is an exciting prospect, and a condition that has not existed at Hato Petera for more than forty years.

Ki a au nei, ko te reo rangatira, te waiu o ta tatou maoritanga. E tatou e takatu nei hei painga mo a tatou rangatahi, tena ra tatou katoa.

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tKR a growing force

The kohanga reo movement may rank next to the New Zealand Party as one of the fastest growing political movements in New Zealand, according to Auckland Maori Council chairman Ranginui Walker.

Dr Walker told the Post-Primary Teachers' Association maori education hui at Huntly's Waahi marae in April that kohanga reo was also one of the most dynamic and innovative education programmes in New Zealand.

"Ostensibly the kohanga reo exist to teach pre-schoolers the maori language," he said.

"The unforeseen side effects include many young mothers not only learning their own language, but also becoming politically active as they grapple the constraints imposed by pakeha bureaucracy for a fair distribution of resources needed to attain their goals.

"Symptomatic of this politicisation was the attendance of 1000 people at Turangawaewae marae for the kohanga reo conference in January....

"As children leave the kohanga reo, mothers shop around schools to seek out those that offer bilingual continuity.

"Where no bilingual programme is offering some parents hold back their children in the kohanga reo for a further year," Dr Walker said.

"As we enter into the era of declining rolls because of the falling birth rate, primary schools will be forced to go bilingual to attract

kohanga reo children and maintain their grading and staff levels."

Dr Walker also attacked Education Minister Merv Wellington and "a coterie of principals" for "watering down taha maori" in the first draft of the secondary school core curriculum.

This "unilateral action" by the minister was an affirmation of pakeha cultural dominance, he said.

"The minister's emasculation of taha maori in the curriculum review provides concrete evidence that the strategy of reform has failed," Dr Walker said.

That was why last month's maori education development conference at Ngaruawahia had advocated maori withdrawal from the education system and the establishment of alternative schools modelled on the principles underlying kohanga reo, he said.

Only when the taha maori had been liberated would it and taha pakeha "realise the dream of co-equal partnership entered into by the signatories of the Treaty of Waitangi 144 years ago," Dr Walker said.

Dr Walker is a senior lecturer at Auckland University's continuing education department, and belongs to the Whakatohea people of the Opotiki district in the Bay of Plenty.