



What the battle has shown is the inability and in some cases, unwillingness of local authorities to acknowledge their obligations under article two of the Treaty of Waitangi, where the Maori were guaranteed the use of their taonga, included in which were fisheries.

The findings of the Waitangi Tribunal in the recent Manukau decision showed how successive local authorities around the Manukau harbour, ignored local Maori fishing areas and built drainage systems, outfalls and even prohibited marae building and fishing in one area because of an airport extension that never came.

Wellington city has been no different, with lip service only being paid to cultural sensitivity. In cases where it is needed the pakeha bureaucratic response is to seek out the definitive "Maori" view, that is the viewpoint that all Maori people are expected to hold.

As well as being extremely simplistic, it is patronising in that pakeha people aren't expected to hold all the views of Sir Robert Muldoon, so why expect all Maoridom to agree with Sir Graham Latimer?

And usually the consultation process defines what is accepted as the definitive Maori view.

Maori planner, George Asher has always stressed this in his dealings with local authorities. He says because Maori people are not part of the planning process from the beginning consultations, it is very hard to introduce cultural sensitivity part way along the road.

He's found that when Maori views are understood by local authorities, it is quite a different matter to firstly rectify past mistakes and secondly make sure they don't happen again.

The Wellington City Council has heard the views of Te Atiawa elder, Ralph Love, as has Ray Ahipene Mercer.

Ray says the council has preferred to accept the more conservative view of Mr Love.

Frustration with not getting the support of the Te Atiawa elder, drove Ray to seeking the opinion of other Te Atiawa and Raukawa people, who are seen as being the custodians of Te Whanganui a Tara from the pakeha settlement of Ponapeke.

Ray's tupuna, Ngai Tara are acknowledged as being occupants of Wellington

prior to Te Atiawa and Raukawa, hence Te Whanganui a Tara, the sheltering harbour of Tara. It was at the Wellington District Maori Council that this support came through. They've resolved to approach the Wellington City Council over this concern for the continued disposing of sewage from Moa Point.

Whatever the Wellington City Council response to the ratepayers loan poll, Ray is aware that the battle is being fought on many fronts.

He's watched the successful appeals

to the Waitangi Tribunal over the dumping of sewage into the Kaituna River by the Rotorua City Council. Also the Te Atiawa appeal over sewage disposal by the New Plymouth City Council, and the Motunui Synthetic Fuel Plant siting of waste pipes, in the traditional kaimoana gathering area.

Ray's seen that the Treaty of Waitangi does have significance, and soon teeth, in a bureaucratic world. An appeal to the Tribunal over Moa Point is an option that makes more sense to Ray day by day.



TOP LEFT: Panoramic view from Rangitatau. Lyall Bay (left), Hutt Valley to Pencarrow sewer outlet. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The spread of sewage from Moa Pt. **TOP RIGHT:** Huirangi Waikerepuru speaks. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** The climb to Rangitatau.