

## Rainbow Warrior crew member memorial

Over 40 Greenpeace members together with Ngati Whatua elders and members of the Orakei Maori Action Committee gathered at Bastion Point (Takaparawha) to commemorate the sinking of the Rainbow Warrior.

A kauri was planted in memory of Fernando Perez, the Portuguese photographer who was killed when the Warrior went down.

The service was presided over by Kawenata Timi Tai Watene (extreme right) and Takuta Moana Wikiriwhi (extreme left). Joe Hawke (center left) said the kauri will be remembered by our mokopuna as a symbol of peace, strength and unity.

Rainbow Warrior mate Martin Gotje helps Joe plant the kauri. Photo by Gil Hanly.



## Maori face consumer difficulties

na Michelle Huria

*Cultural and language barriers can sometimes put Maori people at a disadvantage in the consumer world.*

The Complaints Section within the Consumers, Institute, Wellington, realises the problem is a difficult one. It is a free service open to all the public with consumer problems but Maori seem to be scarce.

Because most of the complaints work is done by phone or letter, Mary Morrison and Paddy Twist of the complaints section say it is difficult to know whether it's a Maori or pakeha at the other end. Complaints, however feel they may only be seeing a small proportion of Maori problems because the ones that do come to the attention of the office are usually serious and have been festering for some time.

In some cases Maori people are not aware of their rights or they don't know who to go to if they are being ripped off.

The areas where Maori people reach Consumer with their complaints are mainly those concerning, used cars, hire purchase and chattel mortgages. Mary says in most cases the problems arise where people sign contracts when they are unaware of the full meaning. The retailer has a duty to explain the

contract but often doesn't. Paddy says in some cases crooked dealers may have a go if they think the buyers do not know their rights. Some Maori have been targeted because of this.

Buying used cars has presented some common problems for Maori people. Both Mary and Paddy give examples, where the car broke down as soon as it left the yard and the dealer refused to give the money back. The buyer didn't know the dealer had to fix the car by law.

Another case was where the dealer refused to fix a faulty car, the buyer stopped hire purchase payments and the car was repossessed. The buyer was not aware his contract was signed with the finance company rather than the dealer. He should have carried on with the hire purchase payments and come to an arrangement with the dealer to fix the car.

In another the buyer had put a \$500 deposit down to try the car out overnight. He failed to get a receipt for a refund of the money should he not want the car. The dealer would not give the deposit back.

A few simple points can help avoid such rip-offs.

1. Never buy a used car off a dealer without a current AA report at the dealers expense.

2. If you take the car away to try it out, don't give a deposit until there is a receipt refunding your money, should you not want the car.

3. Cars in a yard have to by law have one of four warranties in groups A B C D. Most problems occur with Group D which offers no warranty. However the car must have a current warrant of fitness and be fit for its purpose. If the wheels fall off as you leave the yard or you later find the pistons were worn out, the car was sold when it was not fit for its purpose. You can get your money back.

4. Know what you sign.

Mary and Paddy at the Consumers Institute say pakeha people are also prone to being ripped off, however they are more likely to know where to go to complain. Mary and Paddy would like to be of more service to Maori people with their consumer complaints, OR to explain any contracts people are unsure of.

Their offices are at: 39 Webb St, Wgtn. Ph. 847-963.

Achilles House, cnr Custom St and Commerce St, Akld. Ph. 793-552.

482 Tuam St, Chch. Ph 892-078.