Kokiri — "a positive form of gang".

Kai Hui — Executive Officer Tamaki Kokiri

"Pulling all the bits and pieces together" is how Kai sees kokiri working in his area.

"Sure the city area has its problems but we must go beyond talk and convince the people they have the abilities to decide and take action", says Kai.

He views kokiri as an evolving concept that needs to be part of an ongoing relationship with the community. He says Maoris have been conned into thinking they can't decide for themselves and that myth has to be challenged.

A lot of resources haven't been tapped says Kai, and kokiri is a way to get the groundswell support of all groups such as the Auckland Regional Authority, the city fathers, Rotary, etc.

For Kai the challenge is to break through the talk and take the initiative in helping communities reshape their lives and destinies.

Denis Hingston — Executive Officer Mangere Kokiri

Kokiri units are to be established within as many communities as possible. They will consist of staff of the Department of Maori Affairs who will provide a full time support service to community action programmes. The units will also consist of community organisations and individuals so that a real kotahitanga force can develop to accelerate the attainment of goals.

Assumption

Kokiri units must always assume that the community in the main is progressing well and utilising most of its resources. But there must also be the assumption that greater creativity can occur in every community through more self vision, understanding, and confidence to deal with the complexities of its own particular concern. Consequently kokiri units must behave in a way that encourages the initiative and the decision-making to be taken by the community itself.

It is also a valid assumption that the majority of the community are moving through life in a very positive, happy and progressive manner. These are strengths that must be identified and highlighted so as to avoid any distortions that occur through an over-concentration on the negative happenings in communities. For this reason kokiri units must be persistent and aggressive yet sensitive in promoting a tu tangata stance. The units must not give way to any negative force but rather should energise themselves and the positive elements of its community to deal with them.

Method

Members of kokiri units must themselves be creative and perform at a higher level of efficiency. They must understand their role as being one that is both catalystic yet action oriented. The basic requirement is to work in the community constantly and to understand its objectives; to work in tune with the people and with their rhythm; to do all things possible that will assist the community to make good use of its collective power and strength. And again to remind the community where necessary that the focus is to be on positive strengths and the potential; to stand up against negative forces and to deal with them with kotahitanga.

Priority for 1981

Kokiri units must determine their own priorities according to the nature of particular communities. But as a suggestion based on national trends a target which can be used to pivot kokiri units into a wide area of activity would be the 9 to 13-year-old young Maori group. It is in this area where the peak of the population exists particularly in the large metropolitan areas.

The pathway to the target might well be the whanau or the school or the sports club or the youth gang. It might well be that the best beginning is to start with those families that have been identified as needing particular help in coping with home finance, their children's education, unemployment and the like. But the actual reason for contact should be seen as the entree to a wide set of developments with a family be it child care, education, Maori language, etc.

For example, visits to a school may identify a weaker student. This offers an opportunity for a kokiri unit to work with the individual or parents or the school. But it also offers many resource people the opportunity to rectify or adjust problems that may be indirectly related to the reason for a weaker student. It may be that the student's basic fault is an eye or ear defect. It may also be the lack of proper vocational training direction or poor teaching within the school.

Then there is the use of a Maori language class to motivate a family or a person towards education pursuits or greater participation in the community.

Making decisions

Tu tangata corporate management is the body that should be making decisions about kokiri action programmes. The executive officer of each unit is to ensure that a community leader act as the chairman for this decision-making group and that follow through of resolutions are actioned.

A model — kokiri units

The kokiri unit structure for the Wellington region is the first example. It disestablishes the existing district office method and organises the department's resources into four components. They are:

Three kokiri units:
Poneke — Wellington urban areas
Harataunga — Hutt Valley, Upper Hutt, Wainuiomata.
Porirua — As far as Waikanae River.

Staff of kokiri unit

The objective is to put into the field a composite unit with experiences and expertise particularly in areas of work such as education, youth development, housing, and Maori cultural affairs. The fourth component is the kokiri core unit. It will provide the district kokiri units with immediate information about housing mortgage matters and general data. The core unit will collate activities in the field and report directly to head office on progress of tu tangata programmes. But it is important that the core unit provide logistic and administrative support to the field units which will not be staffed with clerical or typing personnel. 🔱

HE KAWA =

KOKIRI =

KOTAHITANGA =

TAONGA =