

# **Debating with Catherine Delahunty**

**Debate with Catherine Delahunty, Green Party's Tiriti o Waitangi Spokesperson.**

**How the politicians think? No wonder New Zealand is in Crisis!**



Catherine Delahunty MP



**Green**  
Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand

Ross Baker  
One New Zealand Foundation Inc.  
PO Box 7113  
Pioneer Highway  
Palmerston North

10 July 2012

Dear Ross,

Thank you for your letter to the Green Party MPs. I am writing on behalf of all of us, as the Party's spokesperson on Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

With respect, we disagree with your contention that New Zealand should not have endorsed the Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous People. We also disagree that the Government has unfairly given resources to Māori at the expense of non-Māori.

The charter of the Green Party contains the following line:

*The Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand accepts Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa New Zealand; recognises Maori as Tangata Whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand*

You may also be interested in reading the full Te Tiriti o Waitangi policy on our website at <http://www.greens.org.nz/policy/tiriti>.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Delahunty MP  
Green Party

Authorised by Catherine Delahunty, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

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**From:** Ross Baker [[ONZF@bigpond.com](mailto:ONZF@bigpond.com)]

**Sent:** Sunday, July 15, 2012 01:06 PM New Zealand Standard Time

**To:** Catherine Delahunty

**Subject:** Tangata whenua.

Hon Catherine Delahunty,

Member of Parliament,

Green Party,

Parliament Building,

Wellington.

Dear Catherine,

Thank you for your letter dated the 10 July 2012 re Maori are the tangata whenua of New Zealand.

It surprises me that the Green Party accepts Maori as the tangata whenua when Dr Ranganui Walker, a respected Maori historian stated, *"The tradition are quite clear on one point, where ever crew disembarked there were tangata whenua (prior inhabitants). The canoe ancestors of the 14 century merged with these tangata whenua."* The 1986 New Zealand Book of Events, page 18.

Dr Ranginui Walker can only supply mythical evidence as to these tangata whenua people as no forensic evidence exists. He states, some arrived by canoe, some on the back of a whale and others fished up New Zealand. We do not know where these tangata whenua came from, when they arrived or how they travelled to New Zealand except for the many varying myths and legends told by Maori themselves. Dr Ranginui Walker even gave the suggestion; the Great Migration may have been just down the coasts of New Zealand when local areas became overpopulated. There is even a theory that tangata maori may have been brought to load ships then left behind to tend for themselves.

When Governor Hobson wrote the Tiriti o Waitangi he refers to the people as 'tangata maori', not 'tangata whenua' as it was common knowledge amongst the Maori, the missionaries and Hobson that there were people already inhabiting New Zealand long before the Maori arrived in the 14th century. Maori described them as, ***"of non-Maori appearance, having reddish hair and pale skin"***.

The Attorney General, Hon Christopher Finlayson and the Prime Minister and Hon John Key have both stated New Zealand does not have a definition of the Indigenous people or tangata whenua of New Zealand. See attached letters from Hon Christopher Finlayson and the Hon John Key.

As tangata maori have intermarried with other races of their own free will, it has become impossible for the Government or the United Nations to give a true definition of the Indigenous people or tangata whenua of New Zealand. While the United Nation gave a loose definition that indigenous people are those people that inhabited a country at the time of colonization, most Maori today have more of the colonizers ancestry that the colonized, therefore

can hardly come under this definition.

***Therefore, on what grounds does the Green Party believe Maori are the tangata whenua of New Zealand?***

As the Tiriti o Waitangi made us all one people under the law, “He iwi tahi tatou - We are now one people/Nation”, intermarriage between the races made us all one people/Nation - New Zealanders.

Yours sincerely,

Ross Baker.

Researcher, One New Zealand Foundation Inc.



## Office of Hon Christopher Finlayson

Attorney-General  
Minister for Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations  
Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage

7 April 2010

Mr R Baker  
by email: [rossbaker@austarnet.com.au](mailto:rossbaker@austarnet.com.au)

Dear Mr Baker

I write in response to your request under the Official Information Act 1982 sent to the office of Hon Simon Power on 2 March 2010, and transferred to, and received by, the Attorney-General's office on 8 March 2010.

Your request states:

"Please supply the "official" definition used by Government today to define who is "indigenous" to New Zealand to claim against the Crown – the people of New Zealand for alleged injustices."

I am declining your request under section 18(e) of the Official Information Act 1982 as no document exists that contains this information.

Under section 28(3) of the Act you may, if you wish, write to the Ombudsman seeking an investigation and review of this decision.

Yours faithfully

R.F. May  
Senior Private Secretary

**From:** [Catherine Delahunty](#)

**Sent:** Sunday, July 15,  
2012 11:38 AM

**To:** ['Ross Baker'](#)

**Subject:** RE: Tangata whenua.

Hi Ross, I don't agree with your interpretation of Dr Ranginui Walker's work. I am not sure what experience you have of the oral culture on the marae but whakapapa connects hapu to tupuna and tupuna are often described in a direct line from the mother earth and father sky in this specific place. I have never anyone from my culture (Pakeha of English, Irish and Scots descent) describe our ancestry in this way. We don't

have to be one people to have a harmonious and successful relationship between tangata whenua and tangata tiriti ( people whose rights are established by Te Tiriti o Waitangi) we do have to stop pretending that we are all one culture and that culture is western and that our colonial history has been healed. I don't expect you to agree. My partner is an archaeologist and he assures me all the archaeology evidence is that Maori are the indigenous people of country and the latest research shows that the red haired white skin gene arises in the South Pacific and Melanesian cultures independent of external influences.

I don't know what your Foundation is trying to prove but John Key ignores tangata whenua rights when it suits him, for political reasons. The Greens are more interested in negotiating peace between the cultures and respect for Te Tiriti o Waitangi as a way forward for all of us best wishes

Catherine

---Original Message---

**From:** Ross Baker [[ONZF@bigpond.com](mailto:ONZF@bigpond.com)]

**Sent:** Sunday, July 15, 2012 03:35 PM New Zealand Standard Time

**To:** Catherine Delahunty

**Subject:** Re: Tangata whenua.

Thanks Catherine but you have not mentioned the main question, while tangata maori were the other party to the Tiriti o Waitangi and whether they were tangata whenue is really irrelevant, their ancestors of their own free will have intermarried with other races causing the Government to amend the definition of Maori many times until today a Maori person can have less than 1% of tangata maori ancestry but still gain all the advantages and privileges of being tangata whenua over their fellow New Zealand Citizens.

I respect Maori culture in every respect, but when it comes to dividing up a country into Maori and non-Maori as Government is doing today, there comes a time when ancestry must be taken into account. It's a fact, many Maori today have more ancestry of the Colonizers than the Colonized but still gain all the advantages and privileges as if they were the tangata whenua or the distinct race of people (tangata maori) that signed the Tiriti o Waitangi in 1840. Non-Maori cannot be blamed on New Zealand accepting the western system, Maori chose in 1840 to accept it and in many cases to marry into it, which they endorsed in 1860 at the Kohimarama Conference.

Why should a New Zealand Citizen today with a small percentage of tangata maori ancestry have advantage and privileged over a New Zealand Citizen without tangata maori ancestry?

As the Tiriti o Waitangi made us all one people under the law, "He iwi tahi tatou - We are now one people", intermarriage between the races made us all one people, one Nation - New Zealanders.

Regards,

Ross Baker.

Chairman, One New Zealand Foundation Inc

P.S. Has your partner forensic evidence Maori were the tangata whenua or indigenous people of New Zealand? If so we would be very grateful if he could provide us with this information as Government has failed

**From:** [Catherine Delahunty](#)

**Sent:** Sunday, July 15, 2012 2:02 PM

**To:** ['Ross Baker'](#)

**Subject:** RE: Tangata whenua.

Hi Ross I think you have confused culture and ethnicity with marriage. Culture is self determining and has nothing to do with percentages. People who identify as tangata whenua are likely to experience many disadvantages from discrimination at school, workplace and in the courts to name just a few. When Pakeha have married tangata whenua they have not experienced these discriminations. However we could debate this endlessly and I could suggest many books about indigneous rights but you would probably still disagree.

We are defining culture differently and interpreting Te Tiriti differently. Captain Hobson was pretty naive in his statements but the events that followed included 96 percent of the land being taken by force or manipulation and hence the situation we need to face up today.

I doubt anything my partner or I could say would be proof enough for you. I just urge to go to a marae and quietly listen instead of trying to prove something utterly unhelpful.

Best wishes

Catherine

---Original Message---

**From:** Ross Baker [[ONZF@bigpond.com](mailto:ONZF@bigpond.com)]

**Sent:** Monday, July 16, 2012 10:07 AM New Zealand Standard Time

**To:** Catherine Delahunty

**Subject:** Re: Tangata whenua.

Catherine, I have not confused culture and ethnicity with marriage. I spent 60 years of my life in Rotorua, which was the heart of Maoridom in the 1940's, 50's and 60's so have a fairly good idea of Maori culture on and off the marae. While a marae can be a very beautiful and moving experience, it is also theatre at its best, a little exaggeration here and a little there can add to the orator's



mana. Fishermen do the same. I myself tend to use the Minute Books held in our archive that are sworn on oath or books written at the time to find the true history of our country.

I have no problem with part-Maori wanting to keep the best of their tangata maori culture, it is their right, but I do object when part-Maori with ancestry of the people you allege, *"took 96 percent of the land by force or manipulation and hence the situation we need to face up today"* are claiming under false pretences for this land and its resources.

**While past culture is in the mind of the beholder, intermarriage with other races is a fact that cannot be denied!**

It seems you have very little factual knowledge of New Zealand before and after the Tiriti was signed. Maori had sold or were negotiating to sell virtually 1/3 of the North Island under the watchful eye of Te Rauparaha and the other powerful chiefs and the South Island chiefs had contracts over most of their land before the Tiriti was signed. Many of these contracts are still held in Australian and New Zealand archives.

What chance would a few Pakeha have against Te Rauparaha, Te Whero Whero, Hongi Hika and their followers if they did not agree with the purchases of Wellington, Wanganui and the Bay of Islands etc in pre-Tiriti times? The Americans and French also had large areas of land purchased from the chiefs pre-Tiriti, which were all protected by the chief that sold the land. Tangata maori had a very good idea of selling and purchasing from a very early stage as they had been supplying the many ships that visited New Zealand since the late 17th century with pork, potatoes, timber and flax. Many chiefs had also sailed to Australia to make purchases of goods or try to sell land in pre-Tiriti times.

Governor Hobson made sure after the Tiriti was signed, the chiefs agreed with these pre-Tiriti sales/contracts or he returned the land to the chief. The whole of the South Island was returned and parts sold again to the Government at a later date. Hobson also gave legal title to Maori land before it could be sold, the first time ever when Maori could own land without constantly defending it from a more powerful tribe. A few years before the Tiriti was signed Taranaki and the Moriori lost all their land to more powerful tribes. The Governor paid off Waikato and the Taranaki

were allowed to return to their lands, but unfortunately, it was too late for the Moriori, they had been slaughtered or farmed like sheep into virtual extinction.

Catherine, we would welcome any forensic information your partner has on the tangata whenua of New Zealand. While other countries can go back 1000's of years in documented forensic history, New Zealand's history, pre-European is still based on oral Maori legend or myth. Why is this kept from the public of New Zealand?

Regards,

Ross  
Baker.

Researcher, One New Zealand Foundation Inc.

**From:** [Catherine Delahunty](#)

**Sent:** Monday, July 16,  
2012 8:41 AM

**To:** ['Ross Baker'](#)

**Subject:** RE: Tangata whenua.

Hi Ross, lets turn the mirror around and start talking about the privileges of "part Pakeha" people or "part English" people who claim enormous dominance and rights based on our ability to keep control. I am also aware of the historical context as I have taught Te Tiriti history for 15 years. Clearly tangata whenua were trading pre 1840 but the history of land alienation via raupatu, land Court enforcement of private property rights and intermarriage is indisputable. An example is the East Coast where early Pakeha traders married a number of Maori women and then converted the land interests they had a share in via marriage into individual private property rights. I recommend Professor David Williams who has written

extensively on the role of the Maori Land Court as a method of confiscation.

I wonder if English people who have married Europeans are no longer English in England.

Anyway we could debate forever and I can see from your dismissal of Maori oral tradition as a serious historical record are unlikely to recognise my points.

But if we continue to impose a western world view we will soon be left behind as the demographic of this country change and the Pakeha identity finds itself a minority in the Pacific island we always were.

Thanks

---Original Message---

**From:** Ross Baker [[ONZF@bigpond.com](mailto:ONZF@bigpond.com)]

**Sent:** Monday, July 16, 2012 01:03 PM New Zealand Standard Time

**To:** Catherine Delahunty

**Subject:** Re: Tangata whenua.

Catherine,

I really appreciate

this discussion as it gives two very different views of the understanding of people in our country. If only more discussion like this could be had I am sure many of the problems that are beginning to raise their ugly head could be put to rest and we could all live under the one Principle Lt.Governor Hobson and the chief's that signed the Tiriti o Waitangi on the 6th February 1840 shook hands on before giving three hearty cheers, "He iwi tahi tatou - We are now one people/Nation".

So what you are saying in your email below, land alienation was better before the people had the law to protect it rather than the spear and the feast and slavery that followed, a fact tangata maori lived by 24/7. It must be remembered, many innocent settlers also had their land confiscated, buildings and crops destroyed and many families slaughtered by the tangata maori during their intertribal wars.

I agree there were mistakes made on both sides but you must admit, New Zealand is a far better

place to live in, work in and bring up kids for all than it was pre-Tiriti times. It was the chiefs that wanted the Queen's law and protection in 1831 and again in 1840 and the chiefs that endorsed it at the Kohimarama Conference in 1860 and this could only happen with the intervention of a British led government. This slowly diluted over the years until we adopted the Statute of Westminster in 1947 where we were granted complete autonomy in domestic as well as foreign affairs and we all became New Zealand citizens under one flag and one law. There was nothing stopping Maori entering politics at this time. Sir Apirana Ngata and others had become very successful politicians long before this and had made their mark. Sir Apirana Ngata's book, "The Treaty of Waitangi - An explanation" is excellent reading.

You mention the people of England. In England all people are treated the same under the law, people that can claim indigenous ancestry are not given special rights as they are in New Zealand, they are all recognized as one people - British Subjects and all very proud of it. Imagine if all the countries over the years that had been settled by different races of people, most through warfare, not by Tiriti as in New Zealand, wanted to take back their countries, we would be constantly at war like the Eastern States - do we really want this in New Zealand where the majority of people play sport, work, intermarry and enjoy each others company? I don't but it seems some do! I am a proud sixth generation New Zealander, I have no idea whether I have tangata maori ancestry or not and I don't really care but I do know my ancestors helped build this beautiful country of ours with all the others, both Maori and Pakeha and I just want to keep it this way. He iwi tahi tatou - We are now one people - New Zealanders!

Finally your comment, *"But if we continue to impose a western world view we will soon be left behind as the demographic of this country change and the Pakeha identity finds itself a minority in the Pacific island we always were"*. The western world view has been the most successful view of any system in the modern world. I admit it is in trouble now but so are all other systems, some far worse than ours, but it's the greed and corruption of the people as in New Zealand that has destroyed this system, not the system itself. If we continue down the path we are taking, we will also be at war with ourselves and how stupid would that be!

I am happy to share all the things my British ancestors brought to this country, all I ask is that others share this beautiful country of ours with me and put the past behind us!  
He iwi tahi tatou - We are now one people/Nation!

Regards,

Ross Baker

**From:** [Catherine Delahunty](#)

**Sent:** Monday, July 16,  
2012 11:44 AM

**To:** ['Ross Baker'](#)

**Subject:** RE: Tangata whenua.

Hi Ross, am about to get very busy at Parliament but before I do, I also believe in dialogue but not in "one people" as it suggests we are all Pakeha and the Westminster system is the best. Even if we think its got great points it doesn't justify colonising other people. It just never works to make the judgement that any one culture is better for all. Remember Victorian England and what it was like for women, who got hung or booted out for stealing a loaf of bread, let alone the 100 years war our ancestors got caught up with. I don't think the large number of tangata whenua in jail think these times are better for them. It might be better to be a woman in our culture now except we have botox and plastic surgery pressure instead of those dreadful corsets and property laws so who knows what era is better and for whom? But the reason for rejecting a colonial view is that its unfair and also it is really about getting resources off people and making them believe your political system is superior, see India, see Ireland and this country

best wishes

catherine

**From:** [Ross Baker](#)

**Sent:** Monday, July 16,  
2012 2:45 PM

**To:** [Catherine Delahunty](#)

**Subject:** Re: Tangata whenua.

Catherine,

I have not suggested we are or should be all Pakeha, we are all New Zealand Citizens, a special Nation of people made up of many cultures and races and I am not saying the Westminster system is the best but 13 northern chiefs asked for the King's laws and protection in 1831, over 500 chiefs asked for the Queen's laws and protection in 1840 and over 200 endorsed the Queen's laws and protection in 1860. How could these very wise and powerful men all be wrong over a very turbulent 30-year period?

As for Maori being in jail, I am sure most would be far happier with our New Zealand jails today than breaking tapu in 1820 and paying the ultimate price. As for women, this is completely over to them if they want botox and plastic surgery, at least they don't have to be forcibly mutilated as they do in many other countries for cultural reasons or forced to marry for the families honour. New Zealand gave women the vote, the first country in the world to do so.

No, the colonial system was not perfect but it was far better than many other alternatives at the time. Why did tangata maori choose the British instead of the French when in need? The system, like our Constitution has been amended and added to many times with new laws and Acts of Parliament, some for better, some for worse, but no system is perfect, the politicians make sure of that!

You say the Colonial system is unfair because it is really about getting the resource off the people. The Westminster system, based on the Magna Carta, based on the Law of Nature holds God given resources such as the foreshore, seabeds, water and the air in "trust" for the people, but part-Maori today want these for themselves and you say the colonial system is unfair?

We cannot compare India and Ireland or any other country with New Zealand, the people of New Zealand are unique, we have worked hard to build New Zealand into one of the most beautiful countries in the world, we have fought two world wars to protect New Zealand, we have played sport together to represent New Zealand, we have intermarried with each other, we have shared each others

culture and built our own unique New Zealand culture. I agree, there were wrongs of the past on both sides, but why let a few ungrateful, greedy and selfish people destroy it for the rest.

Regards,

Ross Baker.

Researcher, One New  
Zealand Foundation Inc.

**From:** [Ross Baker](#)

**Sent:** Thursday, July 19,  
2012 8:19 AM

**To:** [Catherine  
Delahunty](#)

**Subject:** Re: Tangata whenua.

Catherine,

Just wondering whether you have been too busy to answer my last email below. It seems you are clutching at straws in your last email by bringing women's problems that have no relationship to our debate and comparing Ireland and India with New Zealand, which again have no relationship as neither of these countries asked for British intervention, signed an agreed Treaty of cession by over 500 chiefs or endorsed the Queen's law some 20 years later by 200 chiefs at the Kohimarama Conference.

If you are happy to finish on this note, then so be it but there is far more to our history than that orally told on the marae. Hopefully you will spend time researching this as well, especially that held in archives around the world, they cannot all be wrong.

Regards,

Ross Baker.

Researcher, One New Zealand Foundation Inc.