



Mass Rally | Waitangi | Tuesday 29th May 2007 | 12.00pm

Background

On Tuesday 29th May 2007 at Waitangi, the birthplace of our nation, Prime Minister Helen Clark will officiate an Asia-Pacific Interfaith Forum with numerous officials from Asia-Pacific nations, including Australia, Indonesia, Brunei, Cambodia, Fiji, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

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At this Forum our Prime Minister will present New Zealand as a religiously 'neutral' country to an international audience by way of a *'National Statement on Religious Diversity'* which has been crafted as a guiding document for future reference on matters pertaining to nationhood and religion. The Statement declares...

"New Zealand has no official or established religion..."

...and amongst other things contends that schools should teach a diversity of religions. Of the eight principles contained in the *National Statement on Religious Diversity*, no reference whatsoever is made to New Zealand's significant Christian heritage. Moreover, most of the principles outlined in the statement already exist in New Zealand law. Which begs the questions, "why is such a statement necessary and what's the motivation behind it?"

If this Statement were to be adopted by the Labour-led Government, which is clearly its intention, then those 'established' elements of Christianity that currently exist within our constitutional, political and social arrangements would have no basis to remain. Some examples include the Bible in our justice system, prayer in parliament, Christmas and Easter holidays, our National Anthem 'God defend New Zealand' and Civic Oaths that acknowledge a greater authority to name but a few.

Moreover, virtues and ethics based on Christian presumptions will come under even greater scrutiny. Examples include Christian traditions of truth and justice, rights balanced by responsibilities, the nuclear family and parental rights. These will be politically challenged, rejected or redefined to conform to Labour's political way of thinking that elevates the State above all else. Under Labour's regime, this has already been achieved through laws that have substantially redefined the institution of marriage, undermined parental rights and created greater State dependency amongst New Zealand families.

New Zealand's WWII soldiers fought and died believing they were fighting for a Christian country. If there has ever been a time to stand up for our founding Christian faith and national identity, that time is NOW. This is not to impose Christianity on society or to deny any individual the freedom of religious choice. But it is to hold Government accountable to the heritage of our forefathers and ensure this legacy is passed on to the next generation. To that end, a **peaceful rally will take place on Tuesday 29th May at Waitangi (Event details to be advised soon)**. Let's send a clear message to the Prime Minister's Interfaith Forum – *"New Zealand has an established 'Christian' religion."*

"Those 'established' elements of Christianity that currently exist within our constitutional, political and social arrangements would have no basis to remain"

National Statement on Religious Diversity

The *National Statement on Religious Diversity* outlines 8 Principles:

“...When one generation no longer esteems its own heritage and fails to pass the torch to its children, it is saying in essence that the very foundation principles and experiences that make the society what it is are no longer valid. This leaves that generation without any sense of definition or direction...”

Winston Churchill.

1. *The State seeks to treat all faith communities and those who profess no religion equally before the law. **NEW ZEALAND HAS NO OFFICIAL OR ESTABLISHED RELIGION.***
2. *New Zealand upholds the right to freedom of religion and belief and the right to freedom from discrimination on the grounds of religious or other belief.*
3. *Faith communities and their members have a right to safety and security.*
4. *The right to freedom of expression and freedom of the media are vital for democracy but should be exercised with responsibility.*
5. *Reasonable steps should be taken in education and work environments and in the delivery of public services to recognize and accommodate diverse religious beliefs and practices.*
6. *Schools should teach an understanding of different religious and spiritual traditions in a manner that reflects the diversity of their national and local community.*
7. *Debate and disagreement about religious beliefs will occur but must be exercised within the rule of law and without resort to violence*
8. *Government and faith communities have a responsibility to build and maintain positive relationships with each other, and to promote mutual respect and understanding.*

Who is behind the Statement?



The Statement's architect, Professor Paul Morris (Advisor at the 2006 Labour Party Conference) says the idea of a *National Statement on Religious Diversity* would not originate with Government. Strangely then, the key agencies underwriting the initiative happen to be the Ministry of Social Development, one of New Zealand's largest Government Departments under the direction of Hon. David Benson Pope (Sponsor of the Civil Union Act), and the Human Rights Commission, governed by the Ministry of Justice.

It is timely to be reminded of this statement by senior Labour MP and party whip Tim Barnett who said their goal was to...

“...Pioneer a new 21st century expression of commitment free from traditional or religious presumptions...”

This goal is entirely consistent with the first principle of the *National Statement on Religious Diversity*, which states *'New Zealand has no official or established religion.'* Barnett and his colleagues have already achieved a fair level of success by severing New Zealand's constitutional ties with London's Privy Council and redefining through law traditional religious presumptions such as male/female marriage and the role of parents in the home.

New Zealand is being 'de-Christianised'

Over recent years New Zealand has experienced an unprecedented erosion of traditional Christian values at a political level. Some examples include:

- § Disconnecting New Zealand's motherland ties to the Privy Council in favour of a politically appointed Supreme Court
- § The fastest ever same-sex marriage laws to be introduced in the world
- § Legalised brothel keeping and prostitution
- § Underage abortions without parental knowledge or consent
- § Abortion on demand
- § Anti smacking legislation that undermines parental rights and gives increased power to the State
- § Removing legal terms specific to traditional marriage in existing law, such as "husband," "wife" and "marriage," which involved amending up to 1000 provisions in over 100 existing Acts to give same sex marriages equal status, benefits and recognition to the traditional 'marriage.'
- § The Care of Children Bill aimed to eradicate the terms "husband" and "wife" from the Family Proceedings Act. References to the word "custody" were replaced with "day to day care," thus removing the basic legal assumption that parents have "ownership" of their children. Section 17(2) of the first draft of the Bill defined a lesbian partner as a "father."



All of these developments that are contrary to New Zealand's traditional Christian values significantly weaken family structure and put more power in the hands of the State.

Christianity – the religion of choice for the Head of State

At the 1953 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, who is the Head of State of the Commonwealth Realms, she was presented with the Bible and admonished with these words, 'Our gracious Queen: to keep your majesty ever mindful of the law and the gospel of God as the rule for the whole of life and government of Christian princes, we present you with this Book, the most valuable thing that this world affords.... Here is Wisdom; This is the royal law; These are the very oracles of God.' This admonition was followed with Holy Communion.

Christian prayer in Parliament

New Zealand's Parliament has opened each day with a Christian prayer since the first sitting of Parliament on 16th June, 1864... "Almighty God, humbly acknowledging our need for Thy guidance in all things, and laying aside all private and personal interests, we beseech Thee to grant that we may conduct the affairs of this House and of our country to the glory of Thy holy name, the maintenance of 'true religion' and justice, the honour of the Queen, and the public welfare, peace, and tranquillity of New Zealand, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."



Christianity & Maori

Christian missionaries were many of the first European settlers in New Zealand, bringing the gospel of Christ to Maori. Christianity played a major role in achieving the confidence of Maori to allow continued settlements of the British in New Zealand. Here are the responses from some of the Maori chiefs, giving their reasons for signing the Treaty of Waitangi, the document that allowed the nation of New Zealand to exist and grow (the tribal name is in capitals, followed by the name of the chief):

“The former wars and jealousies disappeared, when the light of Christianity shone forth. My friends, the native chiefs, my desire is this: that religion, goodwill and peace should prevail throughout the land”.

Ihaka, chief of Pukaki

NGATITOA, Porirua; Te Ahukaramu: first, God; second, the Queen; third, the Governor. Let there be one Queen for us. Make known to us all the laws, that we may all dwell under one law.

TE TAWERA; Tamati Hapimana: I have but one law, the law of God. It was through the missionaries that I came to know what was right. It was like God's commandment to John, “Go and prepare the path,” for the missionaries came first and cleared the way, and afterwards the Lord came.

NGATIWHAKAUE, Rotorua; Te Amohau: let there be only one road. In former times it was evil; now Christianity has come among us, and we live in peace. In former times we were lost in the dark, but the gospel has come, and now we live.

NGAPUHI, Bay of Islands; Thomas Walker Nene: Who knows the mind of the Americans, or of the French? Therefore, I say let us have the English to protect us. When the Governor came here, he brought with him the word of God by which we live; and it is through the teaching of the word that we are able to meet together this day, under one roof. Therefore, I say, I know no sovereign but the Queen, and I shall never know any other. I am walking by the side of Pakeha.

PUKAKI, Manukau; Ihaka, chief of Pukaki: The former wars and jealousies disappeared, when the light of Christianity shone forth. My friends, the native chiefs, my desire is this: that religion, goodwill and peace should prevail throughout the land. If you approve, accept these things. Be strong to suppress the evil, that confusion may not grow. If confusion should spring up in any particular part, let the chiefs hasten there, to put it down, and let the European chiefs do the same, who are of the same mind. Let them both go together for the purpose of putting down evil confusion. My own desire is this, that peace may prevail throughout the land for ever, and that our warfare should be directed towards the increase of schools, and the promotion of religion.

Source: Pg 86-87, Eves Bite www.evesbite.com



Tahupotiki Wiremu (T.W) Ratana & the crowds drawn to the gospel

Christianity & the first Maori King

In 1858, the Coronation ceremony of the first Maori King, Potatau Te Wherowhero (paramount Chief of the Tainui Tribes) took place at Ngaruawahia. The ceremony was performed with the same Holy Bible that is used to this day. At this great meeting, Ngati Tuwharetoa paramount chief Te Heuheu said, "Potatau, this day I create you King of the Maori people. You and Queen Victoria shall be bound together to be one. **The religion of Christ shall be the mantle of your protection; the law shall be the mat of your feet, for ever and ever onward.**" To this, Potatau, turning to his people, replied, "Yes, I agree, for ever and ever onward. **After I am gone, hold fast to love, to the law and to the religion of Christ.**"



"After I am gone, hold fast to love, to the law and to the religion of Christ"

Potatau Te Wherowhero

Christianity & Pacific Peoples

Christianity is the most dominant religion in contemporary Polynesian communities. Churches are influential and respected hubs for some Pacific communities in both New Zealand and Pacific nations. All of the major Pacific ethnic groups have high levels of affiliation with a Christian religion.

In 2001, Tuvaluan people (97 percent) reported the highest level of affiliation with a Christian religion. At least 9 out of 10 people in the Tongan (92 percent), Tokelauan (91 percent) and Samoan (90 percent) ethnic groups were also affiliated with a Christian religion. The equivalent levels for the remaining Pacific ethnic groups were: Fijian (79 percent), Cook Island Maori (77 percent) and Niuean (76 percent).

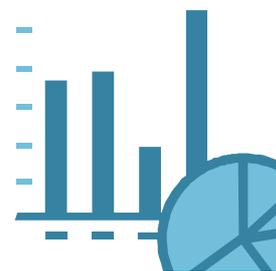
Statistics New Zealand 2001 Census

Christian Affiliation Statistics

More than half of New Zealand's population affiliate with a Christian religion, of which Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian are the largest denominations. At the 1901 Census only 1 in 30 people did not give a religious affiliation.

- Over two million people are Christian.
- The main Christian denominations are Anglican (584,793 or 17 percent of people), Catholic (486,012 or 14 percent) and the Presbyterian group (417,453 or 11 percent).
- The number of Catholics increased by 12,900 between 1996 and 2001, while the number of Anglicans (-46,971) along with the Presbyterian group (-38,895) decreased.
- The count of Anglicans exceeded that of the other denominations in all regions except Auckland (where Catholics were largest) and Otago and Southland (where the Presbyterian group was the largest).
- The main denominations in the 1901 Census were Church of England (41 percent of people), Presbyterian (23 percent), Catholic (14 percent), and Methodist (11 percent).

Statistics New Zealand 2006 Census



More than half of New Zealand's population affiliate with a Christian religion



New Zealand's National Anthem

Consider the words of our National Anthem written by Thomas Bracken in 1876. This anthem should forever serve as a reminder that the Christian religion is the vanguard of our nation.

God of Nations! at Thy feet,
In the bonds of love we meet,
Hear our voices we entreat,
God defend our free land.
Guard Pacific's triple star
From the shafts of strife and war,
Make her praises heard afar,
God defend New Zealand.

Men of every creed and race,
Gather here before Thy face,
Asking Thee to bless this place,
God defend our free land
From dissension, envy, hate,
And corruption guard our State.
Make our country good and great,
God defend New Zealand.

Peace, not war, shall be our boast,
But, should foes assail our coast,
Make us then a mighty host,
God defend our free land
Lord of battles, in Thy might,
Put our enemies to flight,
Let our cause be just and right,
God defend New Zealand.

Let our love for thee increase,
May thy blessings never cease,
Give us plenty, give us peace,
God defend our free land.
From dishonour and from shame,
Guard our country's spotless name,
Crown her with immortal fame,
God defend New Zealand.

May our mountains ever be
Freedom's ramparts on the sea,
Make us faithful unto Thee,
God defend our free land.
Guide her in the nations' van,
Preaching love and truth to man,
Working out Thy glorious plan,
God defend New Zealand.

Oaths of Allegiance

A number of public office holders must take an oath of allegiance that is set out in the Oaths and Declarations Act 1957. Such offices include:

- The oath of allegiance; the Governor-General's oath;
- Government Ministers' oath (Executive Councillors' oath);
- The parliamentary oath (taken by Members of Parliament);
- The judicial oath; the citizenship oath; the police oath; and the armed forces' oath.

Breaching the duty of allegiance can amount to the crime of treason.

These oaths have one thing in common - they conclude with this statement, "so help me God," which is a direct reference to the God of Christianity.

New Zealand's Christian heritage in Jeopardy

Extract from NZ Herald Perspectives Column, 26 February 2007
Bishop Brian Tamaki, Destiny Churches New Zealand

Tapu Misa's column of 21 February headlines, "Can Brian Tamaki seriously believe the state can impose religion?" I'm not sure where Tapu has been, but since 2002 the Labour led government has been imposing its religion of 'secular humanism' on New Zealanders with spectacular success.

I agree that the functions of the church and state should be separate. I also believe that freedom of religious choice and expression are fundamental rights of all New Zealanders.

But there is no such thing as a religiously neutral country. It's a fallacy to contend that individuals who perform the functions of the state separate their personal belief system from their politics. The prevailing belief system (or religion) of today determines the culture of tomorrow. Hence, our nation is presently experiencing a dramatic increase in social carnage that I believe is proportionate to a major departure from traditional Christian values, though many wouldn't correlate the two. I've been saying for some time that our nation must recapture its Christian heritage. But the government has different ideas.

It is hardly surprising that the Prime Minister intends to present the *National Statement on Religious Diversity* to an Asia-Pacific interfaith forum at Waitangi in May. According to the forum's programme, following the Prime Minister's address will be a contribution from the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, whose dominant national religion is Islam (88 percent of its population identify as Muslims). I suspect New Zealand's religious neutrality might well be a magnet to Indonesian Muslims and their global networks.

Ironically, we need only look to our motherland for an example of a nation that has compromised its Christian heritage and opened its borders in pursuit of religious diversity. Today, Londoners live in constant fear of terrorism. Recent investigations are revealing disturbing evidence of Islamic extremism at a number of Britain's leading mosques and Muslim institutions. A 2006 British Sunday Times survey showed widespread gloom about the future, with 87% of respondents expecting further attacks in Britain by Islamic groups on the scale of the July 7 bombings. NOP Research Group conducted a comprehensive survey of Britains Muslim population and found significant numbers exhibit more loyalty to fellow Muslims outside of the U.K. than to their fellow Briton, with 68% supporting the arrest and prosecution of British people who "insult Islam."

Accordingly, I've sought to remind the Race Relations Commissioner of the historical significance of Christianity and the vital role it plays in securing a future and hope for the next generation.

It is not necessary to deny our Christian heritage to cohabitate and fully function alongside those of different religious persuasions. Nor should we feel obliged to appease those who hold different religious views by minimising our faith. How can these values be passed on to the next generation if they cannot be openly advocated without fear of causing offence? Of course, immigrants who come to New Zealand have every right to pursue their religion of choice. But they should come understanding that New Zealand is a Christian nation and that as such, it is their responsibility to respect our nation's Christian founding values. Many other countries are perfectly secure and have no problems stating their religious allegiance. I increasingly perceive that there is a political agenda to totally de-Christianize our culture and our country. Despite what Professor Morris and others might say, the National Statement on Religious Diversity is politically motivated. So then, since they have moved to create a national statement on religion, I propose we take it to one step further and officially recognise what we have always been, a Christian nation.

Link: http://www.nzherald.co.nz/topic/story.cfm?c_id=500818&objectid=10425735

Based on the information contained in this backgrounder alone - contrary to what the first principle of the *National Statement on Religious Diversity* says, there is indeed a strong case to argue that New Zealand does have an 'established' religion – Christianity.

"I suspect New Zealand's religious neutrality might well be a magnet to Indonesian Muslims and their global networks."

Bishop Brian Tamaki

"Since they have moved to create a national statement on religion, I propose we take it to one step further and officially recognise what we have always been, a Christian nation"

Bishop Brian Tamaki

Programme – Tue 29th May

MAY 2007						
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Tuesday 29th May 2007 at Waitangi is confirmed for this event, which will take place in the afternoon.

The general public is invited to arrive at Waitangi before 12pm midday. Confirmed details of the official programme and start time will be released soon.

Behaviour Notice: This is a peaceful family event open to the general public. Any anti-social or offensive behaviour will be reported to the authorities.

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