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|  | Speak Up – KōrerotiaMāori in local government17 August 2022 |
| Female | Coming up next conversations on human rights with “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”, here on Plains FM. |
| Sally | E ngā mana, E ngā reo, E ngā hau e whāTēnā koutou katoaNau mai ki tēnei hōtaka: “Speak Up” – “Kōrerotia”. Tune in as our guests “Speak Up”, sharing their unique and powerful experiences and opinions and may you also be inspired to “Speak Up” when the moment is right. |
| Male | Ngā mihi nui ki a tātou…Pou hihiri, pou rarama, pou hihiri, pou raramaTiaho i roto marama i rotoTēnā te pou ko te pou ka ekeNa te pou o ēnei kōreroKa ma te ariki, ka ma te tauiraHui te oraHui te maramaKia puta ki te whaiao ki te ao maramaTīhei mauri ora. |
| Sally | Kia ora, tēnā koe, Ata. Today we’re going to be talking about Māori in local government and I’m really thrilled that we’ve got two guests who bring completely different perspectives, but I think very complimentary perspectives, to today’s kōrero. We’ve got Rachael Evans who is currently with the University of Canterbury and Atarau Hamilton who has various pōtae that you wear, Atarau, and I’m sure we’ll hear all about them. The idea for this particular show came about because just a couple of weeks ago we had the third reading in Parliament of the Ngāi Tahu Representation Bill. So that’s going to head to become law and it’s a particularly interesting time to be thinking about Māori in local government and what does this mean and what might we hope to see or what do we think we’re going to be seeing happening. I’d love to hear some more about you guys and the background that you bring to today’s kōrero because you both have a lot that you’re bringing with you which is really exciting.  |
| Rachael | Kia ora koutou. Hei ori tēnei. Nō Ngāti Tama, Ngāti Pāmoana hoki. Ko Rachael Evans ahau. My name is Rachael Evans, I’m a lecturer at the Faculty of Law at Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha, the University of Canterbury. I come from mix Māori and Pākehā heritage, was raised by a Pākehā mother in Wellington but I whakapapa to Ngāti Tama in the Taranaki and Pāmoana who are a little hapū up the Whanganui River. My background is I’m a former practicing lawyer, so I did my Masters in co-governance, my LOM with honours in 2013, 2014. I looked at the way that Tūhoe and Ngāi Tahu are working with the Crown to develop co-governance structures and resource management. It’s funny because when I did that it wasn’t a controversial topic at all, it’s just sort of a natural extension of what had been going on in that space. I’ve been a Judge’s clerk in the Christchurch District and Family Court, a practicing civil litigation lawyer and I’ve just come off a few years working with Ngāi Tahu, a group called Te Kura Taka Pini on the Ngāi Tahu freshwater claim. So that is my background: coming at it from both an academic and practitioner angle. |
| Sally | And I think that’s really valuable and really rich to have both those perspectives. And Ata? |
| Ata | Kia ora, ngā mihi nui. He uri tēnei nō Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngā Rauru, Ngāti Raukawa. And I have worked primarily in a lot of community development roles and working now with the National Iwi Chairs Forum and a lot of their engagements with law reforms that are happening and also have worked previously for a number of Independent Crown Entities working, I guess, for Māori and how to better engage with Māori in that perspective. So yeah, that’s kind of the approach I bring is people who aren’t quite sure how the system works or how it impacts them on a day to day basis. Really, really humbled to be here today and to sit amongst this kōrero.  |
| Sally | And Ata you also have, in one of the many things you’ve done, has been involved with the Electoral Commission. So I guess you’re bringing that side of things as well.  |
| Ata | Yes, that was an interesting experience working in the 2020 general election and it was engaging with primarily rangatahi Māori to increase, I guess, participation for our next generation. |
| Rachael | That’s really cool, really cool. |
| Sally | And also stands you in really good stead for what we’re going to be talking about today, I think. Rachael, you mentioned when you did your thesis in 2013/2014, this wasn’t a controversial topic, the idea of co-governance. It would be interesting to think about, as we get into our discussion today, what has changed in the past eight or so years since your thesis, that we’re still talking about co-governance but perhaps the context and the way that we’re thinking about it has changed. |
| Rachael | In 2013/2014, I was paying particular attention to the development of the Tūhoe settlement. Tūhoe have unfortunately a really horrendous history with the Crown, the Crown has raided them illegally several times. The Crown caused genocide to them in the 1890s by starving them basically and Tūhoe approach the settlement with some pretty basic bottom lines and they were a good quantum – the recognition of Tūhoe Mana Motuhake and the return of Te Uruwera which had been taken through a variety of different legal ways and turned into a national park.And the National Party at the time led by John Key, Chris Finlayson was the negotiator there, he was the minister and the Crown negotiation team was led by Dr John Wood. Tamati Kruger led the Tūhoe team and then the Nats then were about this, you know they had said originally that they were going to return Te Uruwera to Tūhoe but then some people high up in the National Party said no and then they had to come to this compromise – what are we going to do. So they made Te Uruwera its own legal personality where it owns itself and this was a whole new form of co-governance but it was actually fated at the time for being an incredibly clever and an imaginative legal response to a political question. So this was National Party policy, they were pro co-governance and you know, Chris Finlayson and John Key got so many settlements over the line during that stage. Now we’ve changed, we’ve got Labour in power, National are in opposition and they’re headed up by a very different team and taking a very different stance to co-governance.So I think to start with you’ve got to look at who is in power and what they’re saying and who they’re talking to. Ata, have you got any thoughts on that? |
| Ata | My position - and I probably should have premised this - is a lot of my roles involve me to come from position without having a perspective, you know, working for Independent Crown Entities in the past and I think one thing to highlight is the tikanga aspect that comes into a lot of these conversations, aye, and bringing… More and more nowadays, recognising the cultural processes required to progress things like that and I think we’re still battling with that at a national level every day. That would have been an interesting kaupapa to work on. |
| Rachael | Yeah it was fascinating and at the time it just seemed like this brave new horizon, the ground was being broken and that the Crown is actually going beyond co-governance into I would say Tiriti-led governance where you’ve got the iwi and hapū really, really forging the path ahead in the governance space and the Crown supporting. But it’s really changed and you know you’ve seen right, when media jump and down about not giving Māori additional rights and oh, one vote for one person. And it’s being led by people like David Seymour, exacerbated by media commentators. Right-wing politicians are saying actually no this is an issue about race and that always gets the voters frothed and it’s getting further stirred up by right-wing media.But you know, eight years ago this wasn’t an issue, this was something cool and something to be celebrated and something that the National Party were headlining and excited about. |
| Sally | It’s certainly interesting that I think from what you’re saying, things were almost further ahead under the Nationals as they are under Labour.  |
| Rachael | In my opinion, my academic opinion, I think that National Party has often been better for developing Treaty settlements than the Labour Party and I think that’s because the National Party understands property rights and they understand how individual property rights and tribal property rights can work together and Labour tends to be more about collective ownership and sometimes those ideas can clash. But you know, we look at the ‘90s, the Bolger government really led by Doug Grahame that led the development of the big settlements, you know, the Ngāi Tahu and the Waikato Tainui settlements. So yeah I think traditionally the Nats have been a bit friendlier. I would say it’s been National Party policy that has really sculpted the Treaty settlement landscape as to where we are today.  |
| Sally | Really interesting. And why is it such a big issue right, right at the moment, this idea of co-governance or Māori in government or however we want to frame it? |
| Rachael | I feel like we’re looping back to the Don Brash era a bit. Do you remember there was all that “iwi versus Kiwi” stuff when Brash gave his Orewa speech and he made it this big thing where Māori were going to take rights away from ordinary every day New Zealanders? And it got him a few votes initially and then that sort of died down and John Key ignored that rhetoric when he came in. But it seems like the Nats are perhaps a little bit desperate to find some votes, have gone hunting for those original people who were pro that sort of rhetoric and it’s getting coverage, yeah. I think some people are scared when you give acknowledgement or rights and responsibilities to one group that it will somehow take something away from them and I think people in the right wing and media and in politics are playing on that fear, that people feel like they’re losing something.And in the foreshore and seabed debate which was the background to Orewa, you know it was the old “Oh iwi are going to block access to the beaches”. But now I think that taking something away from non-Māori, that’s really been lifted up by the media and made a big deal of and I don’t think that’s actually the case at all. I think Māori bring so much to the table and Te Tiriti doesn’t just provide benefits to Māori, it protects Pākehā. It’s the basis, the legal basis, for Pākehā to be here in this country and there are so many benefits to Pākehā under Te Tiriti as well and unfortunately that never seems to be celebrated in our media. |
| Ata | I’d agree with that, Rachael, I think fear has played a huge part in our resistance to change and even the fact that we are still having these conversations about co-governance, you know, since you’ve completed your Masters, I think there’s this opportunity actually to strip away the fear and have the conversations more often at a local level you know.To be able to recognise that actually under Te Tiriti we do know that everyone will put the whenua first and so really, it’s not about taking anything away but more returning provisions that were meant to be given. And I think at a national level, we have these conversations between the government and the National Iwi Chairs Forum and how we can embody this idea of tino rangatiratanga with, I guess, examples of political power being given back to Māori or given to Māori and there’s an element of, I guess, mistrust that still exists which fear has led us to. And I think by having conversations like this or by being able to increase Māori participation in our systems, then I think what we’re able to do is probably mitigate a lot of that fear.  |
| Rachael | I think as well for a lot of people - and I’ve definitely come across this viewpoint when I’ve been teaching first-year law students - a lot of people think that Treaty settlements are static documents stuck in the past and you know, when you get stuck into it they don’t realise that the Ngāi Tahu settlement, signed in 1998, has live provisions like rights of first refusal over property and the relativity mechanism and those are live things that are negotiated and debated every day by Ngāi Tahu and Crown officials. If I can just read out a small bit of law - and I’m really sorry, this is my legal academic hat coming out - so this is from the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 and this is the apology, the text in English and it’s Section 6, Sub Section 7 and I think it’s really powerful and it says this:*“The Crown apologises to Ngāi Tahu for its past failures to acknowledge Ngāi Tahu rangatiratanga and mana over the South Island lands within its boundaries, and, in fulfilment of its Treaty obligations, the Crown recognises Ngāi Tahu as the tāngata whenua of, and as holding rangatiratanga within, the Takiwā of Ngāi Tahu Whānui”*It recognises the rangatiratanga past, present, future, it’s unmutable and then the next section speaks to the Crown beginning a process of healing and entering a new age of cooperation with Ngāi Tahu. Now cooperation is not just consultation, it’s not just ringing up the local hapū and talking to the upoko and saying what do you think. It’s about building relationships, it’s bringing the Crown, the kāwanatanga, and mana whenua, rangatira to the table to form the future of New Zealand – that’s what cooperation means. So I actually I think that co-governance is just the natural development of the Treaty settlement. Sorry to throw law at you, it’s frightfully dull but it’s there black and white, it’s a Crown instrument, a Crown recognition of Ngāi Tahu rangatiratanga past, present and future. And you know, this piece of legislation that’s just come through, that’s just another expression of that in my opinion. |
| Ata | I mean it’s all there in black and white. |
| Rachael | It’s literally the law.  |
| Sally | I think that’s why it is worth referring back to these documents actually, because the text has obviously been very carefully thought through. They wouldn’t have worded it without a lot of consideration and so those are obviously the words that were selected and chosen, knowing that it was going to be the cornerstone from which things would be developed moving forward. |
| Rachael  | There was a full team in the ‘90s working on the apology, Professor Te Maire Tau who is the upoko of Ngāi Tuahuriri so he’s the leader of the hapū here in Ōtautahi Christchurch but he’s also the head of the Ngāi Tahu Research Centre at the University. He was instrumental in drafting that. So it was a very explicit and deliberate recognition of Ngāi Tahu rangatiratanga and I believe that not a single other settlement has that language in it. The Crown, I think, realised that it was perhaps a useful backdoor for Ngāi Tahu to come back to the settlement on and reflected that it could be quite a powerful tool and has yet to repeat that language. So. Hmm. |
| Sally | That is interesting. We might have our first waiata, Ata, you selected the Māori rendition of the song ‘Politician’ by Kora. It would be great to hear why you hoped to have this one. |
| Ata | The original song when it came out, it was significant in the ask, you know. You listen to the lyrics and always asking, we’re putting people in positions to make decisions for us and I just think… like I said before, if we’re having the same conversations that we were you know, ten, fifteen years ago about significance change and the constitutional transformation that we want for Aotearoa. I think this is just quite like a… if you’re having a topical conversation in your backyard on a sunny Sunday, then it feels a lot more attainable. It reminds me of hope. |
| Sally | And I guess that’s the flipside to what Rachael’s just read out, isn’t it? There’s that black-and-white legal document and there’s also this kind of popular culture that tries to bring these big ideas and these big words out to everybody. Very appropriate choice for today.  |
|  | **MUSIC BY KORA – TARAKETI** |
| Sally | Ko Speak Up – Kōrerotia tēnei. Today we’re talking about Māori in local government with Rachael Evans and Atarau Hamilton. Now we’re going to think about the Ngāi Tahu Representation Bill that’s just had its third reading in Parliament. It would be good to hear about what is the Bill, for those who may not be familiar with it, but also some of those bigger questions about where do we see it leading down the line. So just to start us off, then, could one of you please give us a summary. What is it and what is it about and what does it enable? |
| Rachael | So it’s a local act, which means it’s been an act brought by the member for Te Tai Tonga, Rino Tirikatene, to add two permanent Ngāi Tahu representatives to a regional council, Environment Canterbury. And those two councillors have full voting rights and they are also paid in the same way as everyone else and the councillors are appointed by Te Runanga or Ngāi Tahu which is the tribal corporate of Ngāi Tahu and not only are the tribal corporate but they’re a tribal parliament. So they have 18 members, all representing the hapū, the papatipu rūnanga across the takiwā of Ngāi Tahu and Te Wai Pounamu. So the tribe will make the decision about which two representatives will sit with ECan. Yeah it’s quite an interesting piece of legislation, it’s really short but it does say amongst other things that it doesn’t exclude the potential in the future for Māori wards to be inserted as well. So what it does is ensure mana whenua (people of the area) mana whenua representation at regional council level in Canterbury.  |
| Sally | Have you got an idea of the history, the process that led up to the Bill? |
| Rachael | Ngāi Tahu has had representation on the regional council before, and we know that the history of the regional council hasn’t always been straightforward - so the John Key National government got rid of the elected councillors and put in commissioners at Environment Canterbury - so it’s only really recently that Canterbury has begun electing its own regional councillors again. But this process was brought through Rino Tirikatene who worked with Ngāi Tahu and the representatives for Te Tai Tonga and he first introduced it in November ‘21, then went through the standard parliamentary procedure. Was reported on by Select Committee in only June of this year and then it went through really quickly actually and it’s just had its royal ascent on the 8th of August. So that means it’s now the Act, it’s been signed off by the Governor General and it’s now law. So I think it’s quite an exciting piece of legislation and again it’s just the further development of the Ngāi Tahu Claim Settlement Act that came through in 1998. It’s just another statement of rangatiratanga, Ngāi Tahu and their takiwā, that’s my opinion. |
| Ata | I’m curious to see where this goes because I know Ōtautahi in particular and local government has been under the eye of, I guess, the country and what representation for Māori looks like, especially for such a strong leader-like iwi as Ngāi Tahu.  |
| Rachael | I mean Ngāi Tahu is the biggest takiwā, the biggest area in the country, they cover most of Te Wai Pounamu, the South Island, and that means that regional and district councils have got the benefit of, they have one group to talk to when they are cooperating with them, not just consulting. I had a quick Google the other day and I think there’s 19 mana whenua groupings over the Auckland super city, so you know, it’s a big contrast to down here. And the thing is, none of these relationships are new, Ngāi Tahu have been working in and building relationships with their local authority for years and years and years. Westland District Council has two representatives on its council, they don’t have voting rights but they are fully paid and they’re the leaders of te rūnanga or Ngāti Waewae which is on the Arahura River, that’s Francois Tumahai, he’s on the council and then Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio which is down in Bruce Bay, South Westland and that’s Paul Madgwick. We’re not really inventing the wheel here at all. Other councils are doing similar things, other councils really value their relationships with mana whenua. You want to have a bit of a chat about the voices and arguments for and against, well the Select Committee report has some very specific comments from National and the National viewpoint is that this overrides the ‘one vote for one person’ concept which they say is the bedrock of New Zealand democracy. They’ve also got some concerns about ECan getting two additional councillors which they’d then have to be paid for but that’s their secondary concern. And I always find that quite interesting because in New Zealand it’s not one vote for one person, we get two votes under MMP. And suffrage hasn’t always been universal, we know that first it was white women over Māori women who got the vote. And the other thing is, it was National who removed our democratically elected regional councillors in the first place, so it does seem a little hypocritical. But what really the National Party statement suggests to me is they don’t understand the Treaty partnership relationships down here in the slightest. And some of the loudest voices of opposition to this, - David Seymour, Winston Peters, Mike Hosking - they’ve got no relationship to Waitaha Canterbury at all, they don’t know what’s going on down here. And then all of a sudden as soon as you know, these Te Tiriti partnership-based rights are more entrenched in legislation - because trust me, there’s plenty of unofficial representation going on there and engagement with Ngāi Tahu at regional council level - as soon as this is put into law, there’s people jumping up and down. So that’s the views against it. The views for it, say well look it’s just another representation of Ngāi Tahu rangatiratanga and it just cements the relationships that have been ongoing for a very long time anyway. Ngāi Tahu is mana whenua, they bring with them the tikanga of the land through their whakapapa and all the mātauranga Māori, the knowledge associated with this place. You know, Ngāi Tahu have been involved with mahinga kai, so the gathering of food for centuries, they have so much knowledge about the environmental conditions of this place. It only benefits the people of Canterbury having Ngāi Tahu representation on the regional council and Ngāi Tahu values about intergenerationality - is that a word? - but looking after our children and our grandchildren. “Mō tātou, ā, mō kā **uri** ā muri ake nei” “For us and our children after us” and that’s the underpinning whakataukī of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu.Ngāi Tahu values are family and environment and community and looking after our children and our grandchildren. And I would say if you walked out onto Cashel Mall now and tapped someone on the shoulder, it doesn’t matter where they’re from they’ll have probably the exact same values. Ngāi Tahu are not some alien body here, they are an important part of our community and they are us. |
| Ata | I was just going to add in, it was more of a question I suppose is… For me it’s definitely evident, but Ngāi Tahu are quite prominent in terms of iwi representation amongst the community. I’ve seen numerous different ways they approach working in partnership with different councils across Waitaha primarily but you know, Ōtautahi as a whole and I think is there a progression do you think to move this towards perhaps, you know the Christchurch City Council? |
| Rachael | Christchurch City Council currently has a standing committee of Papatipu Rūnanga representatives from the Papatipu who are in the Christchurch City Council rohe and it’s called Te Hononga, I think, and its engaged on a lot of different issues. I don’t know, perhaps, I think that would again have to be led by those Papatipu Rūnanga because there just aren’t enough aren’t enough people for the jobs, right. There are capacity issues within iwi and hapū across the country. So it’s just making sure that we’re not asking too much of Papatipu Rūnanga and saying oh we’re giving you another job. So maybe, but it has to be led by them. As this was, you know this was led by Rino Tirikatene who was Ngāi Tahu and it had the backing of the rūnanga. I think all the rūnanga but I’m not sure. |
| Ata | So it’s a Treaty conversation, aye. |
| Rachael | Yes. |
| Ata | All the Rangatira but we’re not sure.  |
| Sally | I did note that on the Environment Canterbury website, the page that’s dedicated to this Bill, makes quite a lot around the fact that it will benefit the Council and it will benefit the people that the Council is there to serve.  |
| Rachael | At the moment there will be 15 different unofficial ways in which ECan engage with Papatipu Rūnanga and this might streamline things as well and just bring two consistent voices to the table. But when we’re facing huge issues of environmental degradation, nitrates in our waterways, climate change, you know Ngāi Tahu are putting a huge amount of money and resource into researching solutions for all of our communities, not just Māori. Ngāi Tahu have a saying that they’re here forever, they’re not going anywhere. People should be turning to Ngāi Tahu as leaders to help us solve these huge problems that are facing our regions, rather than saying oh they’re not me, they’re getting something I’m not getting, ergo it is bad. ECan decided against Māori constituencies, Māori wards. So Māori wards, there are protestors involved that allow for little electorates within the local government system where only Māori vote and they can vote in a Māori leader in that ward. The problem being is that it might not be someone who with mana whenua or connected in with Ngāi Tahu who is voted in to that seat. Now it can become a bit of a popularity contest, anyone who has whakapapa standing but then it sort of defeats the purpose of engaging with mana whenua and elevating them in this Treaty partnership manner and having that mātauranga Māori being brought to the table. So I think that’s really one of the reasons it’s been discounted but there’s also space, very specific space, carved out in the Act to allow for it in the future if need be. So I don’t think it’s been completely discounted but first things first, got to cement the rights of mana whenua. |
| Ata | It’s so true. What’s important when we think about mana whenua being engaged - and again, it kind of goes back to the systems that we have in place for Aotearoa, is the belief that there’s… have you read Matike Mai? The model that they put forward in that, where there’s the three spheres: the tricameral model where there’s three spheres kind of come into play. You’ve got the Crown and you’ve got the relational sphere and you’ve got the tino rangatiratanga sphere and when we hear things from people like Lisa Tumahai talking about stepping towards tino rangatiratanga. In this it’s as you said I think, Rachael, it’s just that point of recognising that mana whenua are mana whenua and it’s not always the best way to put them into a system that doesn’t work for Māori, aye.  |
| Rachael | There’s been this recent elevation in the law, kind of a development over the past few years, elevating tikanga to sit next to statute law and common law as a source of law in New Zealand. That’s been really enforced by our very highest courts but something that perhaps sometimes gets lost when we’re talking about the importance of tikanga, is that tikanga differs depending where you are. And we’re here in Ōtautahi Christchurch, so the tikanga of this space, this place is Ngāi Tuahuriri tikanga and if we’re not elevating Ngāi Tuahuriri to a leadership space in our communities, how can we then turn to them and say well you share, you share your tikanga with us?If we’re working towards that space in Aotearoa where tikanga truly does sit alongside common law, we need to be looking after the people who share it with us.  |
| Sally | I think this idea of context is really important that you’ve brought up. So I guess one of the arguments, if that’s the right word for it, against this Bill is that is it setting a precedent and I think that the… one thing that we’d have to take into consideration and anyone have to take into consideration is exactly what you’ve mentioned: that Ngāi Tahu are mana whenua and there is only one iwi in this particular rohe. Whereas in other parts of the country that’s not the case and it would be a completely different, I would imagine, system or process that would have to be undertaken in terms of thinking through how it might work in these different places. |
| Rachael | And different Treaty settlement legislation as well. And I think even different understandings of what rangatiratanga is. I think someone from Ngā Puhi might take a different approach to someone down here. I mean a one-size-fits-all approach I think never works when you’re dealing with iwi and hapū. You do have to take people on their own turangawaewae where they stand and approach them and say well what do you want to do, how are we going to run this thing together. So I don’t think this is opening some giant floodgates and these relationships will all be in place over the country anyway. What do people think our councils are doing? Do you think that they’re just completely ignoring our iwi and hapū out there? I mean maybe a couple of them are but the good ones should be already talking and establishing those relationships.  |
| Sally | How about in terms of Māori who might live in the takiwā of Environment Canterbury but who are not Ngāi Tahu? |
| Rachael | If they’re on the Māori roll, they will be able to vote for the MP. So they can vote out Rino Tirikatene if they so choose. I’m of Māori descent living in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā with Ngāi Tahu whakapapa and I don’t see it as my right to come here and tell Ngāi Tahu what to do. I’m manuhiri, I’m a guest so I’ve got to act appropriately. I don’t see myself as having rights over mana whenua here at all and I would be surprised if any Māori did to be honest. There are certain responsibilities and obligations that you take when you come to someone else’s place. Do you think that’s fair, Ata?  |
| Ata | Yeah no that’s exactly it. You never go into someone’s house and claim things, do you,? You abide by their rules. And I think as well you know, if you are Māori and putting yourself on the Māori roll, within or without takiwā, I think you still have access to vote in your local iwi takiwā and hapū. In doing that, what it offers is actually greater inter iwi relationships, if you’re able to feedback, I guess, or witness what’s going on in a different takiwā, it’s only beneficial for everyone really. |
| Rachael | Yeah. My own iwi or one of my iwi, Ngāti Tama… I was up at the marae on Monday because we are receiving 120 hectares of land come back from the Crown in exchange for a roading deal and this is probably one of the most significant deals that happened outside a Treaty settlement. Working in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā, working with Ngāi Tahu on settlement related material has only benefited me in going back up to North Taranaki and seeing what’s going on up there. I don’t think it’s a competitive thing or people seeking rights over one another, you know. I think most people should recognise that Ngāi Tahu are mana whenua and as mana whenua, it is their place to say what happens.  |
| Sally | Great we might have our next waiata. We’ve got a Ngāi Tahu one actually, appropriately in fact. You selected, Rachael, ‘Te Taukāea Aroha’. Is there a particular reason? |
| Rachael | Yeah I really love this one, it was one we used to sing heaps when I was working in the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu building, it’s a contemporary one and it’s been written by Paulette Tamati-Elliffe and Komene Cassidy who are leaders at Te Rūnanga o Waikato so got to acknowledge them and their mahi and I just love it, I think it’s a really positive one and it speaks to the importance of kinship whakapapa links.  |
| Sally | Ka rawe. |
|  | **MUSIC – TE TAUKAEA AROHA** |
| Sally  | You’re listening to Speak Up – Kōrerotia and we’re talking about Māori in local government. Just in this final section we’re going to move from the Ngāi Tahu Representation Bill and think more about local government and local elections because just in a couple of months we’ve got our local body elections coming up. We’ve touched already on the Māori Roll and the General Roll but I think it’s something that’s still perhaps not fully comprehended by some people. It would be great to have just a quick introduction or run down to what it is – who can enrol, how that might come about and before we get into some bigger or complex questions. |
| Ata | We’re lucky in Aotearoa when we’re enrolling to vote we have the option to jump on the Māori Roll or the General Roll. So if you’re Māori and have whakapapa Māori, you can put yourself on the Māori Roll which means you vote in a Māori electorate and if not, you more often than not on the General Roll or unenrolled and that’s not okay. What it means is you still have the same votes for a party, so we all get two votes. You get a party vote and an MP vote and when you’re enrolled in a Māori electorate, you vote for an MP who is running for the Māori electorates and if you are on a General Roll, usually your general electorates are smaller… are smaller areas. So for example we have seven Māori electorates at the moment but we have approximately 270,000 Māori on the Māori Roll. Now, based on Stats NZ estimates, we have about 870,000 Māori in Aotearoa and so that’s about a quarter of us who are jumping on the Māori Roll to vote for a Māori MP.What that says is if you are enrolling for a Māori electorate or jumping on the Māori Roll, you actually are increasing the representation of Māori within the system and what that allows is for us to have more options. So currently seven electorates, you know, to represent that 270,000 Māori but what we did in G2020 is encouraged more Māori to a) participate and b) if they felt like it was an option for them, then to jump onto the Māori Roll. The increase wasn’t massive in terms of what we’d expected with all the mahi we did in the communities but in terms of Māori engagement we felt like they were more informed which is kind of what we were going for back then, particularly in Ōtautahi. You know, we’ve got this different landscape I guess of what it means to be Māori in Christchurch or to grow up Māori in Christchurch.But yes, each electorate usually has about 38,000 represented and we in Ōtautahi are part of the Tai Tonga electorate which encompasses the whole South Island, some sections of Wellington and the Chatham Islands. So Te Waipounamu has got a big electorate to cover.  |
| Rachael | He’s been MP for a long time as well and he’s from a Ngāi Tahu whānau who has had an MP in parliament for… I don’t know, I want to say the last 40 years. They are a family of significant mana and standing within this area.  |
| Sally | And Ata, I think you touched on it but the reason for establishing Māori electorates initially was to increase their representation? |
| Ata | Yeah, yeah and it dates back to the very first parliament really when Māori didn’t actually have a sitting in Aotearoa and so they created their own body to make decisions. So what happened was we basically were lucky enough to have a roll that represented Māori and it’s grown comfortably with our population but we want to see more representation as we grow and head into 2023.  |
| Rachael | I think Winston Peters tried to make an election issue a while ago about scrapping Māori seats but that’s never really received… I think most people are pretty chill with the concept.  |
| Ata | We’re lucky to have quite a rigid system actually in New Zealand in terms of how our democratic system is set up. It’s quite rigid and so we don’t really have too many who aren’t eligible to vote but I guess in leading up to you know, something like the local elections, it’s really important that we encourage those who are considering enrolling next year to actually start thinking now, I guess the local climate and then how that could impact on a national level. |
| Rachael | I’m enrolled in the Māori Roll and I’ve got three younger half siblings who basically said well why should I go on and I said well if you care about Māori representation in parliament, if you want to see people standing up there who you actually feel represent you then you need to enrol. More Māori need to enrol full stop right, we’ve got more disenfranchisement than perhaps others. Yeah a feeling that why should people bother voting when the Crown has… all the Crown has ever done is take and be negative and been a negative force for colonisation. So you know, you’ve got to work with people to get over those attitudes first and they’re pretty hard because they are entrenched for good reason. People don’t trust the Crown.  |
| Sally | Would you share that sentiment, Ata? |
| Ata | Yeah I would, I would. Like I said, I like to think that we made an impact last election but you know, looking at Sarah Pallett and the Ilam electorate where you’ve got a high dense population of students - you know, that 18 to 24 demographic - it’s just ongoing support to make sure that you know, everyone is informed I guess and we talk a lot about free, prior and informed consent in a lot of the mahi we do, and so linking it back to those who work for you in your area is why we encourage anyone to vote.  |
| Rachael | The Māori seat had a significant impact on Labour gaining its large majority last time, as well; I believe I’m correct in saying that Labour took a lot and that has contributed to their ability to bring through some sweeping reforms. So Māori MPs aren’t just token parliament, they’re very present in the decision making and they’re an important role in our government. I think they’re unique too, Australia certainly doesn’t have a system that looks anything like ours.  |
| Sally | I was thinking about increasing numbers of Māori on the Māori Roll, it would be great to think about increasing representation, not just as MPs as you’ve touched on there, Rachael but also in local government as well. With the elections coming up soon, I have heard people very excitedly saying that there are a significant number of wāhine Māori standing for mayor in these coming elections which is really cool and I wondered from either of you, if you have noticed over the years increasing diversity in people standing for office?  |
| Rachael | I don’t know why anyone would want to do it, I think the abuse and trolling would just be beyond the point of anything I could personally cope with. And I think, you know, if you’re a Māori woman, you’re dealing not just with sexism but racism as well and that’s a very potent combination. I really applaud those who are standing up, putting themselves out there because as we saw last year with the young Nat troll who was attacking Sarah Templeton, it’s very real that level of abuse out there.Have I noticed an increase in representation? Not hugely to be honest. The signs going up around my neighbourhood are looking like they always have, what I would perhaps describe as the stale, male and pale, those are the placards around my neighbourhood. I’d love to see a Māori woman standing for mayor in Ōtautahi.  |
| Sally | Yeah wouldn’t it be cool.  |
| Ata | And I want to say only because I’ve voted in two - would be three this year - elections, I’ve noticed in my student time that actually there’s been so much diversity more at university level, you know. The representation that we now put on our student associations, I think it’ll impact… I think we’re just not quite there yet. Thinking about different climates and there are regions I guess with higher student populations you recognise that maybe there is an increase in diversity where they are encouraged you know, from point that others… other maybe rural areas don’t have access for or you know, don’t have the supports. But I also think as well that there’s efforts that can be put in elsewhere that maybe they can see their skills and are put to better use. I haven’t noticed any difference except for my friend was talking to me the other day about the Wellington local elections and they’ve got a huge number of Māori and Pasifika who are engaging and coming up in their wards. So I think we’re nearly there, optimistically I say we’re nearly there. Maybe 2026… at a stretch. |
| Rachael | I think - perhaps going against the grain of most ratepayers - I think we should be paying people more. I think people are paid an absolute pittance to do that job and put up with all the abuse they get and I’m told that the catering at council is so poor because people complain and as soon as someone gets anything more than a sad sandwich. Well you know if you’re going to get abuse and paid bugger all then if you are talented Māori or Pasifika and young, wouldn’t you be better off taking your skills to another area where those skills are actually properly acknowledged and honoured? |
| Sally | That’s a whole other direction, isn’t it?  |
| Rachael | If we want diversity, we need to pay for it, you know; people need to be properly looked after.  |
| Sally | Valued. You touched on, Ata, voter turnout I think. Are you hopeful that things are changing this election or moving forward into the future as the rangatahi come through… as I guess they see, for example, like university, how student body politics might play out, perhaps becoming more familiar with these sorts of systems. Are we hopeful that things might start to change? |
| Ata | Yes, yes and I think it’s just about waking people up to recognise that decisions are being made every single day and if you can approach that when they’re at a younger age you know, and make them realise that actually they’re not in charge of everything but they can definitely make a solid contribution, that’s kind of my preferred area or approach and so I’m hoping that with the work that happens in the change in legislation. Like what’s come out in the Ngāi Tahu Representation Bill, I think there’s a shift naturally and that my generation, our generations are becoming more and more outspoken and so yeah, there will be a change, we just need to see that in the stats. |
| Rachael | Can I add to that that we need to be aiming not just for local and national representation on government but we need to be looking at our corporate boards as well, you know. If we're bringing up our rangatahi and encouraging them to... I think we should be encouraging them to develop governance skills for our corporate community as well. We know that corporations do better when there is a diverse board and the Institute of Directors and Governance New Zealand is crying out for diverse candidates who are board ready so I think that’s also an area we should be focusing on.  |
| Ata | Like you said before, wasn’t it Rachael, it’s you have to be able to trust them. And I know my representation or my governance responsibilities in Ōtautahi, I sit on two community organisations, Ako Ōtautahi who are just you know, are full of people who are passionate and behind the kaupapa and know what it means to achieve equitable outcomes, you know, with having that lens on and also maintaining I guess relationships with different communities and also embedding Te Tiriti in what they do. It's a multifaceted trust model I guess.  |
| Rachael | Trust is important. I’ve done a bit of work with Chris Finlayson and he is… has a saying that for a lot of Māori, they’re Reaganites because the scariest thing that they can hear is someone knocking on the door and that person saying knock knock, we’re from the government and we’re here to help. We’ve got to build up trust in institutions before we put our people forward. Our institutions have got to deserve our people before we put our people forward.  |
| Ata | Tautoko. |
| Sally | Anything else as we wrap up? That was a quite a powerful ending by the way.  |
| Rachael | No, no I think we’ve covered it. Sorry I feel like I did lots of talking there, sorry Ata.  |
| Ata | No that was good and you came in swinging with some good points! We were encouraged during our recent Treaty workshop to just pay more attention to the things that led us to the signing of the Treaty rather than the Treaty document itself you know, because it was all about what the political climate was of the day.  |
| Rachael | Yeah those instructions are pretty powerful.  |
| Ata | Yes.  |
| Rachael | I think it’s not just working on it with our Māori kids but our Pākehā kids as well.  |
| Sally | Definitely. |
| Ata | Yes, inform everyone.  |
| Rachael | I think it’s so great that we’re bringing in history education into the curriculum. We’ve got to be teaching this sort of stuff. How are we going to expect people to not be scared of stuff like this if they don’t understand the Treaty partnership because they don’t know the history?  |
| Ata | It’s the battle we face every day.  |
| Sally | I’d like to say tēnā korua, thank you guys both so much for coming in, been heaps of kōrero today and we’ve covered a wide ranging amount of topics but it all does fit broadly within this idea of Māori in local government and thank you very much both of you. |
| Rachael | Thank you for the time today, it’s been a really interesting conversation. Interesting themes.  |
| Ata | Yes thank you to you both and I hope to see… |
| Sally | More people joining the Roll maybe.  |
| Ata | Yup that’s it, get enrolled. |
| Sally | Yes, another really positive outcome would be better pay for councillors.  |
| Ata | Fair pay.  |
| Rachael | Fair pay. |
| Sally | Fair pay. |
| Ata | Yeah for the responsibility.Heoi ano. Ngā mihi nui ki a tātou, ki a koutou nā. Arero hou, ngā rangatira o āpōpō i runga i tenei o ngā karakia me wātea e tātou. Unuhia, unuhia, unuhia ki te uru tapu nuiKia wātea, kia māmā, te ngākau, te tinana, te wairua i te ara takatāKoia rā e RongoWhakairia ake ki rungaTuturu kia tina, Haumi ē hui ē taiki ē. |
|  | **MUSIC – UPPER HUTT POSSE – E TU** |