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‘Activism, leadership and the new challenges for Indigenous Communities’

edited by Professor Smith

To the community and to the Eora Nation thank you. Thank you for your generosity, thank you for looking after this land for so long, and often I’m sure in times when you thought it had been treated with great disrespect. Thank you for having us here this evening, and thank you for letting the voice of my people be heard very early on in these ceremonies. Thank you to the Perkins family. It was lovely to meet you before my talk, but now you have made me really nervous. Thank you also for keeping hold of an important legacy and for maintaining a relationship with The University of Sydney. Thank you to the Vice Chancellor Professor Brown and Mrs Brown - it was really good to share with you briefly before the function this evening; and thank you also for hosting me.

To other distinguished guests, to community people, to students, to staff, to others who have assembled here this evening. And finally to the people from home “*Tena Koutou, Tena Koutou Tena Koutou katoa*”. Thank you to the people from Aotearoa for their words of warmth to me this evening.

Introduction

You may wonder why an academic might be addressing issues of activism, leadership and communities. I can hear the voices of my relations at home thinking out loud, “*how can academics contribute to this discussion? I suppose they are only going to criticise us and criticise our leadership*” It seems to me, however, that this is a great occasion firstly, to celebrate and secondly, to reflect upon the role that leadership has had in taking indigenous communities through almost two centuries of tumultuous times into an era when we can stand here this evening and think not about whether or not we will survive, nor about how we will survive, but rather about how we will progress into the 21st Century.

I have been thinking about issues of leadership for a while and the reason I’ve thought about it for a while and have not quite got around to articulating my thoughts out loud or publicly is that the topic of indigenous leadership has a very male discourse, at least in my context in Aotearoa. Those who have studied leadership have been mostly men who have tended to think about leadership in terms

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of the work that men do, the hierarchies of indigenous participation and the definitions of leadership that reflect Western ideas about indigenous social structures.

So it has taken me a while to get to the point where I can say that, *“I need to get beyond a woman’s critique of leadership, and paint a picture of our changing world and the challenges for leadership in the new world”*. So, my comments are made with the intention of going forward, they are not about painting a grim picture, and they are not designed to criticise the leaders of the past. I am intending to reflect upon what we can learn from the past about the new, contemporary formations of colonisation and injustice that are impacting on us, and pose some ideas about how we can think about our leadership for the future. I acknowledge that indigenous communities have required leadership and forms of activism that provoke and facilitate indigenous survival and social justice in the context of unequal power relations as a consequence of colonisation. Over the decades indigenous leadership and activism has had to respond to the challenges, priorities, capacities and contexts of their times.

In the twenty first century and in an era of globalisation and the different and contested influences unleashed by globalisation the times have changed and are changing in both subtle and unsubtle ways. The basic point of my talk is to pose the question, *“What are the implications for leadership and activism of the new age we are in, this new era of uncertainty for our peoples, our communities, our leaders and our activists? How can we learn from understanding our historical context so that we can use to move forward, reflect and be more purposeful about how we build leadership?”*

A. The indigenous context in the 21st Century

Let me begin by painting some pictures. They are contextual pictures. The first one really is to think about what has changed for indigenous communities as we think about the 21st Century. What is it we can celebrate? What is it we need to think more carefully about? What is it we can abandon? And, what is it that we need to keep building? In my view there has been a momentum of change in our communities. I have witnessed this through my travels and studied it through the texts of indigenous writers. It is obvious particularly in the countries of the First World in which indigenous communities have a particular place as colonised minorities, but it is also evident in other places where there are indigenous communities who are at one level self-governing nations such as Pacific Islands states but who still have little control over their socio-economic and political destinies. The change that I have seen has mostly been a change of mindset. I would like to say it’s been a change of socio-economic circumstances, but for many of our communities, if anything, their circumstances have worsened. The disparities between those who have, and those who have not, in countries like Australia and New Zealand have actually increased, they have not decreased. Understanding that and being able to work against it and to struggle for a better alternative, has gripped our communities and has made them think about strategies for moving forward, and strategies for engaging in such things as education in different ways.

Now, sometimes those change of mindsets are not necessarily going to propel us forward in any meaningful way. However, what I have seen that is worth celebrating is a sense of purpose and an acknowledgement that we have got to do things better, together, and that the way forward is to take



our culture with us, not abandon it. The way forward is to keep our identity, not discard it. The way forward is to celebrate who we are, not be ashamed of it. Those are simple changes at one level, but they are hugely transformative in terms of throwing off the shackles of colonisation. That momentum of change of mindset is reflected in the many indigenous communities that I have visited across the world.

I also think that our communities have become much more complicated. They were always complicated, but they have become much more complicated. What we see now is an emergence of multiple voices and diverse voices. We, as indigenous peoples and communities, do not agree on everything. We don't understand words like 'self-determination' in the same way. We don't hold to the same ideologies. In fact in one extended family, in my extended family or in any other extended family amongst Maori people certainly, you can get a diversity of views about simple things and complicated things. We do not agree on everything, but we do agree to eat together, we cry together, we can laugh together, and one of the few things that binds us together is a love of our language. It's one of the few things that mobilises people across all those different ideologies. The mobilisation around language is something that we have learned from the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s, the strategies for mobilising and activating our communities. I am always intrigued with the 1970s because that's my generation, and what we have learned about the tactical approaches to making change when you are a minority, when there are very few activists. How do you mobilise people who fear change, who fear shifting the status quo, and how do you suggest to them that as a minority they can win? That they can win a political argument? That they can win a political struggle? Where I come from you would say, "*well look at the numbers, there is no way*". There is this deep cynicism about change. What many of our activists have done is to move that great cynicism and that sheer passiveness around change and that sense of grim determination to stay as we are because to rock the boat is to make it worse. Our activists have been able to take all of that and activate it, mobilise it and make it work in particular ways. What my generation has done is to learn that next step in resistance to oppression and injustice, the step of mobilising and activating in particular ways that move communities forward.

I'm an educationalist, so obviously I believe that everybody learns, but I think we have also learned about what works. We have learned things about ourselves, we have learned about mainstream society, we have learned about what ignites our passions, we have learned what doesn't work, and we have learned from "the master's tools", to use a quote from Audrey Lord. We have learned to apply our own tools, we have learned some strategies that are inherent in the way our own communities work, and we have been able to apply those strategies in mainstream situations and political struggles..

But there are some complicated issues around the topic of indigeneity. There are, interestingly, people in society who think that having a forty thousand year occupation of the land is not good enough as a moral claim to indigeneity. There are people in the society in which we live, who walk the streets we walk, who shop at the malls at which we shop, who do not believe that indigenusness or being native to a land gives us any special claim to that land or any special right to a voice about that land. And, even within us there are those who find concepts of indigenusness or concepts of what is native deeply troubling. They find it exclusive, they find that it doesn't take into account the complicated lives that they have led because of colonisation. Whether they were



brought up essentially as a white person because they were adopted out, whether they were removed from their homes, whether they were brought up because their parents made strategic decisions not to teach them their language. All of those things mean that indigenous people have had varying experiences. Some indigenous people see the way that many indigenous communities organise themselves as exclusion, exclusion from the definition, exclusion from any kind of participation in what counts as indigeness.

I come from two different iwi or “tribes”, with two different experiences of colonisation. In one of my iwi, my father’s iwi of Ngati Awa, most of our land was confiscated and our people were labelled as being in rebellion against the Crown. In my mother’s iwi of Ngati Porou nothing approaching that magnitude was confiscated. Both iwi had land taken by legal and illegal means. The shame of confiscation sat upon my father’s iwi for 120 years or so. The iwi is still struggling to restore itself. The confidence of not having your land confiscated, and the geographic isolation has meant that my other iwi has always been able to celebrate its uniqueness and its connection to land that people still occupy and people still own. So, two different iwi to which I belong had two different experiences of colonialism, and two different legacies that still impact on the way we live. And that is just my experience – every indigenous family has stories about those experiences, those legacies. What it has left us with is not some homogenous group of an indigenous community that shared one story of colonisation, or that today lives a pure ideal life as an indigenous community. We are complicated. Our complexity is fantastic. It is something worth celebrating. We are complicated because we are human, and much of our colonial experience has been about denying us our humanity.

Our leaders have worked at that critical interface of colonisation, between the colonised and the coloniser. They are the ones who really have had to connect with, do business with, negotiate with, make space for us with, colonial or mainstream society, or with government, or with government agencies. Indigenous communities are not necessarily wonderfully supportive of our activists and leaders. We might get romantic about those who lived in the historical past, but the reality for many of our communities is that leaders are really only good for five minutes, then everything else about them we start picking at, and we scratch at it because we want our leaders to be ideal. We have high expectations of our leaders. We also want them to be like us. Sometimes they are like us, and that is not always a pretty picture because we, our communities are not perfect, ideal happy families or happy places. We have high expectations of our leaders but we do not necessarily give them the support, the feedback, the education, the kind of sustained support around them that enables them to survive. And when they fall, we let them fall a long, long way. Then we expect them to redeem themselves, and that will take some time before they pick themselves up. If they don’t pick themselves up we think, “*well they were terrible anyway, what do you expect?*” So we are harsh on our leaders, we have high expectations, but as communities we can also be very harsh when they fail us.

B. The Globalisation context

Let me now move to a larger picture, the impact of globalisation. I want to address three main points in relation to globalisation. The first is the impact of neo-liberal economics and its supporting alliance with authoritarian populism and Christian religious fundamentalism. The second is with its



offshoot, the knowledge economy. The third is with one consequence of the previous two points and that is the discourse around international terrorism and the challenges to human rights.

Both Australia and New Zealand really have grappled with questions such as, “*How do we survive in the world when we are at the bottom end of it? How do we survive economically, politically, socially in a world in which at one level borders have kind of come down, information borders have come down, economic borders have come down, but other borders have emerged and have been reregulated?*” Globalisation is a many splendoured phenomena rather than a clean lineal development. The aspect of globalisation that presents great threat to indigenous communities is the form of globalisation that is influenced by or used to enforce neo-liberal free-market economics. Neo-liberalism has had a huge negative impact already on indigenous communities because it has unleashed and legitimated new forms of economic exploitation. It has widened social and economic disparities between the rich and the poor. It has re-regulated economies to benefit the powerful and enable them to distance themselves from the weak and the oppressed. But neo-liberalism is also a many splendoured phenomena that has reshaped itself and shifted its focus to new horizons. Indigenous communities must focus both on the impact of neo-liberal economics and its next generation, the knowledge economy.

There are particular issues that many indigenous activists and leaders are currently grappling with on the international scene - issues around bio-diversity, around cultural and intellectual property, issues about the role of indigenous knowledge. Whereas once in the 20th Century and the 19th Century, people denied indigenous peoples possessed systems of knowledge, now our knowledge is seen as attractive because it is unique. It is seen as ready for exploitation and for commodification. In the knowledge economy things that were not looked upon very well in the early part of our history are now seen as potentially useful.

It is worth examining the role of international terrorism, the discourse about terrorism, and the way that discourse has been stretched to the extent that you sometimes have to wonder what it’s impact is going to be on the forms of dissent that are permissible within countries, let alone across borders. Now I travel a great deal, so I am always conscious at every border crossing about how very contradictory the notion of borders are. At one level I can travel, globalisation allows that to be at one level quite smooth, but at another level it is hugely stressful, as I wonder whether my name is going to come up on some database as an international terrorist. I know when I was put in a queue in the US for a personal search I was deeply offended because I didn’t think I deserved to be there. “*Why are we all brown anyway in this queue?*” was not a good thing to say, because I stayed longer in the queue. But that is an issue, because it concerns the extent to which the discourse around terrorism is marked racially by what you look like. It is marked by how you dress, it is marked by the nature of your surname, or the nature of your first name. So while at one level we can travel, at another level there are increased anxieties about our identity, our personal record. When you enter the US and they take your fingerprints, it throws up a history of you, and you think, “*Should I be worried, should I be nervous? No I’m really going to try hard not to be nervous, because they might think I’ve done something wrong.*” There is a heightened sense of security and surveillance.

The reason it worries me is not because we have not had surveillance of Maori activists in our own country, but it is the extent to which now it is seen as okay to reframe certain kinds of activism as



terrorism. At an indigenous level, when you look at many of the so-called insurgents in countries, the ones who are seen as potential terrorist groups or who are allied to terrorist groups, they are often also indigenous groups. They often have some claim to indigeneity, whether you are talking about Israel, whether you are talking about the Philippines, there is some element in there that as indigenous communities we think, *“There’s something else going on here. It can’t just be religion. It can’t just be a bunch of rebels who want to live up in the mountains and kidnap people. There is something to do not just with the politics of a particular country, but of how groups and minorities and communities and countries are using the discourse of terrorism, either to take advantage of it, or to suppress it, or to suppress groups within it.”*

So it does concern me that the discourses around terrorism have come to encapsulate or incorporate discourses of activism and of social activism. There are two aspects to that, because I see in some of the responses by the US to 9/11 and to the war on terror that there has been a direct challenge to firstly the framework of human rights, and secondly to the terms of engagement of war. Now you might think, *“War is way over there, it doesn’t impact on us”*, but it seems to me that when you change some of the taken-for-granted universals of human rights and engagements of war, and you start to trouble those understandings and principles of human conduct, you can not necessarily predict what comes out of that troubling, that questioning and that abrogation of the principles of human rights.

Discourses around such things matter. Who is at the bottom of the pile? Who is most likely to be reframed inside discourses around activism, around social justice, around terrorism? It is not the groups who are in power, it is the groups who are often powerless. What is happening geopolitically, and in the war on terror, does impact on how indigenous activists and leaders assemble their rhetoric, on how we as indigenous communities strategise our own struggles. And, it assembles around an invisible line, the line of what is seen as acceptable forms of political dissent.

I am sure that in Australia there is a line of what counts as acceptable dissent that is different from the line that exists in New Zealand. And maybe in Australia there is a line which says that tent embassies, freedom rides, the whole history of indigenous activism in this land is acceptable, but there are some activities over that line that are no longer seen as possible. In New Zealand we have just completed a huge hikoi, or protest walk, in relation to what the New Zealand Government is attempting to do with the foreshore and seabed. Protest marches are seen as acceptable, barely. Maori people can march all we like because no one has to watch, no one has to listen. In fact, people can ridicule the protest because some people did not march the whole length of the country. Some of them rode in buses and that is seen as not a real protest march. But, the one event in that entire march that crossed the line was of someone spitting on the ground in front of and possibly at, a number of dignitaries. That was the event that seemed to justify to a number of people, and certainly to the media, that there is no way you can take this group seriously because, *“Look, he spat”*. So it’s often simple things that cross that line of what is acceptable as political dissent. I would suggest now that that line has shifted, and it is shifting very subtly in the things that have happened over the last two years.

C. Indigenous leadership and activism (old priorities)



I want to move quickly now on to maybe some of the older priorities around indigenous leadership and activism. It is not that those priorities have gone away, but I think they are the legacy of the last 30, 40, 50 years, and the things that our leaders and our activists have been struggling for. I use the word ‘struggle’ quite purposefully, because in a sense the notion of struggle has certain kinds of underpinning ideas and underpinning philosophies. And those underpinning philosophies are often what is used to mark our leaders or especially our activists, that the activists of the 60s and 70s had particular political theories at work. They were either Marxists, or Unionists. They were all troublemakers, and the notion of struggle in one sense encapsulates that idea of a working class notion of struggle.

So this history of activism is very much embedded in our concepts of leadership taking us into the late 1980s. Inside that history there are certainly the discourses of the 20th Century, that what we were struggling over, was about modernity and development. And that what we really got to at the end of the 20th Century is this concept of reconciliation, healing, or in New Zealand the concept of ‘settlement’, or ‘treaty settlement’. Our earlier struggle really was to get to that point; the point of modernity, the point where we could settle, the point where we could reconcile; and that the impetus was to get us through things to that point. We, as indigenous communities in New Zealand invested a great deal of energy, time, resources and thought into building our relationships with the government, the Crown.

I saw it happen in all my growing up years. My sense of elders in the middle of the night putting on suits. Getting ready to go to Wellington, either a long drive just to the airport if they were going to fly, or a long drive sometimes six to eight hours if they were really driving, to go to Wellington because that was the source of power. And to sit there for hours, to be treated like they didn’t count. To come home depressed, down, and trying to work failure into a success, trying to present to our communities and to our families a sense of achievement, when on their faces and on their bodies there was no sense of achievement. There was a sense of defeat. That was part of our story. To build an expectation, that if we had a relationship with the government somehow that would solve many of our issues, somehow the government could do it for us. In New Zealand, many of our Treaty debates are about that, are about our relationship as Maori to the Crown. In New Zealand, that is where much of our energy has been invested in terms of building relationships with the Crown.

Critique of leadership style these priorities promoted

But you can critique that approach. I have just got a very simple critique really because it is not hard to critique, as for the most part that critique has been sustained alongside the type of leadership we produced. For many people the legitimacy of our leadership was always dependent on the government, on who the government was prepared to talk to, on who the government found acceptable as leaders. In fact there are a number of occasions where government selected our leaders quite openly, transparently, and said, *“We’ll have you, you, you, you, you, and sorry we’re going to miss out you because you’re not acceptable as a leader.”*

So in a sense our leadership has got its legitimacy in some ways from non-indigenous systems and non-indigenous people – not always, but in some ways. It has been male dominated, even though



women have been a key part of most of our community developments, of almost all our language developments, of almost all our education developments, of almost all our health developments. Women have been the driving force, the backforce of it, the backbone of it. But when you look up leadership in any thesis, in any book, in any work done on Maori development, it is a very male dominated concept. If you look up participation, you will see the presence of women.

Leadership has also been around the cult of the individual, the fascination with the idea of ‘chiefs’, the individual who has been able to roam free without accountability. There have been grave concerns about the relationship between individuals and accountabilities back home. While many iwi and many communities have had implicit trust in their leaders, there have been a number of examples where that trust has not been well deserved. Sometimes it is simply that the individual has not had the capacity to deal with the sophisticated level of negotiations that have gone on. One individual cannot do it. One individual can not negotiate with the Crown, because the Crown is not one individual – it is both the symbol and the sheer infrastructure of what our government is about.

Some of our communities have sent one person to negotiate and then if they are really generous, they might pay for three. But it is the same idea that often when we talk about leadership we are talking about individuals who are designated as leaders. I think, just echoing what I said about it being male dominated, is that in a sense our leadership reproduced often in its worst forms the social and gender relations of the dominant society. So there is a reason why those leaders were mostly men, because the men in Wellington only wanted to talk to the men. They often found the women absolutely difficult to speak to. Which is why women are really good negotiators, because the women weren’t prepared to give certain things away. Those structures of the dominant group society do get internalised within indigenous communities, sometimes in a skewed way. But they are still internalised, and they are also reproduced. In the end that model of leadership, gendered, individualistic and sanctioned by Government is unsustainable and untenable for indigenous communities.

It is an unsustainable form of leadership, because in a sense our leaders have grown up in an ad-hoc way, and when there’s been a crisis we have waited for the leader of the moment to show us the way, to take us out of it. Many of our most prominent activists have almost been accidental leaders. The media has played an important role in the romancing of leaders and the creation of an identity around certain leaders that is certainly appealing, but does not necessarily ground that leader inside a community support network. If anything, they are plucked out of the community, and they instantly become our role-models who are supposed to exemplify everything idealistic about us, and that is why we criticise them, because we know them, and we know they are not ideal. We know everything about them.

So there is an impossible context, where leaders are selected for us, they are legitimated by non-indigenous communities. We are expected to look out for them, but we know their real lives. And we are caught in the sense of, ‘yes we respect them and we think they’ve done well, but we know something about them’. It creates either a culture of silence that we build around leadership, or a culture of acquiescence where we work with whoever the leader is at the moment, or a culture of backstabbing where people actively undermine whoever is the poor person in the leadership role. And that’s not a sustainable way to think about leadership in any society.



D. Leadership and Activism (new challenges)

So there are some new challenges, and I just want to go through some of these a little bit more deliberately. One of those challenges is really about changing the discourse. It seems that when I think about the vocabulary of the 1970s, it was very much about sovereignty and treaty rights and language rights and concepts about rights. It was about justice. There was a certain kind of rhetoric that we used and that our leadership used in that period. But when I look at the leaders that we have now, the rhetoric has changed, and it's interesting to capture part of it, because you hear them talking about things like creating, building, building capacity, contributing. The language has changed in quite interesting and subtle ways. Building for something, instead of building something.

Issues around integrity and competency have become really important in our context, and important for two reasons. One is, because mainstream society sees us as incompetent – there's a kind of perception of incompetency. And the other side of it is that there has been a reality that some have been incompetent. Between the reality of some and the perception of all is a challenge about how do we grow competent leaders with integrity, with an ethical basis to their leadership, and with accountability systems that mean that they sustain their ethicality, and they sustain their integrity.

The reason that integrity is so important is because when we are let down, we are let down badly. It hurtles us back in time. It isn't just, "*Oh we'll get over it, we'll move forward*", because when one of our leaders fails, we all fail and we all live the shame of that failure. In my context it is happening right now. One of our key ministers has been stood down from cabinet because he is charged with possibly doing things like taking money that he said he was not taking, and not paying tax on it, and a number of other things. He is not the most popular of politicians necessarily for Maori communities, but the government saw him as one of their bright shining stars. Now he has been stood down and is hurting, and that is being lived out in the media. So at one level people can say well that's the individual, but actually all Maori feel tainted by it, all Maori feel ashamed by it, and all Maori bear the stigma of that shame, and that happens frequently.

So for our leaders to do that is for them to fail us publicly and to fail us inside ourselves. It is really powerful when we don't have competent leaders with integrity. But I also think we need to, in thinking more purposefully about how do you ensure that doesn't happen all the time, build around leadership a culture of critical reflection, feedback and accountability. In many of our traditional systems we had that. We can point to models where there were checks and balances. People could not get away with telling you lies because there were all sorts of checks on that. They could not skew things in particular ways because there were different models in which decisions were made. But that is not our context now, so we have to rebuild and strengthen the processes of accountability and of critical reflection.

One of the really challenging things for us to do in New Zealand is to rethink the usefulness, the role, the purpose, the functions of many of our social institutions - many of the things that we take for granted as being us, and the best part of us. The reason I say we need to think about those is because what we think of as a cultural system such as the whanau, or extended family, has become



fraught with government interference and intervention. So sometimes we pull up models that we say are indigenous, but when you examine the history of them they have actually been government organised, government shaped, government funded. It is just that over time we have come to think that this is what it was like. Many of our political structures, many of our committee structures were based on government systems, and they have become embedded in our communities. Many of our ideas about the family, the hierarchy of the family, leadership in the family, the role of people in the family are very resonant with Judeo-Christian views of what a family is. Yet we keep thinking that this is the role of the extended family. It is in other words not just leaders who have been selected by governments but also many of our remaining systems have been sanitised and reframed for acceptance by mainstream society.

Another of the challenges for Maori is about how we position our aspirations in ways that are inclusive of all the groups of Maori. It has been challenging for many iwi organisations to find their members who have become scattered across New Zealand and the world and build ways that enable greater participation by people who may not necessarily know the culture or who may not want to “live as Maori.” There is much work to do in terms of creating more participation in communities and in iwi organisations.

Finally, there is this concept that we can have leaders that we all like. But one of the reasons our communities are cynical about leaders is that no one I seen to deliver on the promises of leadership. Outcomes are not delivered. We just reproduce a generation of leaders who might do things, and every now and again we think we have won a victory. We do not have evidence on a daily basis of what has changed, so there is a deep cynicism in communities about promises, possibilities, opportunities, all those positive words. I can hear people from where I come from thinking, “*Oh yeah, that’s our attitude, oh yeah, whatever, bring it on*”, but there is no sense of confidence that actually someone will deliver, that there will be educational opportunity and achievement, that there will be good health. In a country like New Zealand and in a country like Australia the resources, the intellectual talent, the research, the means to deliver educational equality, the means to deliver good health are here. They are actually within these societies. The fact that they don’t happen is not because there are no resources and no capacity to make it happen, it is because there is no will to make it happen. That is why many of our communities are so deeply cynical about the promises of these high values that democratic nations hold up.

Some models of leadership

I have composed four models of colonial indigenous leadership just to review where we have come from and where we are at presently. Let us look back in history for what a leader might have been. The concept of leadership that Captain Cook might have had is ‘*Take me to your leader*’, meaning that the leader was kind of obvious, and the leader in our sense was always seen as a chief, so: ‘*Take me to your chief*’. And then after a while that model changed, and it moved to, ‘*Which one of*



you speaks the good English?’ so that we can actually interact with you. Then that changed over time to *‘Wait outside my office and I’ll get to you when I’m ready’*, and that’s really the experience that I grew up with in the 50s and the 60s. That’s the model of leadership that I grew up seeing: our people going to Wellington to wait in offices. And then I think that the latest one we’re in is, *‘Leaders are those that government recognises because they have the mandate of their people’*. But the mandate of their people is what is determined by government because it sets the rules of mandate. So all of those are reflections of the same thing. Many of our leaders are those who are sanctioned by government and by the Crown. Our activists, and this is where the two concepts really do split up, is that our activists by definition are not legitimated by the Crown, not recognised by the Crown. If anything Crown agencies go to enormous lengths not to engage with them, not to be seen with them, not to talk to them, and not interact with them in any way, shape or form. One of the few ways you can tell the difference between a leader and an activist, is who a government official is prepared to be photographed with.

New models of leadership

So, now I’m at the end of my talk, *“What are the new models of leadership that I think we’re faced with, and that indigenous communities need to give some thought to?”* I can think of a number of contexts and countries in which indigenous communities really are thinking about leadership in new ways and in much more inclusive ways. So part of it is that if you want healthy leaders who are balanced and who have got integrity and ethics, they have got to grow up in that kind of environment. They have got to grow up in healthy environments in which integrity and ethics are a valued. I don’t just mean in our own systems but the rest of society also needs to value those things. They have got to grow up in healthy social, cultural and political systems. Many of our best leaders have, and some of our most outstanding leaders have not. They have struggled to the top because they did not have those conditions in their childhood. In the Maori context we expect our leadership to be deeply connected to our own value system, to our own ethics and protocols and to our language. You will not see very many Maori who are seen as leaders, not able to engage in cultural protocols. If you can not front up to a community meeting on our grounds, and in our context, then you are already three marks down as a leader because you can not talk to the people in the right cultural context. For us that is a very important role. In a way it is the role that many of our people who are very well educated have not been able to fulfil and therefore have not really been able to take up leadership roles, because if you take them out of a University setting and put them in a Maori setting or cultural context, they just freeze up and go to pieces. They can not always perform in the oral tradition of our people.

Our leadership has to be diversified; it is no longer about the cult of individuals. It really is about a very deep system of leadership and of growing a sustainable leadership across spheres and specialties. That is because we have to look after the few things that we have left, but with greater vigilance. Sometimes when I go back to where I come from, *‘hello, there’s something else that’s disappeared or something else we’ve lost’*. Well actually we did not lose it, it got taken, and it got taken because we weren’t paying attention, or it just got taken. Leadership needs to include men, women, young people, old people, elders. It just can not rest on one gender and one generation. Leadership is part of a community and a set of relationships. If you want good leaders, you also



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have to have in the end good communities, because leaders and communities are connected. Leaderships and leaders should be able to emerge from and work back into a community as a smooth relationship. It is not the leader standing in front at some distance from the community, but someone who is deeply grounded and deeply embedded in a community. It is a core relationship. I'm sure if you look in the management literature it is a given, but in our experience it has not been a given. Many of our leaders have not been deeply connected to communities, they have been distanced from them. And finally the point I would like to make as an educator is that leadership, the potential for leadership, exists in everyone. It exists in every individual. We need to foster that and grow it from the youngest child to the oldest elder. Leadership is in all of us, and I want to leave that as my final message. Thank you.