**All should understand history of Te Tiriti**

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Gisborne Herald : [Opinion](https://www.gisborneherald.co.nz/column/profile/gisborneheraldopinion/posts).



Pauline E Tangiora

While I cannot support what happened at Te Papa the other day, the museum board and CEO should be held responsible for not listening to the people over many years.

For the public’s information, in September 1984 Dame Te Atairangi Kaahu hosted the New Zealand Māori council for the Māori Women’s Welfare League and hundreds of other dignitaries at Turangawaewae Marae in Ngaruawahia. This hui was on how the Treaty of Waitangi sits in New Zealand’s history.

The Treaty of Waitangi and Te Tiriti were supported in long hours of discussion. It was unanimously accepted that Māori did not cede sovereignty to the British Crown.

At the hui, many academics such as Moana Jackson noted that it was important that all New Zealanders accepted this discussion of those attending. There were many leading Pakeha academics in attendance as well, and the unanimous agreement was a continuation of the 1840 decision to sign Te Tiriti.

I do not personally feel that the staff of Te Papa should be held responsible for what was done. They are employed to work in their various jobs, not to become “security”.

Having spent over 50 years volunteering in the public sector, one has always expected that when things Māori came up, you had to be the speaker for the Māori sector.

In one case, nurses walked out on their training area because they were no longer willing to meet the expectation that they had to explain things Māori to Pakeha.

The time is now here that all people in New Zealand should understand our history of the Treaty and why it was signed.

If every person understood both the Treaty of Waitangi and Te Tiriti, I am sure the event this week wouldn’t have happened.

Like many other people who have protested the misinterpretation of the Treaty and had no one wanting to listen to them, there is no wonder that the frustration has come to a head. When something is wrong, and no one listens for it to be corrected, that’s when violence happens.

The first recognised flag of New Zealand was chosen on March 20, 1834 by 25 northern chiefs who met at Waitangi to view three alternative designs. The flag they chose was the Church Missionary Society flag, which incorporated the flag of the Anglican diocese of New South Wales into the Royal Navy’s white ensign. British Resident James Busby declared it the national flag of New Zealand.

Aotearoa was governed from Sydney at this time but Australia would trade with Aotearoa as an independent country.

Our history is beautifully laid out at the National Library in Wellington, where our three founding documents are housed: 1835 He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tireni – Declaration of Independence of the United Tribes of New Zealand; 1840 Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Treaty of Waitangi; 1893 Women’s Suffrage Petition – Te Petihana Whakamana Pōti Wahine.

Maybe Te Papa board of directors and CEO should have a look at how we educate each other in this country. In doing this, they will be able to understand how to do something correctly in the future.

The New Zealand Goverment rules under the Magna Carta system of English law.

To all the politicians who sit in Parliament, make sure you have learnt your history properly.

It is time everyone reads the newly published book of the late Moana Jackson, who spent his life looking at constitutional issues in New Zealand Aotearoa: The Power in Our Truth, The Truth of Our Power — Recollections of Moana, published by Te Tākupu, Te Wānanga o Raukawa.