

New Zealand has claimed to be a country where Māori and pākehā were treated equally. History used to justify this stance is that Māori were given the right to vote in New Zealand well before other indigenous peoples. In the USA, Native Americans could vote from 1924 whilst in Australia it took until 1962 for Aborigines to gain the vote. Heck, Māori gained the right to vote some forty (40) years before Kate Sheppard gained women the vote, so it must be true! It would be nice to think that this was the case, but digging into our history shows pākehā did not want Māori to have equal representation.

Māori voted in the country's **first general election** held in 1853. Only one hundred (100) of the more than five thousand (5000) votes cast were from Māori citizens because only male landowners could vote. The owner of the land had to be an individual to vote as this was how Europeans recognised land ownership. Māori did own land but they owned it collectively as a tribe or iwi therefore they could not vote. This actually suited Māori fine as most were not really interested in the pākehā parliament. If they had issues they went straight to the Governor of New Zealand or established their own governing structures.

Many pākehā leaders were keen to include Māori in our democracy, especially tribes that had fought with the pākehā against Māori in the land wars. Laws were changed in 1867, establishing **four (4) Māori seats**. Based on the population, Māori should have been granted fifteen (15) seats! All Māori men over 21 could now vote on the Māori electoral roll. In 1893 Māori women gained the vote alongside their pākehā sisters. History shows that Māori gained the vote but were unable gain the same representation to improve laws for all Māori.



Questions (look in the text for highlight clues!)

- 1) What are three (3) groups of indigenous peoples that are mentioned in the story?
- 2) What part of New Zealand history is used to justify the statement that Māori and pākehā were treated equally?
- 3) In what year did Māori gain the vote?
 - a) 1853
 - b) 1893
 - c) 1924
- 4) Who could vote in the **first NZ election**?
- 5) What was the reason that excluded most Māori from voting in 1853?
- 6) How did Māori try to solve issues before 1867?
 - a) They spoke with the Queen.
 - b) They all voted in elections.
 - c) They governed themselves.
- 7) Which groups of Māori did pākehā wish to reward with the **4 'new' Māori electoral seats** ?
- 8) Why were the 4 seats given to Māori not a sign of equal treatment?

Word Salad

Find the meaning of these words and put each of these words into a sentence.

- 1) indigenous
- 2) collectively
- 3) established

Position Words (Prepositions)

For each sentence find the word that shows the position of something.

- 1) His mark went on the voting paper.
- 2) Up the steps went all the women.
- 3) The missing vote was under the box.

This fine looking fellow was one of the first four Māori MP's. Meet the representative for Western Māori Mete Kingi Te Rangi Paetahi, who is seen here representing both worlds, dressed in his colonial soldier's uniform with a Māori 'mere' weapon.