The day the raids came

edited by Valerie Morse

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Stories of survival and resistance to the state terror raids

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‘The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.’

— *Milan Kundera*

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DROP
ALL CHARGES
AGAINST
THE 17/19
20
International
Bolshevik Tendency
O RAIDS NO RACISM
NO TERROR LAWS

Introduction

I want you to remember. I don't want you ever to forget what happened on Monday, October 15th 2007. On that black day, the so-called 'war on terrorism' arrived in New Zealand when more than 300 police carried out dawn raids on approximately 60 houses all over the country. They used warrants issued for the first time ever under the 2002 Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA). Police claimed that the raids were in response to 'concrete terrorist threats' from indigenous activists. The people targeted were overwhelmingly Māori.

The stories herein are from people who were affected by those raids: ordinary people from around New Zealand who were subjected by the state to extraordinary acts. Some of these stories are from the people who were arrested and imprisoned as 'terrorists.' Some are from people who were subjected to house raids and had their privacy and security violated by police. Other stories are from people who were stopped at the Rūātoki roadblock or who had friends and family taken away by police. Some of these people organised resistance or experienced political epiphanies. Some people fell in love and had babies. This collection is only a small sample of the thousands of stories of people who were touched by what

the police called 'Operation 8;' but Operation 8 was, and is, about all of us. The stories here are, after all, war stories. These are stories of survival and resistance to war.

The 'war on terrorism' started years ago, of course. It started on 8 October 2001 when the US began bombing Afghanistan. The war started in 1991 when the Employment Contracts Act was passed, undermining the rights of workers to organise collectively. The war started in 1978 when the police invaded Takaparawha (Bastion Point) and evicted Ngāti Whātua off their own land. The war started in 1951 when the watersiders were locked out for 151 days and special laws were passed to make sure they were given no comfort or support. The war started when the police invaded Maungapōhatu in 1916 and arrested Rua Kenana. The war started when the police escorted strikebreakers into the Waihi mine in 1912. The war started in 1881 when the crown invaded Parihaka and arrested Tohu and Te Whiti. The war started in 1869 when the crown burned its way through Te Urewera. This 21st century 'war on terrorism' is a continuation of the same old war. It is the war for power. It is the war for control. It is the war waged by those who have against those who don't.

On that 15 October day in 2007, police arrested 17 people: indigenous, anarchist, environmental and anti-war activists. Police took into custody people from Tūhoe, Te Atiawa, Maniapoto and Ngā Puhi along with a few Pākehā. The police wanted to charge 12 of us under the Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA) with *participation in a terrorist group*. We were denied bail and held in prisons around the North Island while the police placed thousands of pages of information relating to their investigation before the solicitor general. Because of the way the TSA was drafted, the police could not directly lay terrorism charges; the solicitor general had to give consent. We waited in our prison cells, with fear, with trepidation, with hope, for his decision.

In the days immediately following the raids, the police commissioner, Howard Broad, was on the back foot. He vehemently denied that the raids were racist. He said that they had not specifically targeted Māori,

and that the police had arrested some other people also. Despite his protestations, the racial nature of the raids was indeed evident to many. In reporting about the raids, TV, radio and major daily newspapers confirmed the negative stereotypes of Māori held by the vast army of white racists who enjoy racial privilege built on lies, ignorance and injustice. Meanwhile, police denials simply confirmed the views of many Māori with experience of the grotesque historical abuses by the New Zealand state.

When, on 8 November 2007, the solicitor general denied the police permission to proceed with the terrorism charges, there was a huge collective sigh of relief; many people believed that the case was over. Within days, all those charged were released from prison, subject to strict bail conditions. However, the case was far from over; 16 people continued to be charged with breaches under the Arms Act for possession of weapons during alleged 'paramilitary training camps' in Te Urewera.

Six days later, on 14 November 2007, the *Dominion Post* newspaper carried a front-page article entitled 'The Terror Files.' For the story, they culled nuggets from the 156-page police affidavit, itself a highly-distilled document compiled over 18 months from literally thousands of bits of evidence, the sole purpose of which was to persuade a judge to give the police warrants. The newspaper published sensational extracts of intercepted communications between some of the people who had been arrested: 'White men are going to die,' and 'I am training to be a dangerous, vicious commando.' They certainly did not publish any of the thousands of text messages like, 'I am going to the dairy to get milk' or 'I don't have any money; can you lend me $20?'

The intercepted conversations were no longer even admissible in the case because the terrorism charges could not be laid. All the accused were at that time facing only relatively minor firearms charges. Furthermore, all of the evidence was subject to a total media suppression order issued by the court. Nevertheless, the *Dominion Post* editor Tim Pankhurst claimed in his editorial that day, in defence of the breach of the suppression order, that the public 'had a right to know.'

Later that same day, a defiant Tūhoe hīkoi arrived in Wellington. The event was full of amazing energy: raw anger, rage and sadness. Flags and banners coloured Molesworth Street that day as hundreds of people took their messages to the people, to parliament and to the police. Much of the media misunderstood or deliberately misinterpreted the theatre of the hīkoi: the young men and women who dressed with painted faces or balaclavas did so to critique and expose the actions of the police, not to intimidate the public, as the media suggested. Few attendees at the hīkoi realised that the huge police surveillance operation was still underway, and that they were the targets.

On Tuesday, 19 February 2008, police raided further properties in Rūātoki and the surrounding area, arresting three more men. They were all released on bail with strict conditions that same day. Another woman was subsequently arrested on Thursday, 17 April 2008 in Auckland and also charged as part of the group. Now numbering 20, the group of defendants all endured severe bail conditions including curfews, reporting requirements and travel limits.

Following a month-long preliminary depositions hearing in September 2008, an Auckland district court judge ordered 18 people to stand trial on charges of illegal possession of weapons and Molotov cocktails. Most of these charges relate to alleged attendance at training camps in Te Urewera. A few of the charges relate to firearms seized during the actual raids, including a rifle dating from World War II.

During the course of the Auckland depositions hearing, another trial was taking place in the Wellington High Court. The same solicitor general, David Collins, who refused to allow the terrorism charges to proceed, was now prosecuting Fairfax newspapers, specifically the *Dominion Post*, for contempt of court for serious breaches of suppression orders relating to the publication of 'The Terror Files.' After a five-day trial, two high court judges deemed that the newspaper was not in contempt of court despite the view of the solicitor general that,

'The truth is that the respondents' publications represent the most serious challenge to the public policy underpinning the law of contempt that New Zealand has ever seen. The articles were deliberately inflammatory, unsettling, provocative and memorable, and the respondents sought to publish them as widely as possible. They also made firm pronouncements about a group of individuals who have yet to face trial and did so in a manner guaranteed to arouse hostility in the community. All of this would have been more than enough to constitute contempt. The fact that the respondents went so much further and published lengthy extracts that they knew would be inadmissible at trial, in face of suppression orders they knew were in place and a statutory prohibition directed squarely at the very material that dominated the articles puts this contempt into a class not previously seen in this country.'

The trial-by-media had the desired effect: it vindicated the police and condemned the arrestees.

Shortly after the Auckland depositions hearing, the crown law office brought a further charge of *participation in an organised criminal group* against five of the accused. It was a bad re-run of the failed terrorism charge under a new name. It is laughable, to anyone who knows these five people, that they constitute a 'gang': one is a health worker, one a gardener and mother, one a veteran, one an IT specialist and one a clarinet player. The charge flies in the face of facts and common sense, but then there has never been an excess of either in Operation 8. One only need read the essential elements of the charge to appreciate that this utter nonsense is a tactical move by the crown. They conjure up an image with the label 'gang member,' to malign the 'evil-doers' they seek to silence and vilify in the public consciousness.

Subsequent to the depositions hearing, the entire case has been transferred to the Auckland High Court at the crown's request. There have been a series of lengthy pre-trial applications there and in the Court of Appeal relating to the admissibility of evidence. The courtroom battles are exhausting, irritating, costly and ultimately disempowering. These

small skirmishes are hidden from public view; the decisions of the judge are suppressed, and thus the darkness around the egregious violations of the police remain cloaked. A trial date of 30 May 2011 has been set for the Auckland High Court for 12 weeks. Perhaps it will happen then and there, perhaps not.

At the time of the arrests, there was a great deal of anger throughout the country about the raids. In particular, those concerns centred around the police actions in Rūātoki. The police locked down that village by erecting a roadblock on the only road in and out of town. They stopped, searched, questioned and photographed everyone coming in or out of the community.

The police roadblock was situated on the 'confiscation line.' This 'confiscation line' is literally a painted mark on the asphalt indicating the exact border of the lands confiscated from Tūhoe in 1866, following a declaration that the tribe was 'in rebellion' for its alleged involvement in the murder of missionary Carl Völkner. That event was the dodgy pretext used by the crown to justify stealing Tūhoe's most fertile flat land and access to the sea. The tribe had nothing to do with Völkner's murder. The line is a constant reminder of that injustice.

The police roadblock on that line was no accident. It was an act of provocation, yet another act of colonial aggression in an on-going social war against the indigenous people of this land. It was, in fact, just one of a series of invasions, police actions and confiscations that have characterised the crown's incursions into Te Urewera for 150 years.

The roadblock was not the only deliberate act of violation by the crown's agents in Rūātoki that day. Helicopters swarmed overhead while houses were raided: houses full of families and children who had no relationship to the police investigation. They were targeted because they were there, because they were Tūhoe. The police on that day, clad in full black paramilitary costume complete with balaclavas and semi-automatic rifles, literally terrorised an otherwise quiet and isolated rural community.

In other parts of the country, activists from a range of social justice causes were arrested. Anti-war activists, anti-mining activists, union organisers, Palestinian solidarity workers, feminists and animal rights campaigners were rounded up and charged. In many cases, these arrests were in stark contrast to what was happening simultaneously in Rūātoki. Overall, these arrests selectively targeted those whom the police sought to arrest, not the entire communities in which these people lived or worked. Some of these arrests were frightening and brutal, as police action frequently is; some of these arrests were accompanied by the armed offenders squad; some of these arrests involved the polite appearance of police with a knock at the door, a signed warrant and ended with no handcuffs used.

All of this begs the question, 'Why?' Why did the police do what they did on that day?

There has been a great deal of speculation about the reasons behind the raids. One reason suggested is that the police wanted to ease the imminent passage of the Terrorism Suppression Act Amendment bill for members of parliament. One reason cited was that the government wanted to prove to their 'imperial' masters, the United States in particular, that New Zealand was a true friend in the on-going 'war on terrorism.' Another reason advanced was that the crown wanted to shut down Tūhoe aspirations of sovereignty by labelling them as terrorists and thereby undermining their claims. Many have suggested that, given the vast increases in police budgets since 9/11, they needed to justify their new toys and personnel. Finally, there has been the suggestion that the government specifically targeted activists in order to shut down dissent. The unproblematic linking of activism with terrorism, whether the issue is indigenous sovereignty, environmental protection or workers' rights, is a worldwide phenomenon. Activists in the US are now routinely threatened with prison sentences that include 30-year-long 'terrorism enhancements.'

All of these reasons for the raids contain some element of truth. The sum of these reasons, however, produces something greater than the constituent parts. The raids were, in other words, about something much more fundamental than the agenda of one or another political party. These raids were another step in the process of state-making: the coercive apparatus of the patriarchal state expanded the boundaries of sovereignty and reinforced white supremacist hegemonic power. The raids were not an aberration in an otherwise free and democratic society. Rather, they were an inevitable, natural manifestation of the confluence of the concentration of elite power and technological capability. They were, given the circumstances, bound to happen. And they will happen again.

From time to time, in the three years since the raids, I laugh at the absurdity of it all. At other times, the toll that this social war has taken on me, my friends, family, comrades and the huge mass of people who struggle against injustice every day nearly crushes me completely.

Collecting these stories was simultaneously traumatic and cathartic. I met people and heard stories that I had not heard. I hope that they will serve as a marker in the histories of state violence, and spark discussion and action to disrupt and dismantle the status quo.

AUCKLAND

Rangi Kemara

Go back to Sunday, 14 October 2007: the night before the raids. I had been in bed all day. I had hurt my back the day before, so I spent the whole day lying down. I was watching these undercover cars going past, wondering what the hell was going on out there. The day before our neighbours had been in a huge fight, and they had wrecked their place, so I assumed that the cops were looking at them. I was inside my caravan, parked just in front of Tuhoe Lambert's house in Manurewa.

About 4.30 in the morning, I woke up to a couple of cars sitting outside; again, I assumed it was the neighbours because of the events that had taken place. Tuhoe and his wife Aida were awake. They always woke up at about 4.30 in the morning and had a cup of tea. I went back inside the caravan and lay down. More and more cars were arriving outside and parking down the street.

Where the caravan was situated, it was like a sound shell; I could hear everything. There was an enormous noise and a whole lot of shouting. I could hear the cops yelling at the neighbours. I thought they were raiding them; it seemed like a full-on bloody raid. But as their voices became clearer, I could hear that they were actually telling the neighbours

to get back in the house. It took a minute or two before I suddenly realised: *No, they are actually raiding me—raiding us.* I stepped outside the caravan. In my initial shock, it seemed that the sky had been lit up with stars. It was, in fact, the police lights on the front of their guns that lit up the place; it was almost like standing in a glowworm cave.

Almost every corner of the property had guys with guns hanging over the fence. The cops were on the megaphone yelling for me to come out. As I was about to step out from behind the caravan there were armed officers on either side, right around in a semi-circle. The ones that were on my left were yelling that I had a gun in my hand, which was crap. It was one of those situations that either I stepped out and got nailed, or they would come around the corner and nail me. So I had this little thought to yell out that I had no gun. I thought that would ruin their day, and make things more difficult. I said about three or four times that there was no gun. 'No gun. No gun. No gun,' I said and then stepped out from behind the caravan.

At this point I was escorted out by armed men. They were not your average armed offenders. You see the AOS on TV all the time. These people were another level up. They were an elite squad brought in for this particular raid. They did the first part of the raid. They brought me out and lined me up against the fence outside. Then about five minutes later everyone who was in the house was brought out. There were quite a few people staying at the house because there had been a family gathering the night before. We ended up lining up right down the block, about half the street. We were placed down against the fence, handcuffed and forced to kneel down on the pavement. There was an armed officer standing behind each one of us with a rifle to our head.

Tuhoe's partner, Aida, became very agitated because the younger people had firearms to the backs of their heads. She began to voice her opinion about that quite strongly. The police reaction of course was to try and shut everyone up, but they were unable to silence that kuia. It

was obviously a distressing thing for everyone involved, but much more distressing to see children put through that process.

We were handcuffed with those little plastic cuffs. Then it started to rain quite hard. It was pouring down. Not only were we kneeling there against the fence with all the neighbours watching and dozens and dozens of very hyped-up crazy police behind us yelling and screaming, but it started pissing down rain. I was thinking, *Gee, I wish I had put on a raincoat before coming out.*

The cops then tried their separation techniques. They put us in different areas to try to coerce a quick confession or to achieve whatever they were trying do. I had seen this type of thing in the past. It had happened to other people. I had also been through something similar to this once before and had seen the type of destruction these cops can do. They are so amped up; they will go to any length to achieve what they want.

They were looking for firearms. They wanted to search the car. I could have sat back and said, 'Stuff you, you're not going to get anything from me,' but they would just break everything—break the caravan, break the house, break the car. So when I was trying to explain where my car keys were, I said, 'They are right there by my firearms licence.' That is when the next big dialogue took place. One of the officers was quite adamant that there was no way I had a firearms licence. It occurred to me then that they had obviously mis-instructed these guys in order to get them so heightened and amped up, and oddly enough, almost shaking in their boots. It was kind of strange for me; really it should have been the other way around, and for part of the time, it was. I noticed the dissipation of their anxiety the moment that they realised that they had been misinformed. It was almost like letting the air out of a balloon. It was like night and day between two different events and the attitudes of the officers.

After that, they were exchanged out; the commando cops were pulled out and replaced with the 'normal' armed offenders squad. The second team of about 15 to 20 cops came in, and they were wearing the 'normal' armed offenders black garb. They maintained the scene until the

detectives who had obviously ordered the whole thing turned up. Once they took over, the armed offenders were pulled out, and a whole lot of armed police in blue uniforms turned up. So there were three entirely different sets of police at the place.

At that point, I didn't realise that a whole lot more people had been arrested. I thought someone must have complained to the cops because they saw one of my hunting rifles being loaded into or unloaded from my car. I hadn't worked out exactly what was the purpose behind this entire masquerade, until I was questioned by one of the detectives, Hamish McDonald.

He said, 'We are going to charge you with unlawful possession of firearms.'

And I said something along the lines of, 'Unlawful possession? How is it possible that I can unlawfully possess firearms that I lawfully bought?'

The thought hadn't really crossed my mind at the time that such a thing was possible, but apparently it was. That of course was all within the thinking that maybe someone must have complained.

Then McDonald said, 'We also want to question you about terrorism.'

Then I thought, *Whoa. Hang on.* That's not a neighbour complaining about a firearm being loaded into the car out of my gun vault. We are talking about the silly stuff now. It was then that I had to resign myself to the fact that this was going to be a long one; it was not going to be an in'n'out today event. They had gone beyond the issue of whether something was criminal or not, they had stepped into the political realm of silly irrationality and illogical absolutism.

So they trucked Tuhoe and I off down to the Wiri station first, and we sat in the cells there for a few hours. Then they brought us over to the Auckland central police station for another few hours. This was my first time in the cells, locked up in a police station. My main concern was for Uncle Tuhoe, making sure that he was all right. Obviously, the cops didn't really give a shit about his health, and it wasn't until a week later

that the medicines he requires to keep him alive and kicking were afforded to him.

We eventually ended up in the cells where they hold prisoners before being arraigned in court. Only on seeing others who had been arrested that day, did I realise that this entire charade was linked into a much bigger police raid against activists from all genres.

As it unfolded, I began to see how enormous it was, just how far and how deep this craziness had gone.

We were in the last slot of the day at court; it was close to 5 o'clock on the 15th of October. They just read out the charges against us. I was listening to see where this terrorism charge had gone, but at that point we were just charged with unlawful possession of firearms. I didn't really get how the whole terrorism accusation was being played out. I thought that if you are not charged with something, how the hell could they hold you?

We ended up being detained, 'held on remand' as they call it, on firearms charges. Normally, these are not charges for which people would be held in custody. We were taken back to Mount Eden prison, ACRP (Auckland Central Remand Prison), and put into individual cells, what some would call solitary confinement, for a day or two until they found places for us in one of the standard wings.

The wing we were held in was strange. It isn't the place they put your average person. It is a mixture of people being held on behalf of Immigration—I think Ahmed Zaoui was in that wing at one time—and there was an Iranian guy previous to us who had been held there because he refused to return to Iran. It is kind of a quasi-political wing that I never even really knew existed.

We stayed there awaiting the decision of the solicitor general as to whether or not the terrorism charges were going to be laid. The next thing we tried to do was to notify our families that we were locked up. The prison authorities somewhere further up the chain were not allowing us to use the phones. That went on for two or three weeks. We were almost

in the last week when we were finally able to get phone calls out, and I notified my family that I was being held in prison under the Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA).

Later, we found out that they had been waiting for a police monitoring system to be installed in the phone system before we were allowed to make calls.

The extent of the raids unfolded in front of me. I had met some of the people arrested in Operation 8 in the holding cells, and others were being transferred to the various Auckland prisons. We found out more as people turned up at court for hearings or were brought into the wing where we were being held. Some of the lawyers were able to disclose exactly how wide the police operation had been. The enormity of it was just incredible: trying to get to grips with what the hell this thing had become was hard without even getting to the point of asking 'Why?' We just asked the same question over and over again, 'How is this possible?'

The wing that we were in had a TV in almost every room, so we were able to see the news items coming in. The news was full of lots of very lazy articles, lazy journalism and a lot of sensationalism which is characteristic of the New Zealand … what do they call themselves? Journalists, hmm. Nevertheless, it did give us some indication of what was transpiring during this time, and of the protests and support we were receiving from those strong enough not to be taken for a ride on this little merry-go-round. That was heartwarming.

We were also fortunate to receive care packages from John Minto and Matt McCarten's team who had taken it upon themselves to try and get newspaper clippings together and send them in. We received huge piles of newspaper clippings of all of the articles that were written, all the incredible sensationalism and craziness that was going on in the newspapers.

It is a completely different world inside the prison. It is not a place that you can change easily. A lot of activists might automatically take on a place like that just because they are there; however, if you really wanted to make a change in a place like that it would have to be a long-term project

and a long-term commitment to try to deal with the many things that are wrong with that place. We had bigger fish to deal with, and that is what we attempted to stay focused on. Someone told me early on in our detention, 'Never forget you are in jail.' It was a good lesson to learn. It doesn't matter who you are, you could be the most persecuted person on earth—when you are sitting in jail amongst a whole lot of other guys, you are just another person wearing a funny set of blue overalls. You can't ever forget that.

But the inmates warmed to us. Prisoners are very perceptive people, and after reading some of the media stuff surrounding our detention, some of them began to realise that they weren't looking at the usual run of inmates. Many of them commented that they believed that we were people who were being stitched up because of our political beliefs, or for being a Tūhoe, or a Maniapoto or whatever.

It was most evident on the day that the solicitor general announced that there would be no charges laid under the Terrorism Suppression Act. The place just literally erupted with cheers. The guards were running around, panicking, and thinking, *What's going on?* You don't see that much. That was important for us; we got a lot of support from those people, as well as from the guards and a lot of the hierarchy in there, too.

I was actually doing my washing at the time the solicitor general's decision was announced, and someone yelled out from one of the rooms urging us to, 'come in, come in, come in … the guy's giving his decision.' We had been told that it was going to take literally months for the solicitor general to wade through 60,000 to 70,000 pages of crap and truckloads of gear and thousands of hours of video footage, so it was quite surprising to hear that the decision had been made so quickly. The solicitor general had only a week before, I think, been given all this material. It had only been a couple of days, perhaps a week, and then he came back with a decision. We weren't expecting that. We were getting ready to sit in there for a long haul. You have to adjust your body clock, 'Right, it's going to be six months at least.' Many of us had set our 'timers' and were

resigned to a long haul before we could move to the next stage, that of making bail. Thus the news of the solicitor general's decision then came as quite a surprise.

I did not realise initially what the impact of his decision meant because it came so late in the day. It was after hours, and the lawyers were off for the day. As I said, I had already completely resigned myself to the fact that it was going to be a long haul. Funny thing was the night before I had been doing my washing and had finally gotten my own cell. I was actually in the process of moving rooms when the news item came on TV.

When the next morning at 5 o'clock the door of my new single-bed cell was kicked open, I thought, *What the hell's that for?* The guard said, 'You are going over to court this morning. Pack your gear up, you're getting bailed.' The thought in my mind—and this is how easily you become incarcerated, you become institutionalised—was *Oh, what? I just got my own room! And you're kicking me out!* That is the silly shit that goes through your head when you are in jail.

It was a whirlwind exit. I was whisked out of jail over to the courtroom, bailed and walking out the door, a free man, in about an hour. It was just like changing planets.

That little burst of euphoria, however, didn't last long. I was on the way home driving from where my family had taken me out to dinner, when the news came on the radio that the police affidavit had been leaked to TV3. It was going to be the main item for that night. I was thinking, *Ah, man. We are not even getting a reprieve.* There was not even one day to celebrate our freedom before the next phase happened: defamation of our character, which I think was phase two of this whole thing. For the police, it became, 'We can't get them on terrorism, so we'll just defame the crap out of them across the media,' which it is what they spent the next two or three weeks dedicated to making sure happened. They made sure that everyone as far and wide as possible received the leaked contents of cherry-picked conversations from a year or so of intercepted conversations among a large number of people.

When we finally did get out, the bail conditions were pretty strict, not quite as bad as home detention, but close enough. We were only allowed out at certain times of the day. I wasn't even allowed out of Auckland. They had bailed me to Auckland at that stage, and for those of us living outside of the Urewera, we were barred from going to Rūātoki. The very restrictive conditions were the curfew, and having to regularly check in at the police station. To those who have been through the system before, that would be normal, but for those of us who were first-timers, it took some getting used to.

It was a major restriction that most of us were not allowed in Tūhoe country. Of all the people I would have wanted to go and console for what had happened to them—how the police had singled them out and terrorised them over that period of time when the state basically besieged their iwi land—it was them. The first thing I wanted to do was to go and console them, but I was not allowed to. If we went there, we would be arrested immediately.

Then I began dealing with the reality of just how incredibly over-the-top their surveillance had been. Every aspect of what hundreds of people had said or done over the past few years had been documented right down to phone calls and emails. Had they had the ability to do so, they would have tried to read our thoughts.

I found this all kind of ironic because on one hand, as the comedian Katt Williams so aptly stated, they couldn't find Osama bin Laden in a cave with a big dialysis machine connected up inside. On the other hand, they knew every single thing that we had done, and that the people of Tūhoe had done over the past few years. If we blinked there was a record of it. It dawned on me just how paranoid these people were and how invasive that surveillance had been. I had to think to myself, *Am I going to let that get to me? Am I going to think that every little shadow in the corner is the SIS or whoever continuing their surveillance?*

I wasn't surprised by who was targeted in the raids. History is the best indicator of exactly how this would be played out. One thing the

government is wary of is people who still remember what it is like to be free. Going back to the Treaty and how that links into all this, the crown had procured, shall we say, sovereignty and governance by the power of the misunderstanding of language. Hobson wrote a treaty in Māori and the only way that the Pākehā at the time could understand it was through a translator whose name was Williams. Whether designed this way or not, it seems clear to me that when the Treaty was being discussed up north between Māori chiefs, Pākehā pre-Treaty landowners and Hobson and Co., Williams cherry-picked parts of the conversations of Māori chiefs and translated them for the Pākehā who were there. They only got the message that Hobson intended, and vice versa for the Māori who were there. Sovereignty and governance were procured through that method. Somehow the Pākehā thought that was going to last forever.

Then the next generation of Māori came along and the crown realised, 'Oh dash it all, old chaps. We've got to go do it all again. We've got to get the natives to cede sovereignty and governance to us again.' So this time they brought in a big army to achieve the same goal. In the long run the most successful method they came up with was taking over the role of education: educating subservience into Māori, educating ignorance and orchestrating forgetfulness so that we won't remember that in actual fact sovereignty and governance is with us, or just with people in general.

The crown has been quite successful with that project at some levels. But at some point various Māori groups and individuals have been able to survive that onslaught of indoctrination from childhood. They have frightened what I would describe as the 'middle management' of the state with their ability to think like free people. Those people have in the past been killed or arrested or incarcerated because they have reminded the crown that each generation has to be negotiated with; this 'agreement' only lasts a generation, then the next one comes along, and we have our own mind about things.

I think that is what a lot of Māori are saying today. It seems to me to be the deep-seated resentment within 'te hiringa i te mahara.'* They are

saying, 'You have to negotiate with us; you will not negotiate with these people who you call leaders, those so-called tribal rangatira' who seem to have been promoted into prominence by crown entities mostly based on their venal attitude towards Treaty issues, or their ability to further the cause of free-market extremism (for which the 'Māori issue' is often seen as an impediment), rather than from any real support amongst the hapū they are supposed to be representing.

One of the most annoying aspects of Tino Rangatiratanga 150 years ago for the crown was that those chiefs and hapū that adhered to the idea just could not be manipulated using the usual array of methods that the powerful use to direct and conduct peoples and to secure consent to govern. The usual modus of the crown would be to get a lot of chiefs together, pay them some money, blankets, guns or whatever in order to get them to do a particular thing.

Tino Rangatiratanga as a concept does not allow for unilateral decision-making. Ultimately, that is one of the reasons why Tino Rangatiratanga had to be undermined and removed as a social construct: because the chiefs themselves could not make decisions on their own even if they wanted to. If they did, it could lead to war.

Often the case in Te Rohe Potae in the lead-up to the crown invasions was that various rangatira would discuss an idea put to them by a government representative who would be hoping that he would be able to convince them to give their permission to a particular action. He would be quick to learn, however, that no decisions were ever made at those meetings. That was the general rule. Each individual chief would go away and convey those ideas to their respective hapū. If the hapū decided they weren't going to be a part of that idea then it was just tough bickies. The only way the crown could gauge their decision was by the following actions of that hapū after the fact.

For some iwi, taking instruction from the crown was considered being 'kūpapa,' a traitor. Following the coat-tails of the crown in order to receive favour was to be kūpapa.

That is how it was. For the crown, that was the most frustrating and annoying and enraging issue of what is termed Tino Rangatiratanga. If the crown was to make any headway in this country, then that practice and cultural structure needed to be destroyed: that belief in freedom and individual liberty and the autonomy of groups of people to make their own decisions had to be replaced with a degraded level of representational democracy which removed the right of the people to participate and to decide on every issue, let alone who would represent them.

It rings warning bells for the crown when people remember what it was like to have that freedom, to have that autonomy as a people. The last thing the conductors of the Māori elite want is a devolution of power away from those they have become accustomed to manipulating, to the people they claim to represent. Tino Rangatiratanga is intrinsically the nemesis of the representative democracy that is the present-day form of democratic participation, or the perception thereof.

Tūhoe have been struggling and continue to struggle for Mana Motuhake, for justice and for the return of land that was stolen off of them. When I say stolen, I don't mean 150 years ago; the majority of Tūhoe land, some 500,000 acres, was confiscated from them between 1954 and 1979 when the state 'renamed' three-quarters of Tūhoe land (which it saw as crown land) as a national forest and gazetted it under a government act.

There are a lot of Tūhoe people who remember that. It is not a memory that has been handed down through generations, generation after generation; those people are still alive and they remember the greatest confiscation that Tūhoe ever faced in terms of sheer land mass. It's not a 'genetic memory' of any sort or a distant one; it is an actual memory:

memories of crown agents entering their tribal areas and taking control over their land, right around them, like they were not even there.

In my opinion the police pulled this little rabbit out of the hat because of the complacency and subservience that successive governments have been able to cultivate in this country. Each individual in this country really needs to take stock of that. Freedom and ignorance cannot live in the same house.

That is one of the key components to this issue; people in this country have been deceived into thinking that you can be free and be ignorant at the same time. Ignorance gives permission to powermongers to escalate fear and then use it as a licence to remove freedoms. It doesn't matter what the source of that fear is, whether it be the threat of international or domestic terrorism, gangs, drugs or the weather.

With Tūhoe, the police and executive exploited the fear of terrorism. They have played that card and have now moved on to yet another fear. So today it's the fear of gangs, or whatever the scapegoat of the day is. Whoever it is, that fear is exploited; fear is ramped up and legislation is passed that further removes freedoms and reinforces the state's power to control and invade every aspect of a person's life.

This is part of the reason why a construct called 'government' must always be resisted, and why resistance is healthy: it attempts to keep these mongers of power in line, and it tries to preserve whatever vestiges of freedom that are left.

What the future holds is anyone's guess. Many people pretend to be visionaries but are mostly people who superimpose experience of past events to predict human patterns of future events.

Tūhoe have been forced to focus on their past for the last 120 or so years due to the crown not wanting to part with its masses of stolen Tūhoe land. Eventually that issue will be solved one way or another, but in the meantime, and this runs true for all Māori, hapū and iwi, what is

needed is a 'no bullshit assessment' of the present status of our people, whenua and culture. If we as a people are to seriously embark on such an endeavour it will come as a shock to many of us that the faux-comfortable certainties of the prevailing narrative are leading us down a track into a dead-end canyon.

So it is somewhat exciting to me to hear discussions by Tūhoe of a hybrid construct they are working on called Interdependence. This concept shows movement on from the prevailing post-colonial narratives put forward by the likes of Ranginui Walker. It is in some way a recognition of the realities of the present and is intent on setting up a construct under which future Tūhoe generations can determine their own destinies. Rather than making assumptions of what that future may entail, it gives room to cherry-pick the best of our cultural constructs of the past while allowing for the rejection of present constructs, both internal and foreign, that are not helpful or are even destructive to the wellbeing of our people, land and cultures.

For tribes embarking on this form of self-determination what are needed are in-depth comparative self-determination models of other indigenous peoples around the world. These can serve as conceptual guides to learn from and to prevent duplication of errors. There is considerable crossover in the history, culture and experiences of tribes like Tūhoe, Maniapoto and other tribes of Aotearoa with those of other countries around the world, some of whom have already embarked on systems of self-determination.

In this way we return to the evolution of our cultures and our people. The unique gift economies that still exist and thrive in places like Te Urewera also flourish in the urban environment where many Māori now live. They are almost fully integrated into the city lifestyles of the under-, working and middle classes. This evolution is recorded in the wealth of kōrero in our whakapapa that have described us since the time of Te Kore. Through this connection, no one is invalid no matter how urbanised that person may be.

One foot in Facebook and the other foot in the bush, so to speak …

At this point, that evolution seems to be trapped in the suspended animation of fighting for justice against historical and recent state-sponsored crimes, resisting the culture of rampant destructive capitalism and being under the incantations of some of the false academic gods, many of whom have either advertently or inadvertently assumed the role of poropiti and have played the piper until their bank balances have travelled well into six-digit figures.

This I think has created a rift, two separate streams in Te Ao Māori. The key is to create a construct that has room for both streams without one trying to invalidate the other. I believe this is the concept behind what Tūhoe is embarking upon.

The outcome of the 'terror trials' remains to be seen. Nevertheless, I am excited about where Tūhoe is heading, and I hope to participate without hindrance again in their world as soon as we complete this little charade with the courts.

* *Te hiringa i te mahara:* A driven, embolden desire or inspiration from the center of one's spiritual being


Fruit
Mince

AUCKLAND

Chris Zack

The day started with a knock on our door at 193a Symonds Street. I didn't think it would be a raid at that point. I opened the door, and there were two policemen. One said, 'We have a warrant to search the place, please come downstairs.'

I thought, *We knew it was going to come at some point*, that the house would be raided, because we were trying to change the place into a political space, so I wasn't terribly shocked.

I closed the door and changed clothes. It was quite a cool morning, but I didn't put on a sweater; I just put a t-shirt on. When I closed the door, I was thinking, *Oh crap* because I had just bought an external hard-drive for my computer. I was thinking, *Aw man, they are going to take this.* So I hid it somewhere and went downstairs.

Everyone else from the place was already down there. There were maybe six or seven police. I was really cold. It was 6am. I wasn't really fully awake. I guess that is why the police raid at such an early time of the morning, because most of us don't know what is going on when we first wake up.

Everyone was sitting there shivering. The police were explaining that they were searching the place under terrorism legislation. My whole reaction to it—during the time until I left the house and later on—I didn't grasp the severity of it. I thought, *Ok, terrorism legislation, that's really interesting. I wonder how this is going to go.* They vaguely explained what was going to happen.

I had just gotten a new job. It was my second day, and I remember saying, 'I've got to go to work.' So they searched my room first. They went upstairs. I went with them to make sure they didn't take anything. I was going to try to convince them not to take anything, my computer in particular. We went into my room. It was a surreal experience. The cop sat down. This is actually quite embarrassing for me: I know much better; I have been involved in activism for quite a while, and I know not to talk to the police, but he was giving me the small chit-chat.

On the way upstairs he said to me, 'You better tell me if you have any needles lying around because if I prick myself I am going to be really pissed off.' I am a pretty clean person. They opened my door, and my room was tidy. I have books and my music. I am obviously not a drugged-up youth. From there, they searched through everything, absolutely everything. I am quite a sentimental person. I keep things from my past, my yearly organisers, pictures and letters. They went through all that stuff. They were coming up with the most ridiculous assertions.

At that time I was a volunteer at Refugee Resettlement Service and I had the information about the families I was working with. One was from Iraq and the other from Afghanistan. The cops were looking at their names and copying them into their notebooks. I was angry. I said, 'Don't copy down these people's names. They have nothing to do with whatever you are here looking for,' which I understood to be semi-automatic rifles. Again I didn't understand the severity of it all, and what was going on. I thought they were crazy.

I was thinking then of the media backlash. I just thought they were screwing with our place. I didn't understand that these raids were a national thing and the extensive scope of the operation.

The cop was asking me, 'Have you been to Afghanistan?' presumably just to get me talking. I think he knew that the question was ridiculous. He was looking through my pictures from my trip to Scotland. I had pictures of Edinburgh Castle. The younger officer was taking the pictures and showing them to the senior detective; they wanted to know why I was taking photos of this building. I don't think they knew it was Edinburgh; I think they thought it was in this country.

Then they began asking me questions about Omar Hamed, my flatmate. It became apparent that they wanted information about him. I didn't answer anything. I didn't know who Tame Iti was. They asked me about Omar and about Tame, and I didn't say anything about either one of them. In between they would ask me a couple of things about myself. I guess my perspective at the time was, *They are here on anti-terrorism stuff.* I was thinking, *We have nothing to do with terrorism*. 'Do you want to know about my refugee volunteering? Is that what this is about?' It was very naïve of me to talk at all. I will never ever do that again, but at the time that was the line of thinking I was working with.

From there, I was really concerned—I don't know why I didn't call in sick—about going to work. It was so stupid. I just kept thinking, *I have got to get out of here.* So they pretty much let me go after checking through all my texts and phone, copying down the numbers and asking me, 'Who's this? Who's that?' I said, 'I don't know. I don't know.'

Eventually I left. I went to work, and my day got even more ridiculous. I was sitting at my computer screen just staring and thinking, *Oh my god. What just happened?* I looked at the news. *Oh shoot, this is crazy. I've got to get out of here. I shouldn't have come in.* I was in a really weird frame of mind.

When I got to work, I looked at the *Herald* on-line, and there was a picture of Tame Iti. It was the first time that I had seen a picture of

him. I read that there were other anti-terrorism raids. At the same time, I started to get texts from other people saying that other places around the country had been raided. I have a few friends at Greenpeace; people there were saying that information had gotten around that anarchist houses around the country were being raided. I was getting texts saying, 'Has your house been raided?' and I said, 'Yes.' Reading all that, I realised this was some very serious stuff, and I needed to get away from work and attend to that.

I talked to my boss, my boss of two days at the Auckland City Council, and I said, 'My place has been raided. I need to get out of here and go to court and see what is happening with my friends who have been arrested.' They didn't react very well at all. They assumed that I was a terrorist as well. They had meetings at the council about what to do with me, right across the street from the police station. My window actually faced the building. I was looking at the police station thinking *Arggh!* They let me go after a while.

Later, I met up with friends and other concerned people. From there, it was frantic meetings to organise a response. I went back to my flat to see what was taken, and to let things soak in.

The flat we lived in was called the 'Necropolis.' It was an old punk flat, a pretty well-known place in Auckland. Omar and another fellow called Gary and I had moved in, and we had been cleaning it up for the past few months. It was always a place for punk shows, and it was generally chaotic, a place where people just came and trashed the place. We tried to change it to a more political space, having meetings and film screenings there. We had hosted a book launch and an anarchist conference in September 2007. That is what the space was evolving into: a political space.

There were three of us who were politically involved, and there were two others who were of the punk generation who were not interested in politics. I think that during the whole police raids the only thing they found in terms of weapons was one of the punks had a belt, sort of a sash,

that was all old shell casings from bullets. But the police had no interest in him.

The police largely left the flat as it was, except for Omar's room which was totally turned upside down. They were particularly interested in camping gear and shoes, anything of Omar's and things around the house that had to do with camping. I think they took some tents, hiking boots and tarps. It wasn't really changed too much.

I wonder what the police were thinking when they saw that the political activists they had come to raid were relatively together and tidy compared to the punks whose rooms were a complete disaster with clothes, beer bottles and drug stuff everywhere. I am curious what the junior officers, who were there doing most of the grunt-work going through our rooms and seeing that we were obviously intelligent people, were thinking. The officers who searched my room must have had a change of perspective about who I was after going through my room.

I can't figure out whether the things the cops said to me were to get me to talk, just to get a reaction out of me, or whether they were actually idiots with absolutely no clue, who had been hyped up into this mind-frame of terrorism. I don't know, maybe it was a little bit of all three.

We had expected the police to raid the house at some point, because more political stuff was happening there. It is not uncommon for other activists' houses to be raided. They are called 'fishing' exercises. When there is some sort of action planned, the police use that to hype things up a bit, to use that as a pretext to go in, and to fish for names, addresses and information on networks. That was my perception initially about what they were doing: they were fishing. I should have clued in that they were searching under a terrorism warrant. Clearly, that was a much more serious operation than a fishing expedition.

I didn't feel particularly fearful for myself. I figured if they were going to arrest me, they would have done so already. I was kind of half-anticipating—I knew people were being questioned—being pulled

aside. I talked to a few other people I trusted about what to do in that situation, which was a good move. I wasn't personally so worried; I was more worried about those who were in custody and what their status was. Once I started learning about what the repercussions were of such a charge then everything became focused towards ending the charges, getting rid of them altogether. We had to put forward a quick response, to do something about it.

Omar was around when I left for work. I was there when they told him he was under arrest but I don't recall him being led away. The next time I saw him was when I visited him in prison. That visit took a while to organise. I had been to going to the prison quite a bit in order to drop off books and stuff. Finally, I managed to visit him on the day the terrorism charges were dropped. I went with a couple of other friends. We were all saying, 'We are going to find out in a couple of hours if the charges are going to be laid.' He was in a really interesting space, very much resigned to whatever happened. When I went home and turned on the radio, they said the charges could not be applied.

Mount Eden prison was in a way what I expected. It was insanely restrictive and very inhumane. You go in, fill out these forms, go through the metal detectors and then sit in a specified seat. I sat in the wrong seat—I sat in the seat Omar was supposed to sit in because the cameras are focused on it. I looked at the children's play area: they had made a pathetic attempt to make it nice for children, with a coloured wall and a couple of plush toys, very sterile. I waited there for him to come out in his orange jumpsuit. I remember him coming out into the visiting area. He was so excited to have some coins to buy snacks. He was like a little boy, coming up to us and grabbing the change and then running over to the vending machine. The guard yelled at him, 'Hey we told you before you can't run.' He slowed and walked over to get his chocolates. My perception of the space was that it was totally inhumane and sterile, devoid of any kind of humanity really. I talked to Omar about having to be searched every time he leaves and enters. It was pretty tough stuff.

Once people went to prison, organising became very frantic. A lot of people did not know what was going on, or how many more people were going to be arrested. We knew that our place was probably still bugged so we couldn't have any meetings there. We were meeting in these spaces where we could have some privacy to talk.

It was very intense, and there was a huge sense of urgency. At the same time, we were not clear what we could say or not say to each other. I remember discussing things like whether to have cellphones on or off. They would probably be listened to. As the extent of the surveillance became apparent, the realisation dawned on us that it is hard to do much in this society and not be watched. On the other hand, there was a lot of energy, and there was a very different mindset from activism in other circumstances.

I have found that when there is not something urgent to do, there are restrictions to getting things done. There are interpersonal difficulties, very serious issues, but with this stuff, with our friends in prison, all that stuff got pushed to the side. You work with people you wouldn't otherwise work with. It became just about putting stuff together and getting our friends out of jail. We did everything from getting a website up and getting information together, doing prisoner support, and making sure the people in prison had what they needed. We were simultaneously organising a response: protests, a response on the streets and a national day of action.

The results of the raids for me was very similar to a lot of things in life. You can see something, or read about something or kind of understand something in an abstract way, but when something happens directly to those people around you that you love, then the seriousness of it really hits home. With the Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA) I knew that the New Zealand government, the police and the various people that engage in 'anti-terrorism' had been given massive resources to fight terrorism. Of course terrorism is in very short supply in this country and in many others, so I guess it is like anything:

if you get paid to do something, you are going to find a way to do it. In order to justify their jobs, these repressive forces focus on people who question authority or who don't conform to the status quo. Māori sovereignty activists, anarchists and other people fighting for social justice are the logical targets for these repressive forces. I am from Canada originally, and they had been implementing the same type of legislation after September 11th, 2001. Now my thinking is that these people are watching us and will continue to watch us. If it is advantageous to them, they will do the same thing again.

As someone connected, but not directly involved, the events had a huge impact on the way that I look at things. My perception of police and government before was similar to what it is now, but there is something more real about it to me now because of everything that has happened. I have seen it; I have tasted it, and I will carry that forever. It gives more meaning to all of the stuff that I do. It's in the back of my mind that if I am involved in this or that project or campaign there may be consequences; I know that I am being watched. I am not scared of that, but it is something that is always there.

My work at Auckland City Council turned into a bit of a circus in the end. In order to keep my job, I was made to write a letter basically saying that I was not involved, and I was not a terrorist. I also felt considerable pressure to tell them that I was moving elsewhere. I was working with a couple of lawyers at the time who were fairly liberal and so somewhat understanding. But the bosses definitely did not look at me favourably afterwards, and I soon left the job.

Hopefully, as the years progress, things will shift in such a way that laws like the TSA will be repealed. But we need to keep fighting against these things. We need to fight for laws like this to be taken away. Once this is done, we have to keep fighting, resisting and organising. They will always find an excuse—there is always a bad guy. There are always reasons for the police and the state to ratchet up their control over people. It is a struggle and will continue to be a struggle. People need to

be aware that there are repressive forces out there, and it is in their nature to push these regressive laws and policies.


MATARILKI

HAMILTON

Russell Lee

I started that day in Raglan in my bed. I was woken up early by a text message from Kirsty in Wellington. As she was working at the organic shop making sandwiches, she went to work early in the morning. She had heard on National Radio that the 128 community house on Abel Smith Street had been raided. She said that I should get to the radio and listen, that 128 had been raided and that a whole lot of activists had been arrested. She didn't have any more information.

That is what I woke up to on the morning of October 15th 2007.

I got up straight away. I tried to tune in the radio, but unfortunately, I didn't get any reception at my house in Raglan. We didn't have any access to the internet or TV so I felt really anxious about what was happening and was unable to get any more information. I started sending out heaps of text messages as soon as it got to an hour that felt appropriate, telling people what had happened and asking for any more information. Subsequently, I found out that five or six of the people I had sent text messages to had been arrested during the course of the morning.

One of the people I texted was Marama, because she lived close by in Hamilton and we had lots of mutual friends. I received a reply from her

mum saying, 'This is Marama's phone. The police have come and arrested her.'

I was feeling pretty angry and anxious. I looked through my drawers and found my Tino Rangatiratanga t-shirt and stuck that on. As soon as the library was open in Raglan, I stormed down there so I could use the internet. I had made a couple of phone calls before I went down there. I talked to Kirsty, and she was in a similar place of not really having much information about what was going on.

I was a little unsure of how wide the net was going to be cast by police. I didn't know if that would include me. I didn't know which of the people I knew were potentially going to be arrested. I had no idea of what they were going for, or what it was connected to. I wanted to let as many people as possible know about what was happening. When I got to the library in Raglan, I was able to find out a bit more information through the internet. I don't think that there was anything on Indymedia at that stage. I had found out some further specifics in text messages that I received about some people who had been arrested.

I sent an email out on the 'Treaty people' email list because I had read on the *Herald* or *Stuff* website that the raids were related to Tino Rangatiratanga-Māori sovereignty issues. On that email I included the names of a couple of people who had been arrested; one of them was Marama. From my email, Mike Smith then posted that information on the Tino Rangatiratanga email list. I was a little bit worried about that, because there is a protocol that anything that gets posted on the 'Treaty people' list doesn't go on the Tino Rangantiratanga list. I didn't want to put that information into the public arena in that way, but Mike had just done that. Later I got an email from *Scoop* asking where I had got the information from; they considered my email had helped 'break' the story.

I started emailing people as quickly as I could. I was meant to go to kura that day to study. Obviously I decided I wasn't going to go. It was far more important for me to get to the bottom of this, to make some connections and to help wherever I could. I felt really isolated in Rag-

lan, both from information and from my friends. I had already felt that in some small sense in a social way, but with this situation going I really felt that isolation much more acutely. I wasn't sure which of my friends had been arrested nor of who overall had been arrested. I didn't have clear ways of getting in contact with lots of people. I tried calling 128 and either there was no answer or the answerphone was on.

While I was at the library, I bumped into Manda, who I had only met once before. She was a friend of Marama's. I told her what had happened. At that time we made a commitment to each other to stay in contact. We would do something to support Marama and other affected people. It was really fantastic to have someone there whom I could talk to that felt some of the same anger and worry as I felt.

I returned home after sending emails. I tried to make some more phone calls. I ranted to my flatmates about it. Really, I just got angrier and more frustrated. The rest of the day revolved around me walking to town and taking up my half-hour slots on the computer at the library; you could only use it for half an hour and then someone else would use it. I gathered all the information I could and shared it with people nearby who were interested in contacting people in Wellington who might know what was going on.

Later in the day I got in contact with Manda again. We made a time to get together and talk about what had happened and how we could support Marama. I called Marama's mum, Ruth, later in the day and she clarified what had happened. I talked to her flatmates and that helped a little. I think Marama had an experience that was quite different from some of the other arrestees. At the time, finding out what had happened to her helped to alleviate a little of my worry. When what had happened in Rūātoki came out and more of the details of what had happened in Wellington emerged, my anger returned.

In hindsight, I realise that is where the connection between Manda and me began. It was really through that and through doing support work that we got to know each other and got together.

Throughout the rest of that day, I wore my t-shirt proudly and it was really important to me to put that out there. It seemed like a really futile gesture, but for me it was still important. My flatmates got really worried about using the phone when they realised that so many of the people I had texted had been arrested. They got a bit paranoid.

I felt really righteous; I felt really indignant about what had happened, and it was really important for me not to be silenced by it. It was an attempt at silencing dissent, and that was very obvious right from the beginning, even with the mixed messages the media was sending about who or why people had been arrested. It was important that my reaction to that was not to be silenced. I really did walk around ranting and raving that day and trying to tell people what had happened. A lot of the people I talked to later got involved in doing support work in Raglan.

There was a group of people that formed in Hamilton who were essentially friends of Marama; that was really the common denominator in that group. Some of them were people who had been involved in radical or protest activity in the past, especially animal rights, but a lot of them were just people who were friends of Marama who had no other involvement. The day after the raids, we organised our first meeting of those people and the next week in Raglan a group of people got together. Most of those were people who either knew Ati Teepa and his family, or who had been involved in activism around Māori sovereignty issues, either long ago or in the recent past. So that week we had two meetings, one in Hamilton and one in Raglan, and talked about what we could do to support the people local to us and then in a wider way.

It was a pretty tumultuous and hectic time. I was meant to be at school studying full-time every day and my tutors were fantastically supportive of me. They said they understood how important this was and that I should take as much time as I needed. They extended my assignments; they waived the amount of days I could have off, and they invited me to talk about what had happened in front of the school in the morning. It was really cool to have support there, because had I been at any

institution other than Te Ataarangi they would have been dismissive and looked down upon any involvement. They certainly would not have been supportive in that way. That was really helpful for me.

I started to make contact quite quickly with people who hadn't been arrested and to see what they were doing and to learn from them what was happening as far as court dates and where people were. At the time, Marama was in Rotorua; I had never met the other arrestee from Hamilton, so our support was at a distance.

Essentially there were meetings and discussions, and we painted banners, did a couple of stalls and started doing fundraising. With the crew in Hamilton, we had to do quite a lot of work around the issues of Tino Rangatiratanga. A couple of our meetings were dominated by having those discussions with people who were Marama's friends who hadn't been involved in that world or with those ideas previously. I think that is always the case when dealing with predominantly tau iwi people. When they first encounter these ideas there is some struggle. They were supporting Marama and that was unquestioned; it was just the wider support for what was going on that was hard for some. The media made a good attempt at really vilifying and demonising the people who had been arrested, and that affected those people who had a little less critical view of the media. We had quite a lot of talk around that. It was certainly made a lot harder because we didn't know what we could say and what we could talk about, and without really having any contact with people who had been arrested. We didn't know what the issues were that people had actually been arrested for. The fact that, for me, that was not important was not easy to communicate to people who were only loosely connected together and who supported Marama as a personal friend.

In terms of the messages being communicated externally, Manda and I took the lead, with support from two or three other friends of Marama. We made a leaflet and organised a protest in Hamilton for the national day of action. That was the first protest in Hamilton in a long time and it was incredibly successful by Hamilton standards: it was well-attended and reported in the local media.

That was the first time that I had taken on so many of the responsibilities of organising and leading a protest. Along with Manda, it was mainly just the two of us. There had been a few people painting banners and doing things on the side, but it was really the two of us who had to take those central roles. It was the first time in a long time that I had addressed a protest. I had previously shied away from being that spokesperson. It was really cool to find that I had the ability to do it; my anger and frustration and indignation allowed me to find that space. Through that role, I was able to guide the message that we were presenting to the public.

We had to have those talks about our analysis of the raids within the group before they would consent to having those messages on the banners (support of Māori sovereignty and condemnation of historical abuses and racism by the crown); once we discussed it, people got a better understanding. There were a couple of people who were still not prepared to make that leap. One of those people withdrew his support. Manda and I were quite sure of our viewpoints; we weren't going to change the viewpoint of the group to fit softer 'liberal-in-a-negative-way' ideas.

With the group in Raglan, there were some fantastic people who had similarly radical viewpoints; they were able to support that group in having quite a radical stance. Once we were able to feed into the national network of people doing support work, we spent less time trying to do that work with the people on the outer edge both in Hamilton and in the Waikato. We focused more on the networking stuff and keeping the people close to us who were able to stand with conviction: they were in full support of Tino Rangatiratanga and against the suppression of activists full stop, without having to put any 'buts' or qualifiers in there.

I hope that having those discussions in those groups did help some people to think a bit deeper and a bit wider about the issues of colonisation. It certainly illuminated to me how much work had been done on those issues among the communities that I work with on political activism. It highlighted how necessary it is to do that groundwork before you can work on those issues, and how hard it is to do the groundwork at the

time you are trying to do concrete work on the issues at hand. It needs to be done beforehand, and it makes it a lot harder trying to get around doing that work first.

In Hamilton, we got to a point where we couldn't get any further without doing that work, even though it was in a hurried and piecemeal manner. We did a couple of workshop/presentation/discussions around those issues. At the same time, there were a couple of other groups in the Waikato who were vaguely doing similar stuff. There was a group of people who were attached to the Māori party in Hamilton, or at least in some way because they brought a Māori party flag to the protest in Hamilton, and they seemed to have their own network and work that they were doing. We had a very vague bit of help from the Green Party from Mark Servian. Nandor Tanczos came along to the demonstration and offered some help with photocopying. We got some support from the trade union centre for our film screenings; they had obviously done some talking about the issues. Certainly, we were the only group doing anything visible.

Someone in Raglan laid a wreath in the main street that had a message of support for the people arrested and commemorating the death of democracy. I still have no idea who did it; it wasn't anyone in our support group. It was something quite cool and visible, just a small gesture from outside our group, and it was encouraging to know that there were other people who felt similarly. It was fantastically motivating for me.

We went to the protest in Rotorua. I was really surprised by the support from the Raglan people, but some of them had some pretty funny political views about what was going on. As I said, I felt quite isolated there, so it did surprise me that so many of the people that I had dismissed as having quite liberal (reformist) views came out in support of the people who had been arrested. It did seem that they still had the same liberal views and their support was contingent on certain things that were boundaries to their support. They would stop being supportive if certain things had happened.

We made a couple of trips to Rotorua and a couple of trips to Auckland before things really settled into a clearer network of support. I was in contact with Vanessa in Auckland and she helped make the connections with the crew in Auckland. I wrote to as many people as I could who were in prison. I felt angry, frustrated and impotent to do any meaningful things to help my friends; it felt really important to make contact. The procedures for contacting and visiting people in jail were really confusing. It felt like it was purposely so. The Department of Corrections had vague information on their website, and we got conflicting information about how we could visit people. With the arrestees being moved around it seemed, purposely or not, to complicate visiting. But eventually I got to visit Valerie and Emily in Auckland and that was pretty emotional.

The support that we had in Hamilton fizzled out pretty quickly once Marama had been released on bail. Raglan fizzled out after a while but Manda and I kept going doing film nights, doing support stuff and producing information. We had a stall at a festival that was organised on the Māori land in Whaingaroa; some people came down from Auckland to support that. I would say that it was 95 per cent Māori people who were supportive of us, but a bit different with the Pākehā.

I definitely had a lot of curious going-ons on my phone after the raids. Four or five times while I was talking to people, our connection got cut. That had never happened before. I don't know if it was paranoia, but it seemed far too precise to be coincidental: twice while talking to Mark, once talking to Kiritapu, and once talking to Vanessa. It didn't happen any other time.

One incident during all of this was hilarious: a group of us were sitting in the cemetery park on the corner of K' Road and Symonds Street on the day that the solicitor general made the decision about the terrorism charges. We listened to it on the radio, and when the decision was broadcast that the charges would not be brought, we jumped up and down, yelling and screaming in excitement. At that moment, literally from behind the bushes two undercover cops appeared, brandishing

their badges and said, 'What's going on here?' It confirmed what we had already suspected: that there is a cop behind every bush in every park in Auckland waiting for people to be jumping up and down and celebrating. We were on such a high at the time. I think someone was visiting Omar at Auckland Central Remand at the time, and when they came back we were able to tell them what happened. They told us how they had heard shouting and cheering from inside the prison at the same time.

There was a flurry of activities and meetings; fortunately for me in all that craziness, it was interspersed with falling in love. In travelling to and from Auckland and doing these meetings, protests, film screenings, banner paintings and stalls, Manda and I got to know each other and fell in love. With all the late nights discussing stuff, being frustrated together, feeling helpless together, we came together.

I was not surprised that the raids happened. One of the things that became clear very quickly was that the raid was not any sort of stand-alone operation. It was a continuation of a history of raids and the suppression of the Māori struggle for sovereignty in Aotearoa. The banners we made said, and many people voiced the view, that Parihaka and Takaparawha and the raids in Te Urewera historically were all a manifestation of the same mindset.

The language may change from 'rebels' to 'terrorists' to 'activists.' Within each generation such language sounds palatable because it is in contemporary terms. The rhetoric used by the politicians and the media around these raids will look the same in hindsight as do those from the 1800s and from the 1970s and 1980s. They will look completely ridiculous once that language has dated a bit. The message will become clearer. The hysteria that it is wrapped in is a hysteria that gets its power from using terms tied to contemporary global events. Once those terms no longer have the power of being in contemporary usage, the underlying messages will become that much more obvious and be that much more recognisable as the same things people were saying in parliament in the 1800s when they were doing the same sort of oppression.

Unfortunately the technique of cloaking your actions in contemporary hysterical terms works quite well with 'Jo Public.' They believe what they read because they identify with those terms of terror and those catchphrases that are fed to them. Even though that same person can read history books and see how ludicrous those actions are in hindsight, they buy into similar actions within a contemporary setting. Having those ideas myself didn't mean that the average people we talked to on the stall or when we were handing out flyers would understand straight away. Even given the opportunity to explain the historical connection, some people still got hung up on that hysteria.

It continues to amaze me that whenever anyone is involved in something that is reported by the media they are able to see that it is misrepresented, yet they can't extend that to understand that everything that is covered by the media is misrepresented. It is not just when your company goes on strike, and it's not just when something happens in your community, but it is actually every time the media reports on contentious or other issues of political interest that spin is employed.

I think that there was purposeful obfuscation or confusion sown around who was being arrested and why they were being arrested. It served those who hold power to link the struggle for Tino Rangatiratanga with anarchy. I think that there was a clear attempt to divert attention from the fact that the raids were really an attack on the sovereignty of Tūhoe. I am not surprised that information given to the media by politicians served a particular purpose. I felt that purpose was to confuse the issue right from the beginning. They were worried about it appearing as racist as it was. It was important to make it appear as if there wasn't a racist agenda behind what was happening. To be honest, I was more surprised that they didn't cast their net wider and arrest more people. So when more people were arrested, that wasn't a surprise, and when more people were questioned, it wasn't a surprise to me. It wouldn't have surprised me if it had been an entirely different group of people targeted in the raids, given the sort of

hysteria that had been whipped up since the attacks on the World Trade Centre in the US.

There is a global militarisation of police forces in the Western world. Certainly in Australia, the US and the United Kingdom there has been an incredible progression in the use of military tactics by police in suppressing dissent. It was only a matter of time before they got the new toys in New Zealand and found an excuse to use the sort of heavy-handed suppression that they did use in these raids. Throughout the US and UK, at each level of protest, the level of police has been stepped up. I didn't find it entirely suprising that there was some sort of manifestation of that militaristic policing in New Zealand. It had only been a matter of time before they found some way of justifying spending millions of dollars on fancy helmets, guns and toys.

These types of raids will happen again certainly. I think that they will continue to happen as long as Māori continue to demand that the sovereignty or mana that is rightfully theirs be returned, and as long as the state is unwilling to provide the justice that is overdue. The use of those tactics and weapons will become more acceptable because they are more often seen. It is not uncommon now for the armed offenders squad to turn up en masse with all guns blazing, and always with the potential to kill some innocent bystander. It used to be something very notable. Now it is a common everyday occurrence. Normalising heavy-handed tactics allows the police force and the government to feel justified; it allows them to get away with using such tactics without any public outcry.

I suspect that the raids were about testing the waters; it was the signalling of a preparedness and willingness to use those tactics domestically. With the coming search and surveillance legislation, we can expect an extension of the less-visible tactics that were used during Operation 8. They are arguably the more insidious, the more overlooked and the more invasive of those tactics and techniques. They have now become part of normal policing in New Zealand.

WHAKATĀNE

Maria Steens

At 5.45am, a voice on a megaphone ordered, 'Will the residents of 2/2 Werahika Street come out with their hands up!' I wasn't fully awake; I was still operating in sleep state. I wasn't thinking or feeling at the time. We came out of our flat: Tame, my 17-year-old daughter Amie and me.

We walked out onto the front porch. I was surprised because I had this strong feeling that I had seen this before. I had been to an interactive drawing therapy course the previous week. The last segment of the course was drawing something about a personal fear. On my piece of paper I had drawn my two daughters and myself with heaps of police around us and the noise of police dogs barking. So that was my immediate conscious thought; my feeling was one of surprise, *Oh my god, I just drew this!*

Then I stepped into reality. There were heaps of cops surrounding us with guns pointed at us. Two strong powerful lights focused on us. They marched us to the carport away from the flat. I remember absolute chaos and the dogs going crazy. I didn't know where Tame was; Amie was close to me. It seemed a really dark space.

They separated us, me and Amie. That made me tremendously sad. They wanted to separate my child from me. Amie was saying, 'Mum, mum, just let me go.'

I was wearing a summer nightie, and she had her summer jammies on. It was six in the morning. They marched us 50 metres down the road to another street. It was cold. Day was just breaking. There was a van waiting for us at the end of the street.

They made me get into the van. They made Amie put her hands up on the van and proceeded to 'pat her down.' Her body was in full view of a community that was waking up. I watched my child being humiliated and violated. Later, Amie told me that she felt doubly ashamed because she knew one of the kids down the road who went to the same school that she did. They put her in the van and did the same to me. What made it really whakamā was they—I am in a nightie, you know, no knickers, no bra—they said, 'Lift your breasts up.' I said, 'What? What do you think is under there?'

I didn't know where Tame was at that point. I was worried. When we left our property, the scene was horrible. The last thing I saw was Tame lying spread-eagled on the concrete. He had a couple of guns pointed at his head, and a police dog madly barking in his face. Later, when Tame and I saw each other again, he told me that he had lifted his head up because he could see us being walked off into the distance. He was concerned for Amie and me. When he did this, the cops shoved his head back down into the concrete.

They took us to the police station; on our way, I noticed a lot of police cars and a couple of police barricades. They kept me separated from Amie.

I have diabetes; I am insulin dependent. When I got to the police station I noticed that I stunk; I must have been stressed out. I made the police go home and get my drugs. My sugar levels were sky-high; I hadn't eaten anything.

They interviewed us. Amie was quite on to it with the cops: she queried whether it was legal for her to be questioned alone. Apparently she is of the legal consenting age for an adult: 17. She did her interview by herself.

The questions they asked were inane and unrelated to anything real. They were generic questions like, 'Tell me who some of the people are who come to your home?' I thought, *Ok, I'll give them a generic answer* and just named a few people randomly. 'Do you keep money in the house?' 'Yes, we keep money in the house.' It was a waste of time; they were dumb interviewers. They could have been a lot more specific around what they wanted to know. They obviously knew nothing, not even what to ask. I am sure that in the time before they interviewed us, the officer was still writing her questions.

The women cops who were with us were brought to Whakatāne specifically for the raids. They didn't even know where the toilets were; when they did find out I was escorted there. We were really cold and the best they could do was to give Amie a paru little blanket. I think we stayed there until about 9am, at which stage a lot of people were waking up to what was going on.

My father and my other daughter Tia picked us up from the police station. We went back to my father's place because we weren't allowed home. We stayed until about 11.30am and went home to an upside-down house. They had taken both our vehicles; they came back a month later. Other items that were taken and not used as evidence were returned in January 2010. We found out later that the cops had shot out all the tyres; they must have thought we were going to try to escape or something!

The neighbours told us that they had seen red smoke pouring out from the kitchen window while the search was underway. When I went into the hot water cupboard, I found a scorch mark on the floor and a hole in the door of the hot water cupboard. They must have tried to flush a terrorist out of the hot water cylinder!

Needless to say, I knew that they had been through the house with a fine-tooth comb. I knew that by different things I was to discover later on. About 1pm that afternoon, the police came with a search warrant. The warrant referenced the Terrorism Suppression Act. I thought it a bit strange that they didn't present that first but came back with it after they had done the deal and detained us for hours.

I feel very strongly that legal rights and human rights were not respected during the raid. There was absolutely nothing I could do. I was certainly not thinking during the raid, *Hey, hang on you fellas: I will ring a lawyer because that is my right.* I wasn't thinking that—you don't—you just have to deal with what is right in front of you.

I saw Tame twice while he was in prison awaiting the decision on whether the solicitor general would allow the terrorism charges to proceed. The first time was at the first court hearing in Rotorua. The second time was when we visited him at Mount Eden. I never believed that they would bring the terrorism charges. I knew that it wasn't true. I didn't think for one moment that Tame and the other people arrested would be going to prison forever. That's for sure.

What was awesome in that month when Tame was away was the absolute love and support from people in the community; it was full-on. It came from whānau and friends—all absolutely good—kōha with kai and lots and lots of love.

The absolute anger and sadness that all these people felt was difficult. I didn't really have a lot of time to process what had happened; I was busy dealing with other people and the frame of mind that they had come in with to offer their support. I had to deal with all that raw emotion and anger. There was also the media to deal with: it seemed a bit of a circus at times!

What made it harder was that I didn't want to leave the house. I just wanted to stay put; I certainly did not want to be out in public. I felt cut off from work and from whānau out in Rūātoki. I could feel the mamae. I did not want to be with lots of people. The first hui that Amie and I went

to was at Otenuku Marae. The wharenui was packed. I remember wanting to be in a little ball; at the same time, I felt safe and secure with the people there who were expressing the mamae and anger. The safety and security of that time was a beautiful feeling.

Tūhoe was quite busy around our issues of Te Mana Motuhake and other claims at the time of the raids. I see the raids as a deliberate strategy to undermine that process. I definitely felt that immediately after the raids. We were cut off; literally a lot of communication was cut off because they took our cellphones and the landline phones were bugged. I remember thinking that it feels like I have been cut off at the knees. I don't know how long I stayed off work. Amie was off school for a while.

My workplace, Tūhoe Hauora in Rūātoki, was raided as well. Our ability to deal with the consequences for the community would not have been that effective because we were still trying to sort things out for ourselves. I don't know whether the community had expectations of the Hauora after the raids; that is part of our mahi: dealing with people who are in trauma or are unwell. We couldn't offer that to a degree. We had issues of our own to deal with; I had to sort my own shit out.

Not long after the event, Amie went to her papa's house and went hard out on the computer. She wrote this piece that she called, 'Who are the real terrorists?' I think it was cathartic for her. Later she was interviewed by Peter Williams for the civil case against the police. I think that was helpful for her healing, that and the absolute love and support that she was shown in that period. She doesn't really like to talk about it now though. Her favourite word for the police is 'perverts!' Amie and her older sister Tia are lucky to have a sharp political analysis; there was no need to explain the raids. They are quite aware; they have lived with Tame for some time now.

The raids didn't surprise me; nothing much surprises me. One of the things I noticed that day was an increase in the level of state violence. On a scale of zero to ten, when you compare it to the rest of the world, it was quite mild. In terms of New Zealand it had definitely stepped up a

mean-as level. MEAN-AS. That defines the way we were treated. We know that compared to other parts of the world we are very lucky to still be talking to each other.

Throughout that day, I had one little fear: it could have gone terribly wrong. Somebody could have done some small thing, and there would have been a gunshot, someone dead. I was thinking about that throughout that day. Amie had come out of the house first. She nudged Tame because he was fumbling while putting on his pants and trying to wake up. The cops were saying, 'Put your hands up.' Amie told me later that she gave Tame a really good nudge and told him to put his hands up. She feared that if he didn't listen, they were going to shoot him.

I did not wish to become a victim. I do not believe that I and the many other whānau, friends and supporters who were humiliated, raided, detained, frightened and arrested are criminals. The reality of it was that life carried on. Life carries on.

Kids need to be taken care of; the animals have to be fed; the house cleaned; the shopping done and work and school attended to. I think, *Fuck them, get up and continue the day. No way will I bow to their way of thinking, of what they want me to be.*

I am not a victim. Life carries on when you are living with Tame Iti. There is always another day, another walk in the park, and I know to expect certain things. We are not paranoid; we don't want it to happen again; we won't be surprised if it does. We continue to stay strong and demand our rights, for Te Mana Motuhake ō Tūhoe and for all other peoples who believe in self-determination with dignity and integrity!

Whakatāne

Tracy Johnson

I woke to the sound of the loudhailer, 'Would the residents of 2/2 Werahika Place come out with your hands in the air.' I thought to myself, *2/2 – that's not me; it's the next flat, that's my mate!* They were saying to come out the front door, and I was thinking to myself, *there is only one door in our flats.* I got really concerned that they were going to shoot them for coming out of the wrong door!

I lay in bed. I had my baby with me who had just woken up. I could hear a dog barking, and then the loudhailer stopped. I got out of bed. I thought, *I gotta have a look,* so I peeked out of the kitchen window. There were three men dressed in black with their guns kind of at ease. Then I surveyed the whole of our flat compound. I counted 18 men in black and about 12 plainclothes police.

Those men in black were very intimidating. You couldn't see their eyes; you couldn't see any part of them. They were just faceless gunmen.

From my bedroom window I saw police tape all around our house. My friend Maria was being raided next door. Her father lived right across the road. I thought that I had better ring him; he was going to wake up

and see the police tape around the building. He would think something horrendous had happened at our flats.

I rang up Maria's sister; I said to her that the police had come and that they had taken Maria, Tame and Amie away. Then the police knocked on my door and said, 'We just want to come in and have a look to make sure no one is hiding in the bedroom.' They did that. Then they asked me how long I had known Tame. I said, '15 years.'

I thought, *Should I get my camera out and take some snaps, some photos?* But then I thought, *Maybe I don't want to point anything at a man with a gun on the other side of the kitchen window.* I didn't take any photos; I did watch as they took stuff out of Maria's house. There were lots of them, and they were bagging up all her camouflage gear and heaps and heaps of stuff. They just kept bringing it out.

At that point, I was nervous and stressed out, but I was more stressed out for what was happening to my mates. After all, I wasn't pulled out of my house. It was more *What the hell is going on? Where are they taking them?* I rang my daughter in Dunedin and said, 'Steve, there is a whole lot of police around our flats.' She said, 'Mum! Why?' I said, 'I don't know; I think they have come to get koro Tame.'

I had already told Maria's whānau that they had taken her away. So I knew that they would be looking for her, and would go get her. Maria eventually rang me at 9.30 when she got to her dad's place, and I went over there. We could see what was happening down at our flats. It was all still busy with activity, the police taking stuff away. They got a tow truck and towed away Tame's truck, after they had shot out the tyres. They must have used a silencer to do it; one of the neighbours said that he had heard one muffled shot.

We went back to our flat and sat on the steps and thought, *This is the most surreal day I have ever had. What is going on? What is going to happen?*

About this time, we started hearing about other people. It had all just been happening in our backyard up to that point. We started hearing

about roadblocks in Rūātoki, and people down the line being detained and searched. It was an on-going thing, all this stuff happening. We were just stunned, absolutely stunned.

We didn't know where Tame was until Annette Sykes got hold of us.

Then the media descended. They were quite nosey about Maria, looking for that 'inside story,' especially considering her relationship with Tame.

Much later, Maria and I decided to pursue a complaint to the Human Rights Commission (HRC). One of our good friends, a Pākehā woman named Christine, took a complaint to the HRC against this incredibly racist blog about the raids. It was written by a local councillor in Whakatāne named Russell Orr. He is an ex-policeman from Kawerau.

Later, we heard through Christine that the HRC was in town listening to the complaint about Russel Orr's blog. We decided to go along, listen and put to them the kōrero of Maria and her daughter, Amie, about their experience of the police raid. There weren't that many people who participated in the interview process, perhaps five to ten who gave their story to the HRC.

We believe absolutely that there was an abuse of human rights. Taking Maria and Amie and detaining them without charges was in our opinion unlawful! The evidence that we gave to the HRC focused on the detainees rather than the people who were arrested. The detainees were held without charges; we believe that their human rights were seriously abused.

The HRC came just about a month after the raids to do those interviews. They returned with the draft report in March 2009 and presented it to some of the people who had been interviewed previously.

We all went along to hear what human rights abuses they had found. Basically, their report was so watered down that they didn't find any human rights abuses! They did, however, find that there could be further investigations. So we responded saying, 'Please go and do your job and investigate the human rights abuses on that day.'

In their draft report they had also stated that their role was to feed their findings to the Independent Police Conduct Authority (IPCA) investigation. However, we challenged them on that. We suggested to them that if they focused too much on trying to provide information for the IPCA, the human rights issues would not get addressed. We think they took that on board, or they said that they did. It is now more than a year later, and just within the last month we have been putting pressure on them saying, 'When is your report going to be released?'

What we wanted from the HRC was for them to indicate some political accountability; we knew for a fact that Helen Clark and John Key had both been briefed prior to the raids. The issue is at a governmental level, a political level. That fact gets lost in the various reports about the police actions on the day.

It doesn't seem that any part of the state will ever deliver justice for Tūhoe. History shows that. You start getting some hope that maybe there will be some sort of redress or movement, and then that gets shattered.

The state created a new avenue for their security apparatus to pursue: terrorism. With all the legal tools, financing and resources those repressive forces were allocated, they needed to do something to justify their existence. Tūhoe have had a long history of resistance, so the crown chose to focus its energy there. The police, the crown, they do these things because they can. They do so because they have the guns, and they have the time and the resources, and they have someone who will sign their bit of paper saying it is all good to go!

I think the 2007 raids blew a lot of people away in this country. I know a lot of people I talked to were just dumbfounded by them. On one hand, I think some people thought: *It is OK for it to happen to those 'others' over there, 'cause we aren't like them. It isn't going to happen to us.* But I also think people woke up a bit throughout the country. There was a level of concern that we now live in a society where the police can do what they did. I remember watching the media that first week; people like John Campbell were almost farcical about the police actions. They were really

quite pro-Tūhoe, rather than pro-police in the way that they reported; like they really couldn't actually believe it either.

I hope people were affected and realise what might happen in their communities. If the state gets away with this, it is going to continue. Imagine what it is going to be like in our children's time if the state is allowed to do this kind of thing to people who have a certain view of the world and how they would like their world to be!

The raids were a clampdown on dissidents. People who opposed capitalism, globalisation, environmental degradation etc. were targeted. It didn't matter, as long as you were a dissident. The crown does not want indigenous people in this country to network and liaise with 'others,' like the anarchists, to form relationships.

Maybe that is seen as the real threat?

Its funny: I think if we had done this interview just yesterday, I might have felt differently about many things. Yesterday, there was hope on the horizon for the return of Te Urewera to Tūhoe, hope that the Human Rights Commission would release its findings of human rights abuses during Operation 8, hope that the Independent Police Conduct Authority would determine that the police actions against Tūhoe and the others detained was immoral and unlawful, hope that the court would see sense and drop the charges against the defendants. Today, after the horrendous day that we have had, I am finding that my faith in the systems of redress that the state offers is pretty shaky. Thanks to John Key's announcement that Te Urewera will not be given back to Tūhoe, those hopes are well and truly shattered.

Considering all the past misdeeds of this colonial state, I am starting to believe that the only way for change is through the arts, films and books, where the real stories can be told. Through them, people can get a glimpse of what has really happened, and maybe on that level the narrative of our country will start to change.

Whakatāne

Tame Iti

2007
15th of October
2/2 Werahika Street
Resident
Come out with your
Hands up in the air

2/2 Werahika Street
Come out with your
Hands up in the air

15th of October 2007
State Invasion
The state raid
Ka mau te wehi
o ngā pōkokohua

I haere mai
i te rohe pōtae ō Tūhoe
Te ture whakatumatuma
Ngā mahi pōkokohua
a te kāwanatanga

Te ture whakatumatuma
I haere mai ki te takahi
Te mana ō Tūhoe

Ki te whakaparahako
I te mana ō Tūhoe

Te ture whakatumatuma
Te ture a te pākehā
Te ture a te kāwanatanga

Ko wai rātou?
Ko wai?
No hea rātou?

Te ture whakaparahako
i te mana ō Tūhoe

Te ture whakaparahako
i te mana motuhake ō Tūhoe

Pōkokohua
PŌKOKOHUA

Ngā ture whakaiti i te mana ō Tūhoe
Whakaiti te whārua
ō Rūātoki
Ngā uri
Ngā tamariki
Ngā koroua
Ngā kuia
Ngā tāne
Ngā wāhine

Tūhoe o ō Te Urewera
Pōkokohua
Pōkokohua

Koutou i haere mai nei
Koutou nei i haere mai nei
ki Tūhoe

Ko wai koutou?
No hea koutou?
Kua haere mai ano koutou
ki te takahi ō te mana ō Tūhoe

Pōkokohua
Pōkokohua
PŌKOKOHUA

Terrorhaumuti
Terrorist
State Terrorist
Pōkokohua

Rūātoki

Te Wēti

On the morning of the 15th of October 2007, I was at home. I decided to go up to Otenuku Marae to visit some relations at the urupa. I drove up past Rewarewa Marae, and I saw these guys in black uniforms. They had no helmets on, just black overalls. It looked to me as if they were breaking into a house across the street from the marae. I thought, *Is what I am seeing right? Am I seeing someone breaking into a house at six or half-past in the morning?* I slowed down as I drove past so I could have a look at what was going on. Two of the men in black ran out towards the back of the house before I realised it was the police. At that point, I put the van into reverse and backed down the road all the way home, and I came back inside.

About 20 minutes later I found out that there was a raid on in Rūātoki. I jumped back into the van again with my partner and my mokopuna who was 5 years old at the time. We drove out onto the road. We were going to head into Taneatua to get some things for the house. When we got halfway down the road to where the confiscation line is, we noticed there were cars pulled up in front of us—a long line of cars. We slowed down

and stopped. I was sitting in the back with my granddaughter. I asked my partner 'What's going on?'

'It looks like some uniformed people wearing helmets walking along the line of cars—stopping along the line of cars,' she said

I had mixed feelings at the time: *Should we back off?* I thought about what I had seen at the house up the road that morning. It took us a while to make up our minds about what to do—to back away or to stay there. By the time we looked back, there were other cars behind us so we couldn't back away.

Eventually the police got to us. They were armed. Four of them came over to the van: two on each side of the vehicle with their guns. They ordered my partner out of the car. They took her to the front of the van to photograph her. They looked like soldiers.

When they had 'processed' her, they started looking in my direction. Two of them came around to the side where the door slides. They came and opened the door. They said to me, 'I order you to come out of the van.' I refused to come out of the van. I said, 'What for?' They said, 'Oh, you have to come out of the van.' I said, 'No, I don't have to.' I said, 'Who are you?'

And they said whatever it was that they were called. I said, 'How do I know it is you?' They said, 'Are you trying to be funny?' I said, 'No, I don't talk to strangers. What have we done? Why are you stopping us?' They said that if I don't come out that they were going to come in and drag me out. So I put my granddaughter down, and I thought that I would just wait until the first one comes in. Then I would grab him.

The two of them came in through the door. My granddaughter started to cry when they both came through the door. I told her it was all right, and I put her behind me. I got ready to hit the one coming through the door, but the two of them grabbed me at the same time. They both dragged me out of the van and threw me on the ground. One of them stood on my back, put my hands behind my back, and then they handcuffed me. Then they said, 'What's your name.'

I told them to, 'Go and get fucked.' Then they said, 'I'm going to ask you one more time. What's your name?' I said to them again, 'Go and get fucked.' Then they dragged me across the road and dumped me on the other side of the road with the other people.

In the meantime my granddaughter was left in the van screaming. Luckily one of the relations, who was in a car behind us, jumped out and grabbed her.

Then they questioned me again on the other side of the road: Where did I come from? Who was I? I just said to them, 'Go and get fucked.' In the end they said they were going to arrest me for obstruction. They took me into the police station in Whakatāne. They locked me up in the cells. I don't know how long I was in there. They brought in a girl who was in there with me; we were both in the same cell.

I went to court many times; the whole thing took two years. The prosecutor tried to talk to me about taking a plea. They promised me that if I pleaded guilty to disorderly behaviour, all other charges would be dropped. I said to him, 'You know what you can do?' And he got the hint of what I was going to say. I wasn't disorderly. I argued with the judge during my case in court.

The judge said to me, 'If they come and ask for your name, you give your name.'

I said to the judge, 'But I didn't know who they were. They were strangers.'

He said to me, 'But that was the police doing their duty.'

I said, 'I didn't know that they were police. Anyone can come and pose as police. Why would I trust anyone who comes along? How do I know they aren't nuts?'

The judge said, 'Now don't go that far.'

I said, 'Yes, I have to. I am the one who is on trial, not you.'

The judge said, 'We'll adjourn the case.' That is when the prosecutor came to try to make a deal. That's when I said, 'You know what you can do on that one.'

For me, it was a political issue.

I pointed out to the judge that I was arrested on the confiscation line. He said, 'What line is that?' I said, 'The Confiscation line!' That is where they arrested us. It is the line that marks the land between Rūātoki and the ocean that was confiscated by the crown. All of the land north of that line, they stole from us. They got government surveyors in the 1860s and they surveyed the Bay of Plenty and then took the land.

For me, I think, *What gives the police the right to come here and set up a roadblock on that line?* The judge said to me at the time that the police had a right to come there.

I said, 'No they didn't. What had we done? Why did they come to arrest us over there? Why did they do all that?'

The community found out later how the police tried to justify why they stopped people going in and out of our community. They arrested us coming in and out of our own community. That's why I call it a political issue. I said to the judge, 'Are you saying the police had every right to do that?'

He said, 'No, not really.'

That is why he kept saying to me, 'We're not going to go that way.'

That's why I kept saying, 'Why not? I am on trial not you!'

One of the lawyers said to me, 'Just be careful they might have you up for sedition.' I said, 'I don't really care if they have me up for sedition. What's wrong with voicing what you really feel? If that's sedition, so be it. I can't help that.'

They let me go that afternoon of the 15th of October, pending another court appearance. I argued with the judge because I knew I was right. If I knew I wasn't right, I wouldn't argue with anybody. It is pointless if you know you're wrong, and they know you're wrong. Why bother? I knew I was right, and I was going to stand up. The judge has ears for listening like everyone else.

After I got out of the cells, I came back to Rūātoki. When I came back the whole community was sort of abuzz dealing with the situation. It was

only later when we watched the TV news that night that we realised the raids had happened across the whole country. I went back to my thoughts that morning when I drove up the road and saw the men in black at that house, *Where did it start? Was it there or was it before that?*

Early in the evening, I found out about Tame being arrested and the other raids around town. It wasn't a shock for me. It was bound to happen. It is always going to happen. No matter what we do, the government is guaranteed to look over this way, and then the police will come.

They have been after Tame for years. Anything they can do to make something stick to him, they will. Everybody here knows that; Tame knows that. At the end of the day, they will target him. He has been a thorn in their necks. In their minds, he needs to be gotten rid of.

We have been working and struggling for Te Mana Motuhake ō Tūhoe for a long time. Tame and I have the same beliefs. For me you can only work with someone with the same beliefs. Some of the things that Tame did, I liked, and I understood. Some of the things Tame did, I didn't like. But overall, what was really keeping me going with Tame was he was focused on the issue just like I was, regardless of what was happening on the side. We got things going and got into trouble a few times, too!

I have come to the struggle because of my own personal beliefs and experience. When I was at school we were hammered to learn English. I started to hate the Pākehā system even at a young age, but I couldn't express it. That feeling hasn't levelled out yet; part of me says, 'It won't be enough until we get what we are owed back. It was stolen, and that is it.'

The more that our people are arrested for whatever crime, the angrier I get because as I said to the Waitangi Tribunal, 'What you took was more than we ever took off of you. You still lock us up when you see us pinching out of a shop when right here underneath our feet is something that you took.'

What keeps me going is the fact that injustice is still here. I am not worried about the money that they give to these people here. For me Tūhoe can get corrupt just like anybody else. It is the land. It is like what

one of my aunties said, 'It don't matter if you burn your house, it's your home to do with what you will. But if someone else comes and does it, it is an injustice.' The crown are the ones committing the injustice, and the more it is like that, the more I will keep going until I fall over. That is how I feel.

I think the raids in Rūātoki and the larger 'war on terrorism,' as they call it, are one and the same thing. After Bush passed the terrorism law in America he gave it to other countries like Australia, Canada, England and this country. All they are doing is exercising that law. I think it is like a toy—we'll see if it works. Let's put it this way, they aren't stupid. It didn't work this time, but they'll know now how to take out all the kinks for the next time. I believe that they think like Mr Bush: any upheaval, stamp it out, even if you have to use force. It just happened that we were the first ones to get it, but they won't hesitate to use it again.

The raids upset many people in the community because it is the first time they have been stopped by police. It is not the first time in Tūhoe history it has happened in this place, but it is the first time this generation had a personal experience of being stopped like that. I'll explain it this way: when the government sends the police in, it is just a raid. It is just an operation for them. For us, it is *Here we go again*—our whenua is being invaded again by the same state, only nearly a century later. They always come to this place; they have always invaded.

People are more aware now of what can happen. For me, I like that because it woke the people up to the fact that *Hey, don't ever think that a hundred years has gone past, and it will never happen again*. It is always there. Our younger people witnessed it; they went through it, especially the little ones. The adults talked to the high-school-aged children about how they felt when the police came this way and invaded this place. As far

as the old people are concerned, they keep tight-lipped, they are always like that, just like our old, old people were.

I hope that we will never forget this raid. We need to teach our young people, our children and our grandchildren about this raid, about what can happen. A raid like that could happen in their time, for what reasons only they will find out in their time.


TUHOE
TE MANA MOTUHAKE Ō TŪHOE
LIBERATORS NOT TERRORISTS

Noti Teepa

Matangirau mai te Ōkiwa
Wahanū ana te whenua
Taumarumaru ana nā mahara
Ohorere taku rongo
Tākirikiri ana waku whakaaro
Kai hea kē taku whānau?
Kai hea kē aku mokopuna?
Kua ngau te aroha
Papaki kau ana ē

I was milking in the cowshed at about 4 o'clock on the morning of October 15th, 2007. I heard nothing, not even any vehicles on the road. When I finished about 7.30am, I went back home and put the TV on. I started getting breakfast ready. On the TV, I saw that something was happening in Rūātoki. I thought, *Hey? Rūātoki raid?* But when I went outside there were no cars, no movement, no nothing. It was like even the birds weren't out. I couldn't hear any insects or birds.

I was thinking, *Where's this raid?* I thought it was a gang-related raid, so I just carried on having breakfast. I was looking at the TV because the World Cup Rugby was on at the time. Then I heard a helicopter. When the chopper went overhead, I thought this is something more than what I thought it was. I came outside, and I saw it going towards the Mission House.

I was there for about another hour before my sister Huka turned up. She said, 'Rameka and Maraki have been taken away by the police.' I said, 'Hey? What's happening?'

'Ah, they've done a raid.'

We got in her truck to go find out what was going on. Then the chopper started following us. It seemed like Huka's truck was the only vehicle on the road. We went down to look for the grandkids. We got to the house and there was nobody at home, not even any neighbours. So we went up to the Mission House. By then, the police had come. They took us all out of the Mission House, and we all had to stand outside. They said, 'You fellas got to stay over here. You can't go inside.'

I said to them, 'Ah! My mokos! You have taken my husband and my son. I need to go and find where my mokopunas are!' But they wouldn't let me go. At the time, I didn't know that there was another family with six kids staying at the house as well. I didn't find all that out until much later.

About lunchtime, a van turned up. All these policemen in plainclothes arrived with their gear and went inside the Mission House. The workers were frustrated because it was a Hauora, and they had lots of people's confidential health information. They didn't want anyone to see the files on their clients. But the police wouldn't let them in. We just had to stay right there.

We started to get hungry, and asked, 'Can we have some kai?' 'No,' they told us. The worst part about that was that this van arrived full up with meals, and we thought it was for us. But it wasn't for us. It was for those policemen in the black clothes.

That day was spent standing around at the Mission House. I was there until half-past four in the afternoon. We had arrived there about nine o'clock in the morning.

They did question some of the workers, but they didn't question me. I think they already knew who worked up at the mission. They didn't bother talking to me.

While we were up there, we looked down at the valley, and we could see police around Huka's house. Huka was getting pissed off. She wanted to go down there. 'I want to go to my house,' she said to the cops. They just said, 'No, you are not allowed to move.'

We didn't get to see any of the whānau, the mokopunas, until that night. It was really late. It was about 8 o'clock when we finally saw them.

Maraki and Rameka had been arrested at home with all the kids there. I don't live at the house where the police raided, the whānau house; I live at the marae closer to where I was raised, so I didn't see the raid. It was my son, Maraki, his wife, Louise, my husband, Rameka, and the mokos who stayed at the house. After the raid, the mokopunas were really scared. They kept crying and were always upset. If their mother moved away, they would cry for her. They never used to do that. If Rameka moved away, they would play up. It was really ugly. The kids were really fretting for their parents.

Maraki and Rameka were taken to Rotorua, but Rameka ended up at the Te Ngae police station. Our brother was on the other side of the road-block in Taneatua, so he went looking for them. He had found out that another cousin, Moko, had been arrested too. So he went to look for all of them. The people who were arrested were scattered all over the place. The police released Maraki, then they picked him up again as he was coming back from town. Rameka came back that night. We weren't there when they were processed, and we didn't even know where they were. My sister Hadie and I had gone to Rotorua to look for them, but while we were on the way, Rameka had arrived back home.

My sister Ngawai and I were the ones doing the running around while Rameka and the rest of the whānau looked after the kids. Maraki's partner, Louise, needed looking after, too, because she was in shock. She wasn't at home on the morning of the raid; she was at the hospital with the baby, Manu. She didn't know what had happened.

It was a really hard experience. I got angry but I couldn't show my anger because we needed to get things moving, and because of the kids. We would go to Rotorua and organise whatever we had to do with the Ture. We didn't understand it. I said, 'Never mind understanding what they are doing, we just need to know where the whānau sit with things.' It has been just a hōha, and even now it's a hōha because it has affected the whānau, too.

Later, the kids started describing what had happened to them. They would point to parts of the house, and show where the police smashed things in the house. The kids started describing those things, days and weeks later. One of the mokos wouldn't talk about it at all. He used to just look around, and we could tell he was thinking about the raid because he would stare at corners of the house. Even today, I see those mokopunas being really anti-police. They will say, 'The Ture,' and then put their head down in the car. Even when we are just going into town past a police car, they say, 'Hide from the Ture. Hide!'

For the relations, like Rameka's sister, it was really hard too. They all live around the whānau house. I know that they feel guilty because they couldn't go and rescue the mokos. They could hear the kids; they said, 'Argh, we could hear the kids screaming. They were scared.' But they couldn't do anything. They were scared to even move. The police were there with their guns, and no one knew what to do. It is almost like they feel ashamed that they couldn't do anything.

On the day of the raids, one of our nephews eventually brought his truck across the river. The cops couldn't stop him because he just cut across the river in his 4x4. He drove it straight up to the house and said, 'I am going in to get the kids.' And that is what he did. He got the kids out.

My son Maraki was always a loving kid. But I noticed ever since that day, he sort of pulls himself away from being cuddled. There is a lot of anger, too. It just goes on and on. When he is confronted by the lawyer, he doesn't say that he doesn't understand what is going on. That is why we have always tried to be there with him. It is easier if we are there. He says, 'Hey, I don't understand what the bloody hell that was all about! I don't know what I signed.' I said to him, 'You are not expected to. That is why you have a whānau, so they can talk to all of us and we know what is going down.' He gets angry at all of the legal stuff, and it frustrates him.

Before the raids, I was working doing the milking and being at the farm was good because it is a whānau farm. After the raids, though, I actually felt that I was abusing the kōrero. The whānau on the farm were saying, 'We can help out financially,' but I felt that wouldn't be right because we would be taking the money from the rest of our whānau. We had no idea how long this was going to go on. I said, 'No, no. I can get another job' to finance this, because neither Rameka nor Maraki could get a benefit. Work and Income (WINZ) cut off their benefit, and Rameka was really behind on his mortgage.

So I went back to the farm and told my uncles that we could accept the meat, but not the money from the farm. I didn't feel it was right. I said, 'Naw, I can find jobs.' So that's what I did. I went to all sorts of jobs. I went to Te Puke, Auckland and Wellington. It wasn't just for my son; there were the nephews and the cousins, and their kids who were all involved, all affected by the raids. It was for all of them. Hadie and I said, 'Ah look, we'll go and fundraise.' We both went out to work because our kids couldn't go out to work because of their kids. They were quite happy to look after the kids anyway.

The best part of going away was going to Wellington. I loved it. It was good for me to be away from it, from the valley, and making money. It was a good place to save. After a while, things started to come back into order. They started to get a benefit again; they started to get jobs. Still they

would sometimes say to me, 'Can you pay my power?' 'Hang on! Send the power bill,' I would tell them.

Some of the kids didn't go to school for about two months. When they were at school they were getting teased. Zachary was getting physically bashed. 'Your papa is a jailbird, a terrorist,' they would say to him. Of course, most of those children don't even know what a terrorist is! But that is how they splash it out on the news. The kids were using those words, and he was getting bullied, really bullied. For Manu, the abuse was verbal. But he gets really hurt, and I think that is why he is clingy to his father. His dad couldn't save him. It is a kid's thing. That's why it was best that they didn't go to school. We talked to the teachers about him, and they had an assembly, but it still carried on. Later on, it wasn't just the children, even the adults were doing it. Sometimes when we would go to a marae people would say things. They don't realise that kids have feelings. They said, 'Anei nga tamariki a nga terrorists!' and all this sort of kōroro. And it hurts the kids. I know for Zack it hurt.

We had to deal with all of that. Even some of the adults didn't understand—and some of them still don't understand. The kids are the ones who said, 'Nah! I am not going to school anymore.' I don't know about the other kids, but for our mokos, they didn't want to go. We didn't force them to go either. They weren't happy there. Oh my goodness, it was a lot of work.

The hīkoi was another thing that happened just after the raid. It was on top of all of the other rushing around! Te Wēti and a cousin, Tikirau, said, 'Sis, we are going to have a hui. Come up to Papakainga.' So we went up there, and it was only the three of us! 'Where's everybody?' I said. They said, 'This is enough.' 'What's going to happen?' I said. 'We are going to hīkoi to Poneke!' they told me. 'Eh?' 'Yep, we are going hīkoi,' they said. 'Righto then. What's the kāupapa?' I asked. Tikirau is a very spiritual person; he explained that, 'They come here and they dump their shit on us so we have to pick up that shit and take it back down to Wellington and dispose of it. We don't want that shit left over here.' So that was really

the purpose behind that hīkoi. That was actually the start of it. I read in *Encircled Lands* that it was another whanaunga of ours, Taiarahia Black, that led the hīkoi and I thought, 'I have to get that right! It wasn't even him. It was Tikirau and Te Wēti.'

As soon as our cousin, Harata, from Auckland and then the ones from the South Island arrived, we left the next day. That's how fast it went — 'Righto we're going!' And that was it; about 20 of us left Taneatua and started that hīkoi down to Poneke. It was really a spiritual cleansing. We felt that they couldn't just go and dump things like that and just leave it. Who was going to pick it up?

During the hīkoi, there was the karakia to do, and the challenge to take those things back down to the source. When we got down to parliament, Tikirau saw the High Court and said to me, 'There it is. Sis, let' s go in there. We'll do our tuku over there.' We went in, and there was nobody around. We went into an empty room, and we did what we had to do spiritually to dispose of all of that kino that was dumped on us. We came out, and a large crowd of people had come out. That was good for us. There was a lot of anger. We were angry and scared. The hīkoi was a good healing thing, even though there was some there who were motivated to get really angry. That wasn't the focus for everyone. It was also to make people aware of what had happened and to make the police aware that they had done wrong.

Ever since then, I have been going to all of the court hearings. Sometimes I fall asleep. People say, 'Why do you want to be there?' I tell them that I don't want them to forget that we are still around. I just go and sit there. Some things I understand; some things, I gotta say, I don't understand. That is what the lawyers are there for. I go there because I want to be there. I want to make sure I see everything. It is my own way of protesting—to show my face. It is just to keep reminding them of what they did.


TE RANGI MO

RŪĀTOKI

Priscilla Woods

It was a horrible day. It started here, of course, at that whare just next door. It was the first thing I saw in the morning. It was quite early. It must have been because I always get up early. You know when you are older you don't need as much sleep. I was really concerned that I saw a couple of police cars and that several police had surrounded the neighbour's house. Then on my way to work, I stopped over at Tame's sister's whare. I said to Sharon, 'they might be after your brother,' and we were having a laugh about it; little did we realise then how serious the situation was.

When I got to work, we listened to all of the kōrero from the people coming in and out about how they were stopped at the roadblock by police. We could see a lot of what was happening from work because the Hauora sits on a little hill just behind the kura. It is based in the old Mission House. We could see the police going over to Huka's house. About ten o'clock that morning, a helicopter came and just hovered above the Mission House. We hadn't realised that they were following Huka. She is one of our kaimahi at the Hauora. The helicopter would go away and return to hover just above the Mission House. Huka had been at work

and was about to leave in her truck with Noti when several police arrived in their vehicles and swooped on the Mission House.

Huka was in her truck trying to go down the hill. She didn't get even a couple of inches before they blocked her with two or three cars. We didn't realise that some armed police came up from the other side of the hill at the same time. They had surrounded the whole building—armed police. It was frightening. There were six or seven of us kaimahi; that's right seven people in total with Noti. The rest of the kaimahi couldn't get through the roadblock on their way to work.

We were all told to get out of the building. We had to leave whatever we were doing and were shuffled over to the fence-line where the carpark is now and told to stay there. Some armed police remained surrounding the building while others were inside searching the premises.

The detective in charge had asked who was in charge of our workplace. The guys all pointed at me. Our manager was unable to get through the roadblock to get to work. The detective in charge took me aside and asked if I was positive that there were no guns hidden in the building. Prior to the search, he told me that they were searching the premises under a section (I have forgotten which section he stated) of the Crimes Act.

When we were outside I felt really ashamed that the kids from the kura were witnessing what was happening at the Mission House. It was like something out of a movie. I had to go back inside with the detective in charge to show him where Tame's desk was situated. He sat down, and then asked me to sit down also. He asked me again if I was sure that there were no firearms hidden in the building. I said, 'No, I don't think so! Not that I am aware of!' The police continued to search the rooms.

The manager's office was locked, and she was the only one with the keys. The police indicated to me that they were going to have to break into the office. I told them not to make a mess. I also said, 'You have to look at another alternative.' The police ended up coming in through the window from outside into the manager's office.

All of the rooms in the building were searched. The police took away Tame and Huka's computer hard-drives. I had a laptop, and was adamant that the police weren't going to take it away. I am the secretary for our hapū, and I had only taken the laptop to work to catch up on the minutes for our hapū hui in my spare time. In the end the cop, I think he was a sergeant, said he would have to wait for advice from his commanding officer. He didn't take the computer.

Huka was interviewed outside the building by police, and later they took her away. We were outside for a good four hours before we were allowed back into the building. The armed police that were outside searched all our vehicles one by one. That was quite hard for us. During the time that the police were there, we were not allowed to answer the phone or to make any calls. Here we were, a Hauora, a health provider for the community, and we were being raided by police.

We hadn't had anything to eat or drink. A van arrived with lunches for the police personnel. I said to one of them, 'Where's our lunch?' and he said, 'You can have mine.' I then said, 'That's not going to be enough for all of us!' The lunch he offered was a small package with a drink. The police didn't care that we were thirsty, hungry and needed to go the wharepaku. We couldn't do anything.

After that, most of the armed police left, but a few remained. I guess they were watching the building in case someone came to sneak in the weapons! The detectives that were doing the search inside were there for ages. We weren't allowed back into the building until late.

By the time they took Huka away, the others went home because they were hōhā. Our administration girl had gone to Taneatua at 8am to get some milk for the kaimahi; she wasn't allowed back until about 2.30pm. She had been down at the roadblock for hours trying to get back to work. Most everyone stayed around for a while; Noti was stranded at the Mission House. She couldn't get through to anyone to come and pick her up. Her husband and son had both been arrested. She had come up to the Mission House with Huka, and the cops had taken Huka away.

I was the last one there. I waited until they left to lock up the building and then went home.

Then the next day everything happened. The media started coming up to the Mission House and were quickly told to leave. The iwi were having hui. We, the kaimahi for the Hauora, were charged with working with whānau that were directly affected by the raids, including whānau of the ones who were arrested. So we didn't get a chance to talk to anybody about how we felt. I felt we needed to debrief but we didn't get that chance. We never really got to discuss among ourselves what had happened to us here at the Hauora. We had a brief chance to talk and to tell the story of what had happened when Justice Goddard came to do the Independent Police Conduct review. That was the first time we had spoken to anyone about the raids. We had a directive from our board of trustees not to speak to anyone about what took place here.

We carried on and did our work as best we could with the whānau who were still feeling the hurt and the bewilderment of the raids. For me, I was almost in a trance while doing the work that needed to be done.

As I had been in charge on the day of the raids, I had to complete an incident report about what had happened to us on that day. Then because Tame got arrested, I was asked by his lawyer to write an affidavit in support of him, which I did. On top of that we were all working with the whānau that were affected by the raids.

I wouldn't wish that experience on anyone.

For the next week or so after the raids we were harassed by media. There were news people in helicopters. I think I had an anxiety attack every time I heard a helicopter. It was the news people trying to get stories; they photographed the Hauora and photographed the Whakatāne river.

You know what the media did? They landed down at the river and they were trying to get kōrero from the little children. That river is their playground. They were giving the children lollies—news people, the media—that is what they were doing. One of the children was my mokopuna. All he wanted was the lollies. He just grabbed them and came home.

The impact of the raids was really serious, especially for the Hauora kaimahi. We are supposed to be there to deliver a service to the community and to our whānau. They saw us getting raided and thought, *What have they been up to? What's going on?*

Later, the police sent the iwi liaison officer, the head one from Wellington, along with the local ones, into Rūātoki. I was angry when they turned up at the Hauora. 'Where the bloody hell were you when we needed you?' I said to the local officer. Of course, they did not know anything about the raids before they happened.

The ones that did know were cunning ; they didn't tell us that the local police had no inkling of what was going on. Then when it suited them, they brought them along to take the brunt of the abuse from the people.

Now, I think a lot of the community are waiting in anticipation. There is a court action against the police. The community is interested in what will happen there. I hear from the iwi liaison officer that Howard Broad is resigning. He heard that through the grapevine. It probably will be before anything formal is done about what happened, about his actions during the raids, and the decisions that were made by him prior to the raids.

I was a transcriber for some of the Tūhoe raupatu claims before the Waitangi Tribunal and some of the kōrero blew me away. I transcribed the kōrero about my great grandmother, Te Oti Hororiri. Te Oti was one of several women who were arrested because they pulled out the survey pegs. You know how the crown had sent the surveyors to survey the whenua before they stole it? She got arrested for that. They were all interned down at Te Anga o Muriwai in Whakatāne until the ship that took them up to Mount Eden arrived.

Knowing those sorts of kōrero, about what happened at Maungapōhatu and Ruatāhuna, the raids brought it all back for me. I had a lot of hatred for the police at the time it happened. I couldn't stand to talk to any of them. After the raids, they sent other officers in to get kōrero from the community. They came up to the Hauora, and I and others refused to talk to any of them. Our manager was good; she said the

option was ours whether we wanted to talk to them or not. They came to my home and I said, 'No, I am not talking to anybody, especially the police.' I thought, *Damn cheek after what they have just done. They have the cheek to come and talk to the community—the very people they victimised*. Had they informed the local police, like the one in Taneatua, had the iwi liaison person come and talked to the community beforehand, things would have been better.

These raids didn't need to happen; they could have talked to the people in Rūātoki and gauged their whakaaro. But that didn't happen.


MAORI
ALL STAR

LAKE WAIKAREMOANA

Nikapuru Takuta

For us, the raids happened on the 16th of October. We found out the night before. I was in Wairoa doing some volunteer stuff at a place called Manaaki House; they do drug and alcohol counselling. I was helping with their men's programme. We heard on the radio that there was something going on in Tūhoe. We watched it on the news. I was sort of thinking *What the fuck is going on?* Then I got a bit more information about Tame, and straight away I thought, *That's us, we'll probably be involved.* I would have been angry if I wasn't!

I drove home back to Lake Waikaremoana. By the time I got home from Wairoa it was about ten o'clock at night, and the news was all over the world. It was the biggest thing to hit Tūhoe since Rua the prophet. We talked about it for a couple of hours. We talked to the whānau about it. I was saying, 'They hit Tame and all that lot in Rūātoki today. I wonder if they will hit us tomorrow?'

Eventually, we all crashed out in the sitting room. We all sort of knew what was coming. Sure enough, at about 6.30 in the morning there was this tap on the window. We opened our eyes and there they were: two of

the biggest-headed baldies you could ever find poking their head in, smiling and pointing things at us.

My partner and I looked at each other and said, 'Well, we knew they were coming.'

Then the cops said, 'Can we speak to you please?'

I said, 'What if I don't want to speak to you?'

'Well, you haven't got a choice.'

I said, 'Aw yeah OK, that's cool.'

They came in. There were so many of them—about half a dozen cops in blue overalls, about half a dozen 'suits,' and some guys in black. The main man was a big guy, bigger than me, a big Pākehā fella. He was the one who did the talking.

'Can you come with us please? I have to question you.'

At the same time, the guys in the overalls went around my house and started searching the whole place. The big guy said, 'Can you accompany us to the police station?' 'Ah yep, sweet as,' I said. We left the others there.

I followed them out the door to the car. I lived up at the top of a place called Valley Mountain Road. The police station is halfway up the road. I am right up at the top looking down on the cops. We arrived there at about seven o'clock in the morning, and we were there for the rest of the day.

They were questioning me about some text messages. Apparently from these texts, I was supposed to have picked up a green truck and driven it to the army camp—oh, I mean to the terrorist camp.

I said to the police, 'Did you get the green truck?'

'Yes,' they said.

'OK. Did it have my fingerprints on it?' I asked.

'Nope.'

'Nah, I didn't do that. I may have said it, but I didn't do it. It ain't got my fingerprints, so what of it?'

Then they asked what relationship Tuhoe Lambert was to me.

I said, 'He is my brother.'

'Your brother?' the cop said.

'Yeah. My brother-in-arms,' I replied.

'What about Tame Iti?' they asked.

'Yep, he is my tribal brother, too.'

They said, 'We would like you to have a look at some photos.'

They had about 300 photos, all of them in colour. By this time—it had been a couple of hours—some of the other cops had come back from my house. They walked in carrying about three or four boxes from the search. They put them on the bench and took out army gear: army boots, army pants, a Swandri, and a few jerseys. My brother in Gisborne had just given all of these to me about a month earlier. His daughter in Palmy had given him a couple of boxes of army gear. When he gave those to me, straight away I thought, *Ah yeah man. I know where I can take those—give them to the kids at school.* The cops took those and put them on the floor.

Then we started going through the photos.

'Do you know this guy?' he asked me, holding up a photo.

'Uh, no.'

'Do you know him?'

'No.' And so on like that.

Meanwhile, they were looking at the clothes. There were three or four guys standing behind me holding up the army gear so the cop questioning me could try to match up the clothing to me and the photos.

Then he held up my Swandri and said, 'Whose is this?'

I said, 'It's mine.'

It has a small Tino Rangatiratanga flag on it just above the front chest pocket and they tried to match it up to their 300 photos. They couldn't! That was their only link to arrest me, to match me to some of the clothing. That took all day.

After that, I said, 'Are you arresting me for anything?'

'Not at this point,' they said.

'Cool. Then I want to go home,' I said.

'Not yet,' he said to me. 'We have a few more things to talk about.'

'Oh, OK.'

They brought out some more photos. It was me, Tame and my partner sitting at the kitchen table. Tuhoe was there, and our mate, Anaru. We were all there, taking photos and having a good time, enjoying each other's company.

The cop said, 'Can you explain what this was? What's that scene. Where was this?'

I said, 'That was at my house.'

It wasn't at my house. He said, 'Your house hasn't got this or this in the background.'

'Oh, it's my other house.'

'Oh, you've got another house,' he said.

'No, no, no. It was at a motel. We went to the Wairoa Film Festival.'

It was the first one. They were releasing a film based on the Waitangi Tribunal hearings by Robert Pouwhare. Everybody went over to support it because it was about the Tūhoe treaty claims. Tame and the others came down, and we all went. They scored a motel room so we all went to hang out there. They wanted to know about the photos.

Straight away, he said to me, 'it looks like a bit of an important meeting.'

I said, 'It was. It was the first film festival in Wairoa.'

'What were you doing? What were you talking about?' They went on like that.

Sweet as. It is what it is. That was about it for the questioning.

They told me, 'Don't leave town. We'll take you home.'

So we went back up to my house. I got there and was informed that the local policeman had come in earlier with his own search warrant looking for stolen stuff. *Ah, yep*. And he found it! A guy had stolen some stuff and he got caught. When he got caught he told the cops that he had given the stuff to me, but that I didn't know anything about the gear.

The first load of cops had taken everything: our laptops, all our clothes and photos. That was more or less it. They said, 'Oh we'll be in contact,' and away they went.

Next thing after the raids, everyone geared up to march to Wellington.

We went down to Wellington for the hīkoi. There were quite a lot of us from Waikaremoana. It was a big crew—five or six cars—it was mean. It was our whole hapū. It was good to make a point to the crown about the raids. Some of our ones were in contact with people in Rūātoki; they would let us know about marches in Auckland and other stuff going on in response to the raids. It was just the information chain going on every day.

We marched to Wellington on Thursday; they passed the Bill on Tuesday. What was it called? The Terrorism Suppression Act Amendment Bill. When it is translated into English it is actually the Tribal Oppression and Marginalisation Act! They needed to enforce it.

Some time after the raids, I was offered a job at the Hauora in Rūātoki. I had only been volunteering, so it was a good decision to bring my whānau over there. It was during the aftermath of the raids and people there took it hard. 'Come and work for us,' they said. It didn't take long for me to agree.

We are still doing the so-called 'training camps' today. We call it the tikanga programme. What happens is the Department of Corrections gives us somewhere between ten and fourteen guys; we take them out to Rūātoki on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and they go home Friday. It is the same thing. It is the same thing that all the people were arrested for doing! It is the same thing Tame always does! Me, Tame and a couple of others do this tikanga programme: if anyone has been to those camps, it is no different. We are allowed, and even paid, to do it because the justice system is giving us these guys! The programme is about connecting with Tūhoe, no matter where you come from and the importance of

knowing where you come from; it's about having values, and how tikanga and kawa can work in your home, not just on your marae. We are trying to help these guys to create, I suppose, rules and boundaries around their house—kawa and tikanga in daily life. It is a start.

The raids were a pretty normal thing for me. I have experienced that more than once in my life. This time, I think they only picked on me because of my affiliation with Tame, not because of anything that had happened.

I can only speak for myself, but I sort of expected the raids. We all know that there is only one way one culture can maintain power over another one. As far as our ancestors are concerned, it is just another day in the office under colonial rule. I used to blame my old people, but looking back, our old people would have had nothing.

We have the power of others today. We have you. We've got more people. Sometimes we have the media, and they work for us as well, not just for the crown. We are throwing that back at them. There are people out there who don't really care what the dynamics are, but when they see little kids getting harassed they say, 'No way.' A hundred years ago, there was no one standing there with a camera; they all had guns.

The crown will always beat down on us. You only have to go back 50-odd years ago to see it. The violence is so normal that we even do it to each other. It is normal to overwhelm and bully the shit out of people. We have learned from that behaviour. The deal with the crown today is over. So we will just keep on fighting another 100 years. I would rather fight on than be pissed around.

Tātai whetū ki te rangi, mau tonu mau tonu
Tātai tangata ki te whenua, ngaro noa, ngaro noa

Palmerston North

Tia Winitana

The night before the raids, I was really unsettled; I kept getting up. It was only me and my two kids at home in Palmerston North. I was getting up because I was hearing strange noises. I kept checking all the windows and the doors to make sure they were locked. They were all fine. I went back to bed.

It was still dark when I woke up. There were heaps of armed offenders police standing around my bed with guns in my face. My first initial reaction was, *You're dreaming, go back to sleep.* I shut my eyes again, and then reopened them. The guns were still right there in my face.

By that time they were yelling at me, 'Get out of bed! Get out of bed! Put your hands up and get out of bed!' I was like, *Oh my god,* and I said to the fella, 'Get that gun out of my bloody face right now!' They were shouting at me, 'Roll out of your bed onto the floor.' Then they stood me up. I could hear what sounded like heaps of people in the house.

I was yelling at them, 'What the hell are you doing? Where's your bloody search warrant?' They wouldn't talk to me. They just said, 'Stay right where you are. Don't move.' Then, I don't know who he was, a detective came in and said, 'We want to take you down for questioning.'

I was furious. I was screaming and yelling at him, 'Where's my kids? I can hear people walking around in their rooms. Who the hell are they? I want to see my kids.'

At the same time, my cars were being started, turned off and on. They were right outside my bedroom. The police were playing around in my cars. During this, I was still yelling, 'I want to see my kids!' They led me out. There were about seven or eight of them in my bedroom. I kept yelling about the kids and the warrant. I kept saying, 'I want to see the warrant.' They said, 'Oh you can just wait; wait for a minute. You're not getting the warrant yet.' I said, 'I want to see the warrant, and I want to see my kids.' I said, 'You can't be in that room by yourselves with my kids. I don't know what the hell is going on in there.' He turned around and said, 'Oh well, you know why we're in here. You were running around in the bush.' I said, 'Pardon? I really want to see that warrant.'

He handed me the warrant. The first thing on it was the terrorism charge, and I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. I honestly didn't. When I walked into the lounge, there were another five or so cops in there rummaging through all my stuff. They already had everything out when they led me out there. They had flipped my beds up and pulled all my clothes out; they just tipped my house upside down. Everything.

I finally managed to get through to my son's room. He was on the corner of his bed. They all had guns in there as well. There were about five or six cops in his room. I wasn't allowed to touch him or go near him at that point.

It was the same with my daughter Shemea's room. There were another five cops in her room. She was bailed up and scared on the corner of her bed. I asked both of my kids, 'Have they been talking to you? Have they been asking you questions?' They said, 'Yes, they have been talking to us. They have been asking us questions.' I said, 'Don't you say nothing to them. These are bad men. These are not good cops, honey. These are bad men.'

They tried pulling me away from the kids, and that's when I told the kids, 'You get up and run for mum and you don't let go. Come to mum and don't let go.' They had tipped my kids rooms upside down as well.

At that point the main detective said, 'Have you got anywhere your kids can go?' He added, 'Don't bother about sending them to your parents; your father is already down at the cells.'

I turned to him and said, 'You should know then that if you have my father, or my parents, that I have no one else here in Palmerston for them to go to.' They said, 'Well you have a choice to try and find someone else or we will put them through into CYFs. We will ring CYFs to come and pick them up 'cause you won't be getting out any time soon.'

I was lucky and managed to contact this friend who worked for Women's Refuge at the time. I managed to get her to come and get the kids. At that time, the neighbours—I didn't know many of them—one of my neighbours ran over. They were quite worried. I didn't realise at that point how many cars were parked outside my house.

When my friend turned up to get the kids, the cops were loading heaps of my stuff into their cars, big bags of all my clothes and loads of paperwork. The majority of the paperwork was my assignments from the wānanga, my pre-1800s assignments, Tūhoe history.

Before I was led out the door, I was thinking, *How strange is this? Shall I walk out with my head down or shall I just walk out with my head high?* I got to the front door and the police had about 10 or 15 cars pointed toward my house on angles. I thought, *Oh my god!*

Where my house was situated, the front of the house faces onto a big park; all the houses are situated around this park, so I was in full view of everything and everyone. All the neighbours were out on their doorsteps trying to figure out what was going on. My thoughts were, *Oh no, they all know I am a solo mum!*

I got down to the police station, and they put me into one of the rooms. The room had a two-way mirror in it. I could see Dad in the next room but he couldn't see me. They wanted me to make a statement. They

said, 'Do you mind if we do a video statement?' I said, 'I am not going on any video.' The officer said, 'I am going to write it then.' I said, 'That is fine, I am not going to sign anything.'

I kept asking for a lawyer. The first lawyer I did talk to was a crack up. He said to me, 'If you have nothing to hide, just tell them.' I said, 'Pardon? You are the first lawyer I have ever heard say that!' That was the first lawyer on their list. *No, bugger that*, I thought, *I am on my own in this case*. I was better to make up my own mind; I was not talking.

They kept asking me what my connection to Rūātoki was. Do I know Tame? Tame Iti?

The cops kept showing me a whole lot of dates and put a whole load of photos in front of me. One detective said, 'Do you know any of these people?' I had to say to them, 'From that photo to this photo, there is only one I don't know; they are all my uncles.' I said, 'And I am sure it is not a crime to be related to them.' From Waikaremoana to Rūātoki, there are not many who aren't related.

I can't be done for being related to them!

When they pulled photos out they told me that all those people had been arrested. They said, 'You all have been arrested for acts of terrorism. You have been training in the bush.'

Then they showed me a photo of a person in black pants and a black and white Swandri and a balaclava. They said, 'This is you! You tell me, this is you.' I had to say, 'What part of that person do you think is me? Is it the hips?' I was angry. They had no evidence of anything. I thought, *What are these people on?*

It was about 7am when I got into the police station. They left me in the interrogation room for a good hour at a time. They kept coming back in and chucking questions at me. 'We know how many times you have gone through to Rūātoki.' I was like, 'Whatever.' I said, 'I go through there all the time. Like I said, they are all family.' I travel through there all the time; there is no crime in that. They were especially interested in my relationship with Uncle Tame, saying, 'We have seen him at your place

down in Christchurch a few times. You are known to call him all the time.' I said, 'That is not a crime; he is my uncle. I am allowed to.'

The police asked if I felt threatened by my father. They said that they could help if I just talked. I told them that they were the ones who needed help to explain the mess they had made.

They left me in the room for another couple of hours while they went away. Then another couple of detectives came in and said, 'Look we have been talking to your father and he has told us that you were there, and you were holding guns. You were part of it all. This is what your father has told me so you need to give yourself up.' I said, 'Oh my god, how do you know you are not talking to a senile old man!'

They just looked at me. Then I turned around and I looked through the window at Dad. He was holding his hands up and gesturing around, and I said, 'See, look at him, he's senile!' They left me in the room to find out what Dad was talking about.

Another couple of hours later they came and said, 'We've gone through and heard what your dad is talking about, and we are going to release you.' Dad was telling them how he could turn himself into a tree. I thought, *Well about time!* They said, 'Before we do that, we want you to listen to some tapes.' And I said, 'No, I am over it. I don't want to do anything.' But then I thought, *Bugger it. I am going to listen to this tape.* So I went in, and they turned these tapes on. It was a phone call between Uncle Tame and me. I rang him up in Taupo. I said, 'I am here in Taupo, Uncle Tame.' He said, 'Ka pai.' I said, 'I am lost. I don't know through this part—the forest roads—I don't know the way.' So he gives me the directions. I said to him, 'What's for dinner, Uncle? Are we going to have a hāngi?' And he cracks up laughing. The cop pauses the tape and he says, 'What's that code for?' I said, 'What?' He said, 'HANGEY. What's that code for?' I said, 'A bloody good feed!'

The questions were getting dumber by the minute. They finished by saying to me: 'Don't go anywhere. Don't even think of going out of Palm-

erston cause we are coming to get you.' After that, they let me go. It was about three or four o'clock on the afternoon of the 15th of October.

When I got home I thought, *How am I going to ring anyone?* They had taken all our phone books and all our cellphones. I went home to Mum and Dad's house. I needed to ring Mum right away; she was down in Christchurch. I picked up the phone, and there was music playing on it. And I thought, *Those silly buggers have the phone tapped, and they have left the music playing!* I thought, *I can't use the phones here as they definitely are bugged*. I went through Mum's house looking for phone numbers, and I couldn't find anything; the whole house was a total mess from the raid. I eventually went somewhere else and used the phone. I managed to contact one of the uncles at home to get my brother's phone number where Mum was staying in Christchurch.

I then went home, and by that time there must have been a news announcement. I wasn't home for even five minutes when all the neighbours turned up with kahawai and flags and painted pictures all over the fences, Tino Rangatiratanga flags.

I didn't manage to contact Mum for about two days. The cops were still holding Dad. It was on the third day that I spoke to her. She got home on the Thursday. During this time I couldn't speak to Dad, but I was ringing the police station to make sure he had his medication. When Mum arrived home, I took her in to visit Dad. That was entertaining.

Dad had been in the police cells for three days. When I finally took Mum in to visit, they actually let me visit Dad. I went in to see him to make sure he had his medication and to give him a kai. He didn't like eating in his cell because it contained a toilet and was not hygienic. I also wanted to give him an update about what had happened with me and what had been happening outside, because he wasn't aware of anything. After that visit, we kept in touch with him until he was released. He went to court on the following Monday.

After the raid I got a phone call from Dad's lawyer very late one night asking me to get a lot of character references for Dad, as many as pos-

sible before his court case. It was urgent. I rang my brother and sister, and they ran around to everyone we knew in Christchurch to get references. We worked from about 12 midnight right through to a deadline of 8am when we had to have them all together. While they were running around all over Christchurch, police repeatedly pulled them up. Every time they would leave their house they would get pulled up. The cops would ask where they were going and what they were doing. That is all they would do. They didn't give them tickets or anything; they just stopped to question them. I happened to be on the phone with one of them when they got pulled up. There was no specific reason why the cop had pulled them up. There was nothing illegal in what they had done.

In another inexplicable incident during that week of the raids, my brother's house in Christchurch got broken into and the only thing that was stolen was paperwork. That is pretty random for a burglar. He has computers and model planes and things like that in his place, but they didn't touch that. This happened twice; when he rang the police, they weren't too worried about it. They said, 'There is nothing much we can do. You probably won't see that stuff again. Here's a victim support card. Get in touch with us if you hear anything more.'

Needless to say, I was prepared for the cops to come back that week. I had this funny thought, *Oh my god! I have topped every crime in New Zealand in one go! I have no criminal record, and now I am a terrorist!* That is what I was thinking that day. There were a lot of things running through my head that day. I honestly didn't know whether this was a big joke. I was almost ready for someone to bring out the Candid Camera crew. Sometimes I didn't know whether to laugh or cry because I didn't know how serious this was or what the hell they were going to pull out next. I was so worried about my kids because I didn't know what was happening to them.

The kids were quite traumatised by the whole experience. At the time Shemea was nine and Biyahn was seven. They were face-down crying when the cops were in their rooms on the morning of the raids. After

the raids, the atmosphere in our house was totally different, so quiet—we moved around so quietly. We didn't know if we could talk in our house; we didn't know if it was bugged. We didn't want to talk about anything, particularly not about the raids or what had happened. The kids were pretty scared after that. They slept in my bed; they wouldn't go back to their rooms. They ended up being scared of the dark after that. They were really put off a lot of things. They even went through a stage of bed-wetting and waking up with nightmares. It has taken quite a while, and moving home to Lake Waikaremoana, to get it out of their system. I had to get them out of that house as soon as possible in order to change their thoughts and to be around more family. It was the only solution I could think of to heal them.

When the cops were turning my two cars on and off during that day of the raids, I had yelled at them that even a warrant doesn't allow them to turn the cars on and off. Search them yes, but not turn it on and play around with it. I sold one of my cars two weeks after the raids and it was working perfectly fine, nothing wrong with it. My sister-in-law came to pick it up and drove it to Hamilton where the motor blew up. The fire brigade put the fire out. They checked it out and they said that there was new wiring from the battery to the front of the car. For a late model Ford Falcon V8, it was pretty random for new wiring to be put in. I hadn't had any work done on it. The fire brigade said it was the new wiring that was the cause of it blowing up. I have my suspicions that when the cops were turning my car on, they were mucking around with the motor. Then the car I was driving short-circuited a couple of weeks later. That was also from wiring, and the circuits blew out. Both my cars were stuffed in the end.

When the evidence was later released, it clearly showed that the cops had bugged the cars so I know I wasn't just imagining things.

After the raids, a lot of strange and inexplicable things that had happened during the two weeks and two years prior to the raids started to make sense. For example, I was getting pulled up left, right and centre

by the cops. There was the time we went through to Whanganui for one of my brother's games, and I got pulled up on the way back. They said I was speeding, but I didn't get a ticket even though I didn't have a licence and my car wasn't registered or warranted. They should have taken my car off me and given me a fine for the licence. At the time I thought, *He's a bloody good cop for not giving me a ticket.* I didn't give it much thought; I just thought, *It's my lucky day*. Another time I was leaving home, and I got pulled up. The cop said that I had a warrant out for my arrest. The cops hadn't mentioned this the first time I was pulled over, even though he checked out my details. The second time I got pulled up he said, 'We have a warrant for your arrest, and it's been there for quite a few years.' He said that it was to do with a car that I owned five or six years prior that had been used in a burglary. I said to him, 'I only learned how to drive a couple of years ago, and I haven't owned another car. I haven't had another car in my name.'

And he said, 'No, it has definitely been said it is yours; if you would like to come to the station later, we can question you.' And I thought, *Ok, and the reason you pulled me over was?* He actually had no reason to pull me over in the first place. I wasn't speeding, I hadn't done anything illegal for him to pull me up; somehow he knew it was me in the car and there was a warrant for my arrest. Does that make sense? No, he followed me from my home.

I let that one pass. It hasn't been mentioned again. Maybe it will surface again in another few years.

The friend who took my kids on the day of the raids had encountered police hanging around her place during the two weeks prior. At the back of her house are the rail tracks and then paddocks for miles with some scattered trees. I went around to her place one day to help her with an assignment; we noticed two men ducking in and out of the trees. They didn't look like cockies. They were quite odd in their movements. They were cops stopping outside and hanging around her place.

I was confiding in her quite a bit and spending time with her. Undercover cops and police were hanging around her area seemingly for no reason at all. I remember thinking back then, *None of us has done anything or is doing anything wrong*. The closer that the raids came, the more cops were hanging around. It was around the area where I was living, and over at Mum and Dad's that I would see them quite a bit. So when the raids happened, it all fell into place and made sense. Even my friend was getting pulled up randomly and not given any tickets.

After the raids I thought about a lot of things that had been happening in my life. I had been in Palmerston about a year at that point. I had come up from Christchurch. The last year I had been in Christchurch and the year of the raids were two of the hardest years I have had. I was being financially mucked around. WINZ was stuffing up my money left, right and centre for no reason. One week I would get my full pay and the next week I would only get half; that was happening every time, at least twice a month. I was forever in WINZ. They never knew what was going on, there was no reason.

The other thing that was stuffing up was my bank; even they were losing my money, misplacing it. It would take me a couple of days to get it sorted out before it would get transferred over. All my finances were really getting mucked around. In retrospect, I think it was a deliberate way to limit my travel and to make things as hard as possible for me.

I was going crazy during that time before the raids. It was a horrible year. My benefit was cut off because they said I committed fraud. When my benefit was cut off, I thought *Oh, I will just ring up and sort it*. The guy on the phone said, 'Look, this is the first case I have seen like this. It has been classified, and no one is allowed to open it. My best advice to you—and I shouldn't be saying it—you need to prove where you have been in the last few days or you are going to be arrested.' I thought, *Oh my god*. He said, 'When you rang in you contradicted everything you had said since you have been on a benefit.' I said, 'What? The last time I rang you was about six months ago.' I said, 'I haven't rung in for ages.'

He noted that down. I was so worried. I had been home for the last three days so I hadn't even been to a shop where I might have been on a CCTV camera. I was pretty much buggered. I ended up going into this place called Māori Disabilities, and I asked for an advocate. When we went to meet with WINZ, we demanded a copy of the phone call, and it was obvious straight away that the person on the phone was not me. I had been impersonated. They had lost my file. I no longer existed. They just said, 'Ok, we will start afresh.' All I could think of was *WHAT?* How can a government department put someone through so much stress and then just say, 'We'll start afresh.'

This was all within the 18-month period of surveillance before the raids.

During that time, my partner was in prison. He was due out a week after the raids. Normally, someone getting released goes through a process of probation evaluation to see if it is OK to be released to live in a particular place. The raids were a big part of the reason why he wasn't allowed to live with us. It was decided that my partner wasn't allowed to live with me and my children for a year. There was no reason given. It was decided, and it is on paper, that he and I weren't 'good together.' That was their reason for keeping him away from me. They believed that I was his 'issue;' that I was why he was re-offending. He wasn't allowed to come and stay with me.

He was ordered to stay at the Salvation Army men's hostel. Once he was out he wasn't allowed to visit us, even though he lived around the corner literally two blocks from my house. We weren't allowed contact with him. The week after the raid, when he got out the first thing he said was, 'What the hell happened? I saw your father's name up on the prison board! What the hell is going on?'

While he was still in prison, the detectives had gone to see him and pulled him aside. This was a couple of days before the raids. The prison guards said, 'You have a visitor.' He naturally thought it was one of us who was there to see him. He was led into the interview room. He walked in,

and they shut the door behind him. When he realised that there were a couple of detectives in the room, he refused to talk and said, 'I want to go back to my cell.' He knocked on the door for the guard to let him out. The detective then says, 'Tame Iti has been arrested.' My partner says, 'And?' 'So has your father-in-law and your girlfriend.' And he said, 'And what has this got to do with me?'

When Bruce got out, they had obviously decided he wasn't allowed to stay with me; they thought that I wasn't going to be there. They must have known I was going to be raided the week before he got out.

Once I got out, he still wasn't allowed to stay with me. It was clearly stated that they wanted to break us up. I wasn't allowed to go to any of his probation meetings; I was cut out of everything. I was told by probation, 'We are only here to support the prisoner, not the family.' There is no support there whatsoever. My partner refused to be away from us any longer. He came home because he missed us. They allowed it for a while but it wasn't easy with probation.

The probation officer even came to our house during that time after the raids; she did all sorts of unreal things that I have never seen a probation officer do. This woman came into my home and said, 'I am wanting to give Bruce a week away because you are stressing him out.' I said, 'You have caught me at a time when I am injured—I have a leg injury and I can't walk and I need him here for the kids.' And she said, 'Well, this is my decision, and it is effective as of now.' It was a really stressful time.

It was then that I decided everything was working against me. I told the probation officer, 'If you think I am the cause of him re-offending then you deal with him: he's yours. I am going.' I was fighting against the system to keep my relationship going. I have never known a probation system to split up a family. I returned to the Lake.

Just before I returned to the Lake, a couple of months after the raids, the police turned up again. They were returning some of my things from the raids. They turned up with my computer, which they had broken, and two cellphones; one was mine and one wasn't. The cop wanted me to sign

for them. When I had gone through the stuff I refused to sign. I told him, 'You take that computer and return it the way it was.' He said, 'Sorry, I can't do that.' I said, 'Sorry, I can't sign your piece of paper.' He had to take the computer away and they still have it. I was given one of my phones back and another Telecom phone that I had never seen before in my life. I wouldn't sign for it either.

I asked the cop when I was going to get the rest of my stuff back because they had taken all of my clothes. Half of the stuff they had taken was not on the warrant. There was quite a bit of stuff that was left off, that still hasn't been accounted for. He denied anything else had been taken. I said, 'You wouldn't know. You weren't here. So you are just lying.'

After that episode, I felt that my home was totally turned over, violated. Nothing in my house was private anymore. I didn't know what they had put in my house or if my house and my phones were bugged. I had seen the record of the police recordings of phone calls and text messages they took throughout those 18 months of surveillance. I remember them asking me questions covering three or four houses that I had stayed at over the past few years.

After the stuff with Bruce and the probation officer I moved home. The reasons for moving home were because of the raids and what had happened with Bruce's probation. It was the most isolating feeling I have ever felt; I was in an area I was not from, Palmerston North, and I had no one to call. I wanted to be around family, and to never feel isolated again.

When I got home to Lake Waikaremoana, everything was fine. Then the local cop turned up and said he had a few presents for me. It was some more stuff taken from the raids, although not everything was returned. The most interesting thing they returned was the paperwork. It made me feel watched all over again because it turned out that the paperwork was of new surveillance of the house I had just moved into! There were aerial shots around my house and some of the house. This was well after the raids. I went to the Lake in March 2008 and the paperwork was given to

me in July 2008. It made me feel really bad. I thought, *Am I still under surveillance? Are they still watching me?* I had no privacy and no security; there was no place for me and my family to go where we weren't being watched.

It is extraordinary that they were doing this surveillance, because the community at the Lake is so small that it is easy to know what and who comes in and out. It was quite freaky actually knowing it was still going on six months later. At the time, I was having a lot of prowlers around my new house. I was blaming the locals—a curious cousin, I thought, but that didn't pan out. I don't know actually but looking at that paperwork made me think it was not over.

Why do I think the raids happened? The government at the time joined a worldwide anti-terrorism campaign following America's lead. To do this, they had to put a bill through government, the Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA). To do this, they needed people here to support their cause. To get those supporters, they had to find a group of people to call 'terrorists.' These people who were involved in anti-war activism, environmental protection and, of course, Tame Iti along with all his whānau were all raided and branded as terrorists just before the amendment to the TSA passed in parliament. How convenient! What better way to frighten a nation of people?

Who were the terrorists on the 15th of October 2007? The crown, the government and the police.

I am proud to say that I am Tūhoe, and that I am from the Chatham Islands. I was brought up on a farm where guns were used. We knew that people from the city used them for 'recreational hunting,' but we used them for everyday living: hunting to feed our children. Guns are a common sound in Te Urewera and on the Islands. These aren't terrorists—these are people feeding their families and living a lifestyle most city people don't get a chance to experience or could even imagine accurately.

My children and I were raided on 15th October 2007. I was one of the fortunate ones to be released. We weren't charged with terrorism, but we were terrorised.

Palmerston North

Teanau Tuiono

When I look back at it, I would say the reason why the police targeted me during the terror raids was because I support Te Mana Motuhake ō Tūhoe. To me it makes sense. When I heard Tame Iti talk, he was all about, *Te Mana Motuhake for Tūhoe, run their own shit, run their own rohe, run their own stuff.* Sweet as. I'm into that—that sounds like a really good idea to me. That's why I reckon I got the old knock, knock, knock on the door from the cops.

I will support them whether it is doing sausage sizzles for Te Mana Motuhake or whatever else. It is not for me to say, as a person who is not from Tūhoe, 'do this, do that,' but if there is a group of them that have an idea, and I think it is a good idea, I am going to support them. The concept of indigenous self-determination is a very real and solid concept. I know that indigenous peoples are doing it worldwide in different ways; it is still the same idea.

I work internationally with many different indigenous peoples, and some have sovereignty in varying forms. I am thinking of places like Kuna Yala, Nunavit and the Navajo Nation. There are also other arrangements that can be made like the Sami Parliament in Scandinavia and giving effect to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Could we have indigenous self-determination, Tino Rangatiratanga /Mana Motuhake, in Aotearoa? Well of course we can! If some American guy could walk on the moon in the 1960s then we can have Tino Rangatiratanga/Mana Motuhake here in Aotearoa. It requires commitment and a critical mass of people that believe enough in the idea. It begins with people, Māori and non-Māori, who are willing to listen and to learn and to approach that listening and learning with integrity. A part of that is countering the culture of intellectual laziness we have in this country, particularly mainstream approaches to Māori issues. This ignorance is fed by politicians, dubious breakfast-show hosts and the odd small-town mayor who can't spell Māori words.

The other thing I think is very interesting about the Te Urewera situation is that you have the leadership in that iwi who are aiming higher than all other iwi have. Most iwi are now corporate. It's all about the Treaty settlement money and the corporate agenda of tribal elites. It is an ideology steeped in neo-liberal economics, which is fine if you believe in that. I believed in Santa Claus when I was five. The main point I want to make is that you only have to look at the last economic recession (is it even over?) to see that the $20 you got from your settlement today could be worth 20 cents tomorrow. Playing the stock exchange with the money you got for the blood of your ancestors is, in my opinion, not as safe an investment as is getting the actual land that was stolen. Land for land. I riro whenua atu me hoki whenua mai.

Having said all that, for those that have gone the corporate route, these people believe they negotiated the best deal they could get. Folks have to put food on the table somehow—yes, even lawyers. Personally, I just wish our people aimed higher, and did not settle so low. If somehow through the settlement process they manage to decrease the incarceration rate, raise the education standards, house and feed Māoridom, well shit, there might be Santa Claus after all!

My personal experience with the NZ Thought Police during the terror raids began as I was coming back from Australia after supporting,

ironically, the struggle against the militarisation of aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. I say ironically because that was precisely what I came home to on 16 October 2007.

The then Australian prime minister John Howard had this bright idea (and was also scaring up some redneck votes) that the way to solve sexual abuse and alcohol abuse in indigenous communities in the Northern Territory was to send in the military. There was a lot of resistance from indigenous peoples in Australia to this policy, and we were invited by some of our aboriginal brothers and sisters to take a bit of tautoko over for this kāupapa. The vehicle we used was hiphop and a tour went over, just to show there was support from here. It even resulted in an album called *Solid Territory*, pretty cool.

When I arrived back home I was walking up the road to my house when my partner, Terri, came running out the door.

She said, 'Shit, are you all right? You OK?'

I said, 'Yeah, just coming back from backing up the brothers and sisters in Australia.'

She said, 'Emily, Val and all of them—they have all been chucked in jail.'

I was like, 'What? What for?'

'For terrorism,' she said.

I was like, 'What? You're fucking kidding!'

'Yeah,' she said, 'Rangi has been chucked in jail.'

I went inside and turned on the news, and sure enough there it was. Then the phone calls began. Because I knew a lot of the people who had already been arrested, I was thinking, *They'll be coming around to my house soon*. I was thinking, *Here we go.*

Sure enough, early the next morning there was a knock on the door.

'Mr Tuiono, you don't look too surprised to see us,' the cops said to me. I said, 'You just chucked a whole lot of my mates in jail, shit, I thought you would be around here sooner or later.'

They gave me the search warrant. I had a look at it. They hadn't signed it.

I am from South Auckland, and occasionally police get out of control. The last thing I wanted was for them to go ballistic—you know, how cops can **GO**. So I thought I would cooperate with them because I didn't want them to get all nasty. My kids were there, and my youngest one was only three weeks old.

The search warrant was totally dodgy but I thought, *Shit look how many of them there are, and they are already coming through the door.* There were heaps and heaps of them—I looked out through the dining room outside and there was a whole pile of them out there.

They read out the warrant, 'blah blah suspicion of being in a terrorist group blah blah blah.' I didn't say anything. I've got a law degree, and I was going to keep my mouth shut. I told them 'no comment'—you know, the right to silence?

I told them that I wouldn't sign the warrant either because it sounded like a crock of shit. I was thinking: *Yeah, I am an activist, and we get up to mischief, but to say that what activists get up to is playing bin Laden, is bullshit.*

I knew then that I wasn't going to argue with them, but I was fully keen to get a lawyer. Even though I have a law degree, when you have young children and you have all those cops up in your face accusing you of this and that, you back up a bit. You think, *Oh yeah, I've got rights, what the hell are they again?* I just wanted these guys to relax. I didn't want them to go nutty.

So I said, 'I need to get a lawyer.' They took the phone out of one room, plugged it into another room and closed the door.

'You are entitled to a phone call blah blah blah' they said.

I said, 'Aren't you guys listening to it anyway?'

They said, 'Yeah yeah yeah, probably we are.'

I said, 'Well, what's the point, mate? I'll just ring up who I need to talk to.'

I rang my mate Tere Harrison. I said, 'Tere, there's cops all around here, accusing me of all sorts of shit. Find me a lawyer.'
'Yeah,' she said, 'I'm on to it bro.'
She said, 'I think they might take you down to Wellington.'
I hung up the phone. She got me a lawyer within five minutes. She told me that they had been around to lots of houses.
'Just tell them,' she said, '"No comment."'
I just started saying that to these cops who were saying, 'I just want to ask you a few questions Mr Tuiono.'
'No comment.'
'But I still want to put these questions to you.'
'Yeah, well I am going to say "No comment".'
They just kept asking me, and I just kept saying the same thing.
Then they asked me if I knew Tame.
'Do you know Tame Iti?' the police asked.
I said, 'Of course, who doesn't know the dude? Everyone knows Tame Iti.' So the cop got a bit excited and wrote down in his book, 'Knows Tame Iti.'
He then asked me if I was Tūhoe. That made me laugh; I mean who accuses someone of that?
After that the cop said to me, 'I want you to come down to the station.' I said, 'Nope.'
'We really want you to come down to the station.'
I said, 'Nope. No comment.'
I said, 'I'll tell you what: I'll ring my lawyer, and you can talk to my lawyer.'
The lawyer said, 'No, you don't have to go.'
I said to her, 'Can you tell him that?' So I put her on the phone, and she gave the cop a bit of the, 'I'm a lawyer and my client has no comment, and he's not going down to the station unless you are arresting him.' After that, he looked really fucked off.

At that stage the cops had put my partner and my kids in another room, and they were fully questioning her. I know she just wanted them to leave. They went through my freezer and my back shed; they went through my rubbish bin.

The most traumatic thing for me was knowing that my friends and comrades were in jail. I was thinking, *Aw shit, this is pretty serious.* I think a lot of us were just really worried about those who were incarcerated. I was pretty sleepless for a month or two. Those of us who were on the outside tried to organise, to get the word out, to get folks out of jail.

When my mum found out that I had been raided she was pissed off with the cops and supportive. That's my mum. My family knows what my political beliefs are. Most of my whānau are not particularly into the stuff I believe in, but they think you should be able to say what you like.

I found out that during Operation 8, they had been following me around quite a lot. Some of the details they knew were incredible, like they knew I went into the fish'n'chip shop on such-and-such a date. It's crazy that they would write that stuff down.

If I peel all my politics back and think about it purely as a taxpayer I think, *Man you should be out catching P dealers instead of wasting time on this! If you are about fighting crime, then fight crime. Don't muck around with this shit.* I was surprised at the length and intensity of the investigation.

I have been involved in activism for nearly 20 years, so during times of high political activity I would say that I have been under surveillance a number of times. But the level of surveillance in Operation 8 was just unreal. It wasn't just how they usually do if you are at a demo or protest, and they follow you around and take your picture. I don't know what they do with those—maybe pin them up on a wall and draw little connection lines between you and other people. Who knows?

I was surprised at the investigation: the depth and the millions of dollars they spent. Looking at it like a cost-benefit analysis—this is my inner economist speaking—it must be $30 million by now. Shitloads of dudes following shitloads of people around. Looking at the Urewera

claim in the Waitangi Tribunal, I think, *Couldn't they have just given them that money?* It was an awful waste of money that could have been used to do an awful lot of good. The inner economist in me is screaming for economic justice!

After the raids, it was a bit isolating for us in Palmerston North. There were four of us, four houses that got raided there: the old man and his daughter, and another sister and mine. I think people were a bit shocked. Wellington is full of activists. Auckland is full of activists, and it was all on in Tūhoe, and then there was this little blip on the map for Palmerston North. *What the hell? That's weird! How many of them? Four! Shit!*

I quickly met with the daughter of the koroua after the raids. I hadn't met her before. Her dad wanted me to go up to where he was being held. I thought I had better go. He was in a pretty bad state. Real bad actually. When they arrested him he was in bed, and they chucked him in jail in his undies. It was real touch-and-go. His wife was really upset, obviously. When his daughter got raided, they questioned her kids. It was completely unethical; they questioned them separately from her.

All of us gravitated towards each other because that was all there was in Palmerston North. We had good support. My mate Te Ao took up a lot of stuff for me personally. She organised our first protest. I was frazzled by then. I had to borrow a computer so I could keep working and get some bills paid, because all of my gear had been taken during the raids. We got 70 people along to the demo—not big numbers, but it is Palmy. That was really good.

Just before the protest, the cops rang Te Ao and said to her, 'Oh, we're just ringing up to make contact with you about the protest. What does the movement want to do? What are the movement's intentions in Palmerston North?' I was thinking, *Excuse me? What are our intentions? There is a whole army base just up the road. We are just ordinary families who recently moved into the area!*

We started having whānau dinners to shore up our support and share with other people who were going through the same shit. In Auck-

land there was a big crew. We were in touch with them and the folks in Wellington. They had the numbers. We organised a few things in our Palmy way. It was good to organise even though we were in a new community.

We had a funny introduction to our new neighbourhood. On October 15th, just before I got back into the country, my fence blew over. As a result, when the cops raided the house, the neighbors got a full view of the raids. Terri was outside, and the neighbours asked her if we were all right. 'Yeah,' she said.

'When we saw all these police around here the other day, we thought it was something to do with the terrorist raids,' they said. 'Yeah, yeah it was…Oh, my name is Terri, nice to meet you.' We hadn't been in Palmy long, and I was already on the shit list!

When everyone was still in jail, we all talked in whispers. I was in my bedroom whispering to my partner because we didn't know who was listening. There was a lot of self-censorship going on, which was really sad. It is a really unhealthy state for free-thinking people. *I can't say what's on my mind because I am scared Big Brother is going to bust through the door and arrest me for thought crime.* After the raids, it felt very Orwellian because it was! We were being watched. They were following us around.

Society ain't shit if it can't deal with a bit of dissent.

There has to be space for people to protest, to vent a bit of opposition, to find ways to move society in new, different, progressive and possibly radical ways. We have got to have that. I think we lost a lot of that during the raids. People's levels of mischief are not what they were. To be straight-out and honest, for years and years, I really enjoyed being a protester. I enjoyed being radical. I enjoyed the new ideas. I loved the conversations. I loved the new challenges: of being challenged by the ideas you are being exposed to that are different from those you were brought up with. It is just getting out there and trying to find new ways to move society forward in a good way. It can be fun.

Looking back on it, the people who were targeted, the people who were raided were 'do-ers,' people who did stuff. There are a lot of people that know this stuff about colonisation, about indigenous rights, about self-determination, that know these ideas are being sanctioned at the highest level, at the international level, but there are so few people among that lot who are actually out there doing it. Academics and lawyers must outnumber the activists at least 20 to 1, certainly in Māori society.

I reckon what put the shits right up the cops was that diverse groups of people starting to talk to each other. People realised that if you peeled back a lot of the surveillance onion, in terms of who was being watched and why, there are a lot of things we have in common. It was a good way to build solidarity. There were environmentalists and anarchists and, of course, Māori activists, especially Tūhoe, from all walks of life. There were many connections made, and there is still much more potential for mutual understanding and collaboration among the progressive movements in Aotearoa.


Tena koutou ka
ki te
128 Community Build
Our Values and Princi
Haere mai,
Come on in...
128

WELLINGTON

Julia Grant

The day before the raid I was with a good friend watching *Dr Who.* I came back late at night and went to sleep. Everything was normal and happy. I had all these plans for our community house at 128 Abel Smith Street for November.

I was asleep, sleeping very happily. The first thing that I heard that morning of October 15th was a giant crash. We had had major problems with the neighbours before, so I naturally thought it was them.

My first thought when I heard the giant crash of glass and shouting was, *Oh shit, I am going to be raped,* because I thought it was the neighbours coming in. It was instant fear. I thought I was going to be horribly beaten, but I was one of the lucky people and wasn't.

When I heard that giant crash and some shouting, I just froze in bed and tried to pretend that I wasn't there. The shouting got louder, and I heard people running up the stairs. I realised what they were shouting was 'POLICE' and something like 'GET OUT.' I decided to stay silent. I thought that maybe they wouldn't see me. I wasn't sure what they were doing, and I was scared. I stayed in bed not moving as much as possible.

They ran into my room. I was up in the loft in the blue room. They were yelling and shining their flashlights everywhere; then they ran out. I was thinking, *Oh, thank god they didn't find me.* I didn't breathe or move an inch. I thought that they would leave. But then their frantic yelling stopped, and then they were just normally yelling 'POLICE' and doing a more thorough search of the house. That is when they found the loft and started shouting at me to get down.

Even though I was quite scared I had some presence of mind. I told them I was getting down, but I got dressed first and put on warm clothes and got my cigarettes and my cellphone. Then I climbed down the ladder. I believe that they had me lie on the floor—maybe it was just sit on the floor—in the dark. It was 5.45 or 6.00am. They were shining flashlights on me, four cops, while I was sitting on this wood floor. It was so unnecessary, like what danger was I posing? They started asking me questions: 'Do you live here?' and 'Who lives here?'

I just kept saying 'I don't know, I don't know.'

They said, 'You don't know if you live here?'

I said, 'I don't know.'

They ascertained that the stuff in the loft was mostly my stuff, so that satisfied them. I had brought my cigarettes, which was good because I really needed one. I didn't bring a lighter, but I brought my cigarettes. I started trying to roll a cigarette. I was sitting—maybe they let me sit on the couch—for a few hours it seemed. I was so cold, and I was scared shitless. I was trying to roll a cigarette, and my hands were shaking so badly that the tobacco was flying everywhere. I was actually quite embarrassed in front of the cops, which was funny.

I kept looking up at the cop shining the light on me and said, 'Sorry it's cold which is why my hands are shaking so much.' I think at that point they realised they didn't have to take me so seriously. Here I was trying to roll a cigarette for about 30 minutes, and it's just not working. I think in the end I just gave up and put the tobacco back in the pouch. I didn't have a lighter anyway, but it would have been nice to hold on to.

Finally it started getting light. I got to watch the sun rise, which would have been nice if I hadn't been scared shitless. I had no idea who was in the house either, because I came home late the night before. Sometimes I am the only one in the house and sometimes not. Sometimes there are tons of people here.

The cops were turning on the lights in the other rooms. They took me into the white room adjacent to the blue room. They said that someone was going to show me a warrant. Someone was going to talk to me about what was going on, which seemed cool because I had no idea what anything was about. They asked me if I was living there, and who was living there, but they didn't tell me what was going on, what they were looking for, or who they were looking for. I was sitting in the white room for what seemed like ages.

I was wearing a scarf, which was a good thing because there was this photographer going around taking pictures of each room and trying to take pictures of me. I wrapped the scarf around my head. He kept taking pictures of me and tried to get me to show my face to the camera. It wasn't a big deal; he was taking pictures of everything else. The whole day he just kept trying to sneak pictures of me, and he probably did at one point. It was annoying.

There were so many people, I mean cops, coming in and out of the house. Ages passed and finally this guy who wasn't wearing a police uniform, the detective in charge, showed me the warrant. I was trying to read it, but I was still freaked out and was just looking through it. I'm not really someone who understands these things very well (what they need for a warrant) so I was just trying to read it. I was flipping through it and found the section of things they were looking for. It had stuff from 'October 2006 camp' and from all these different camps. Underneath those headlines were descriptions of clothes. The clothes were black pants, black shoes, a black-hooded sweater with a triangle on it, navy blue pants, navy blue shorts and camouflage pants. After all of that there was an even bigger list that I think was from the police auction or something. It was just a

really long list of generic weapons, generic clothes and army surplus-type stuff.

I thought that they would find most of those things at 128 because we had a lot of black pants and black hooded sweatshirts! I thought it was kind of funny, but it did seem like it was a description of what people were wearing. I was trying to think of what they were doing; perhaps it was related to the anarchist conference in Auckland. *OK, they are looking for the things people wore at these conferences.* It did confirm what people had said to me. I thought all my friends were really crazily paranoid, as I didn't think people were listening to us. I thought, *We're not nearly important enough.* Perhaps it is because I am from America that I think that New Zealand is quite small. I guess small groups get a lot of attention in America, too.

After I looked at the warrant, they finally let me go downstairs. The other caretaker, Sam Buchanan, was wearing only a trench-coat. Poor guy! He looked like a flasher. But I was SO happy to see him. It is the happiest I have ever been to see anyone because I was just thinking, *Thank god I am not alone in this house full of 50 to 30—I don't know how many cops.* He is also an older male and has sort of a sense of authority. I think the detective in charge and other police were more respectful of him. He could just take care of things. I could just sit there and be freaked out.

God at this point I really needed to pee. I started asking the cops if I could go pee and they said, 'Nope, the bathroom is still being checked.' They took me into the library where I saw Sam. I was looking around and everything was like in the movies: couches were turned over, tables were turned over, the paintings were on their sides. It was kind of funny and kind of traumatic. This was my home, and they were taking everything out of the cabinets and under the stairwell and categorising everything. I was actually a bit overwhelmed at all the work! *They are going to be here forever,* I thought. Going through everything in 128 is not something one could do easily. I mean they had 30 people, but my god!

Later, I found out that they even went through the compost bin. That was really nice because they turned the compost for us. They had to go through the attic and the bike workshop; it was stressful seeing it. I almost felt bad for them, aside from feeling angry and thinking that they kind of deserved it. I liked that they were wasting so much of their time.

We stood in the library on the ground floor of 128 while all these cops were coming in and out, categorising everything. It was easy to feel invaded and naked, and poor Sam basically was naked because he was only in a trench-coat. They finally let him put on some clothes; the poor guy looked quite awkward.

They finally let us into the yellow room, which is the living room and meeting room. I guess this was about three hours into the search. They finally let me go to the bathroom. In the next three hours I went to the bathroom six or seven times. I was so nervous I just kept pissing. I mean I hadn't had a drink of water or anything, but my body was in shock. The police were looking at me very suspiciously because I kept needing to go to the bathroom. They were standing right outside so in the end they were just thinking, *This girl is weird, she is shaking and pissing...she's a freak.*

I had my cellphone with me while I was sitting in the living room and had decided to try to text someone. It was late enough by then that people would be awake and getting the text. It was about 9am. I was kind of wondering why I hadn't seen anyone wandering past. I texted my friend Val that we were being raided and that we would need a nice clean-up party afterwards. I was thinking that after the raid, lots of people would come over and we would clean up the house. It would be nice and healing.

After I sent the text, the cops said, 'Oh, you can't be using your cellphone.' It had been fine that I had it; they knew I had had it for ages. But as soon as I used it, they said, 'You can't.' So they took my cellphone and they saw who I had sent the text to. They said, 'Oh, Val, that's a nice name,' and they all kind of laughed. I said, 'Yeah, that's a nice name.' I didn't really get why they were laughing. Then they took all the numbers from my cellphone.

A little bit later one person that I knew came by. They didn't really stop or look in. I was waving frantically. I needed some support. They pretended not to see me, but I think then they told other people.

Some other people came by. One of them started yelling through the window, 'Have you seen X?' (this person, this friend I was with the night before). Did I know where she was? I think I told them, 'at home.' Then it just made me start worrying and thinking, *Why are they worried about this person? What's going on?* I hadn't been worried about that person, but I didn't know what was going on.

Then another person came up to the window and was yelling at us, 'Are you guys OK?' and was yelling at the cops and that made me feel a lot better. I was thinking *OK, people know what's going on,* but also thinking *why aren't there more people here* because it seems like a big deal, and you would think that there would be more people, and *where's Val?* I sent her a text ages ago!

At this point, I had finally been able to roll a cigarette and was just carrying it around with me looking to do something with it, but I couldn't quite do anything with it. There was still no lighter and they wouldn't let me borrow a lighter. I couldn't have any fire or something.

Finally about 11am, just about an hour before they left, they let us into the kitchen. I had been up since 6am; I had pissed six times, but hadn't had any water or anything to eat. I was quite thirsty and quite hungry. I was starving. We went into the kitchen, and I thought that we were just going to get something quick and go back into the living room. Sam started getting apples and he got the cutting board and a big knife. I lit my cigarette and stood near the door feeling quite guilty because I was breaking the rules for 128—there is no smoking inside.

Sam started making an apple turnover. I just watched in disbelief; he was just being so presumptuous. Without asking, he took out all this stuff. I thought, *Is this ok?* There were just two cops in there talking. I finished my cigarette and started helping him make stuff. I got this huge butcher knife from behind the cop and brought it around the cop and

then to the apples. I cut the apples and went towards the sink where the two cops were and said, 'Excuse me' holding the big butcher knife right in front of them. They said, 'Oh sorry' and moved away. Maybe after they had found nothing there, they decided we weren't so scary.

It was pretty ridiculous.

So we put the apple turnover into the oven and about the time it was going to come out the cops left. The doors—the two front doors and the back door—were broken, and we couldn't close anything. There was no one else there. We were thinking, *Where are all the people to support us who should be supporting us?* There was just a lot of press.

So we put stuff up against the front door and then a couple of people did come through the back door. They said, 'OK, we have to go to Oblong.' Oblong was the collective internet cafe on Cuba Mall. Everything was such a rush. I thought *Why?* That person said, 'Haven't you heard?'

I said 'What, yeah, there was a raid on the house! I was here.'

And they said, 'No, there is other stuff going on too.'

'What other stuff?' I asked.

And he said, 'Other stuff.'

We decided to go out the back door and around so we could avoid the media. I had no idea what was going on. We were meeting at Oblong. We rushed across the street, and Sam went off; I think he was going to his office. It was just me and this other person. He told me that there had been raids all over the country. I said, 'What are you talking about? Raids all over the country?' He said, 'Yeah.'

I can't remember if he said hundreds or tons of raids all over the country. Was this a strategic attack? They were not just threatening us. This was a huge plan.

Then he said, 'Our friends and other people have been arrested and they are charged with terrorism.' I started laughing. 'No! What?'

We were walking really quickly to Oblong. As he was re-confirming what had happened and that he wasn't joking, I could hear the sound of the glass breaking earlier that morning.

I felt like there was this organisation of people who were actively against us. They saw us as a threat and had a malicious will towards us. We were, in my mind, trying to help and trying to change things for the better. There was this organisation that was against me and against my friends. These people were willing to destroy our lives. This was the government. The vast majority of people believed in it so much. Everything that this organisation did was the right thing, or there must have been some reason behind it that was valid in some way.

I had had these feelings that the government was messed up. I knew that they had done stuff in the past that was terrible. It was still doing stuff that was terrible, but I never thought that they would be malicious to me. I am white and middle-class, which means I am who they are trying to protect. I am not wealthy. I am part of the small segment of the population that they don't usually actively want to harm. I was directly affected by that day's state violence, which I don't feel that most privileged people are so much. It is usually poor people and minorities that are directly affected; the people in other countries that are directly affected by it, third-world countries.

We continued walking to Oblong. We watched the news. The news was showing big maps—these maps of New Zealand—they had all of these places marked on them where they were zooming in. Then there were pictures of the cops. I got really confused by them. I thought, *Isn't that what terrorists are supposed to look like?* They were fully clad in black with huge guns. I was confused!

I don't know if we knew who at this point was arrested. I think Val's name was possibly mentioned; I am not sure. I didn't know if Urs was in town yet. We didn't know what was going on. I did see that friend of mine that I had spent the previous night with watching *Dr Who* and that was the biggest relief. I just started crying because I had been so worried about her.

The atmosphere in Oblong was manic. There were some people just running about; it was interesting to see how everyone was dealing with

it. Some people were running about, frantically trying to do things. There were other people sitting there in shock; some people were crying and running about, and some people were crying and sobbing in a heap on the floor. I had been at Oblong for 15 to 20 minutes, not long, just enough time to have a few hugs. Then I was taken to the court by a wonderful lady who gave me some of that rescue remedy, a homeopathic medicine, and it actually saved me for the longest time. I carried it around with me. To everyone who was getting teary and crazy I would give it to them and say, 'Here take this!' It made me a bit more sane.

That was the first day we all went to court together in support of the October 15th defendants. It was similar to other days in that everyone was there, eating and lounging around the court. There were lots of hugs. Some of the court days just started blending together.

We went into the courtroom when it was time. I don't know if I had known before who was going to be there. I remember seeing Val, Em and Urs. They looked so haggard. It was just so scary to see my friends. Everyone just looked so haggard, although Urs looked like he was having a good time. I wasn't worried about him. That was the day Coe was there. He was two. He quite liked Urs. He saw Urs and called, 'Urs!' across the courtroom. Urs looked up and waved to him. Everyone looked and giggled in a sad sort of a way. The judge said, 'This court is no place for a baby!' and made Coe leave. I don't think that court was a place for anyone except maybe the police and the judge.

It was the saddest thing in the world seeing my friends and feeling like I didn't know what they had been through. I didn't know if they were going to be OK, if they had been beaten or if they were just scared shitless. I wanted to give them a hug and make it better, but instead they were on the other side of the room, alone and afraid—aside from Urs. Then they were taken away. I didn't know when we would be able to see them.

They didn't get bail. When does that happen? We were all shocked and horrified as we were leaving the courtroom. The whole time reporters were harassing us. I don't quite remember if this happened this

time, because there were so many court days. There were just so many heartbreaking days.

Later, the vans going to the prisons were leaving the court. We were standing outside the court building not knowing when they would come, or if there would be people we knew in them. Whenever they departed, we would start singing. I think that day we were yelling and screaming. Some one reported, 'I saw Val looking through the window,' but I didn't because those windows are hard to see through. I just remember screaming at those vans, screaming as hard as possible because I wanted to get in there. I wanted to tell them that I was there. Afterwards everyone was traumatised. We were screaming so hard as the vans left. We didn't know if they heard us or not.

Everyone—well, not everyone, but some—would have these meltdowns, and start crying. That is when the reporters would come and harass people. I felt so invaded and so freaked out, so heartbroken and then so invaded at the same time.

I remember at that point we had to run back to 128. There was this one guy who said, 'OK everybody, let's go to 128.' I was thinking, *Actually, this is the house I live in. It's also a community house, but it is the house I live in, and it's totally broken.* I said to this person, 'Today 128 is closed; we are going to make repairs, clean it up, have a decent time.' In the chaos of leaving, someone got a text from someone at 128 saying, 'There are some people here and it is getting out of hand.'

There were two guys at 128 who were affiliated with the house. Then there were a whole bunch of people who were more into hanging out at the park and drinking beer, which was cool, just not at 128. We were just a few blocks away from 128 in the car. I decided to get out of the car and run home to deal with it. I didn't know if these people had been invited to come. I ran in. Someone was working on the door handle. There were three people in the living room building a fire, and I believed they were drinking. I am not 100 per cent sure that I saw alcohol; it might have just been my assumption. It could have been bias on my part. I knew that

other people wanted them out. I wanted them out. So I was going to help them out.

I tried to explain to them that we had had a really stressful day and that we needed to clean up the house. It was great that they had stopped by but could they please leave? They said, 'Nope, this is our community centre, we need to be here right now, we want to be here right now.' I kept trying to explain to them that they just really needed to leave. They were welcome, just not on that day after everything that had happened.

Finally, two of them did leave, because they realised nothing was going to change. However, one of them got quite frustrated and started pacing around the room. He was saying that because he was tangata whenua he had a right to this place. How dare we tell him he wasn't welcome there? We were just colonisers. I said, 'You raise really good points, however, this is something we should talk about during a meeting. If you would like to come back for a meeting that would be great. I really welcome you. I hope you do. Right now we really need to sort things out.'

He was pacing around the room and getting more and more worked up. He seemed belligerent in a slightly drunken way, or perhaps just a slightly angry way. I realised he was pacing around so much that I could gently gain space, and push him out the door. I got up from my seat. I was talking to him and edging him towards the door. I realised it was working so I got some other people around me at that point. There were two other women who were standing on either side of me and we were talking to him. He looked around and said, 'Oh, I see what this is... this house is a women's conspiracy.' Even though there were more men in the house than women, he saw only women in that second. He said, 'I see I am not welcome, this is a feminist conspiracy.'

One person got so angry at that point she dropped out and said, 'I can't deal with this.' I tried to get other guys along into the group forming around him, pushing him out the door. I got one on one side, and we were really close to the door. He was in the doorway, and it was

really close to working. He was still in the doorframe when the male standing next to me pushed him, and I shut the door quickly. The guy outside punched through the glass. The force of it pushed me back; I was a bit scratched. The impact that I had been hit was—I reacted like I had been shot. I stood back, and everyone held the door shut. He was just walking back and forth outside and yelling, yelling that he would be back and bring people. I was standing back holding my slightly scratched hand.

There were quite a few supportive people at 128 by that point. I walked to the hallway and started crying and hyperventilating. People were talking to me, but I couldn't hear them. A really good female friend came up to me and said, 'Julia, you are having a panic attack.' I said, 'I am going to throw up; I need to go outside.' I went outside. I was dry-heaving. Then my two close friends said, 'We need to get you out of here.' There were so many people around; they were trying to have a meeting, and here I was hyperventilating, on the ground, crying, about to vomit.

They got me out and put me in a car. I wasn't talking, and they were doing all this stuff for me. It was perfect. In the car, I got a text from the same person who had texted me outside court and he said, 'Don't ever exclude me from MY community centre.' I thought, *Hey, that's not supportive.*

I went to my friend's house and lay in bed. I had some tea and some toast or a cookie. I hung out for an hour or two; it was really good. I think one person left and the other person stayed. I just lay there feeling totally useless. I took a bath. While I was in the bath, I decided that what I needed to do was go to this meeting and keep doing stuff. I could just lie around, but what I really felt like doing was—I needed to know what was going on and what we were going to do.

After the bath, I got out and said what I was going to do. My lovely friend had brought my banjo. For some reason I was freaking out, and said I needed my banjo. She said, 'Here, now you don't have to go home.'

So I sat with my banjo in the back of the car as she drove me to the meeting.

The meeting was amazing. There were all these people, and all this food including that apple turnover that we made earlier in the day. We started talking about our plans; we started talking about prisoner support. Someone had found out about visiting. I thought, *We don't need to visit them because they are going to be out in a week*, but I didn't say anything. I was thinking, *Why would you visit them? They are going to be out tomorrow, right? Or Friday, the next court date.* People did get in to visit even before that Friday and many times after.

We talked, and I decided I wanted to go home to 128. I decided I wanted my own space, and I didn't want to be coddled. I thought, *Ok, I have got to get over this because tomorrow is going to be a big day.* One of my friends was going to spend the night, because she didn't want to spend the night alone. She was going to a concert, a show she was really looking forward to that night; it must have been a Monday, that's right. So she went to the concert. That night the neighbours were having a huge party. There were some people who were still quite upset about being kicked out of 128 earlier, out front drinking. When she got home a little later, they harassed her when she was coming in. That was all that she needed in order to feel less safe after our day. You could hear them from my room. We talked. She was quite upset and tried to go to sleep.

Late that night, I got another unhelpful text from that same person who had sent me the text earlier, saying, 'We feel it's important to go to 128.' So we disconnected the doorbell. I heard them knocking. 'A group of us are coming to 128,' the message said. I got down from bed and stood at the top of the staircase. I heard them knock, and I started to shake. Sam was still there, thankfully. He was in bed, too. It was quite late, about 11.30 at night. I wasn't answering the door; I could just hear them.

Then I heard them come in through the window. This was the second—no, third—time that 128 had been broken into that day. I was just shaking. I knew that they were not going to hurt me, but I was still shak-

ing, I didn't know what to do. Then Sam came; he got out of bed, put on his trench-coat and went downstairs. He argued with them. They were drunk. They were arguing about how this was THEIR community centre. There were voices that I had never heard before. There was a long argument and finally they left. I went back upstairs and went to bed. That was my October 15th.

The following month after the raids was extremely frantic. There were all these new people. I don't know where they all came from. On 16 October, someone put a notice on Indymedia that they were having a meeting at 128. We were thinking, *Who called this meeting? What is this meeting?* All of these people showed up. I think I started that meeting. I had never facilitated a meeting before.

I don't have many speaking skills; I don't have many leadership skills; I have good supportive skills. What I do is help support people who are doing stuff. I can make food and do support roles. I don't do leadership roles. But there I was in the middle of everything, and actually I got this sense of power, which is quite funny in an anarchist group. I had this sense of power and authority and felt better about myself. I was insanely depressed; I wasn't suicidal, but definitely the thoughts of killing myself were there. I wasn't ever going to, but it was always there. It was a terrible time in my life, except that I also had the most self-esteem I have ever had. I did projects, big projects, almost on my own.

Perhaps because I was one of the people in power, I didn't feel that there were strong power dynamics. Everything had been reshuffled. There was a lot more opportunity for new people. There was so much to be done that anyone could just get a project and do it. I felt like I was part of a big movement. Something really big was happening. I was in the centre of it, because I was part of 128, and 128 was where everyone was coming through—and it was also a symbol of what had happened. The broken window. It felt like that was the symbol for what had happened. It was shattered by the police. It was quite sharp; we could easily cut ourselves on it. We could make do. There was so much energy.

It was great, because there was something different to be done by each person. Some people wanted to protest; some people wanted to do support; some people wanted to start new projects, and help continue projects. There were all these people who would come over and bring food for 128, and all these people who would come over and clean. It was great; I don't think I went shopping that whole month. There were all these other people just carrying the house. It was the most amazing thing. I have not thanked people nearly enough for everything they did. I definitely wouldn't have eaten for the first week if it wasn't for people constantly shoving food in my face.

There was this urgency for everything. Our friends had real needs that had to be met. We had a really great support group, especially a few people who just devoted their whole lives to this, nothing else. It was a really interesting time to be involved. So many new people just walked in off the street. So many people were willing to do so much. I had never been in meetings with more than 50 people. I don't think I had been in meetings with more than ten! The whole downstairs of 128 would be completely full of people trying to attend this one meeting and how was I supposed to facilitate something like that? No one with any experience had any energy to do that stuff. There were definitely a few people who ran those meetings who were amazing.

Right before the raids, I read *Assata.* What the Black Panther Party went through was totally unique and totally violent, but I saw so many parallels. In America, the environmental movement and the anti-capitalist movement have turned into the prisoner support movement. I'm sure you can see this in other countries, but America and New Zealand are the only countries I know. A government becomes afraid for its safety once it sees people questioning it and organising against it. I don't know why they chose that point—October 15th.

I feel like on the west coast of America, *Operation Green Scare* was a preventative measure before they actually saw any sort of threat. It want-

ed to let people know that they couldn't do anything that would threaten the government because it was just too big.

Perhaps the New Zealand government didn't want indigenous people to think they could organise or do anything. Perhaps it saw there was a beginning. The state is cool with Māori pride, so long as it is good for capitalism. Have your kapa haka, have your marae, but don't actually organise or try to empower yourselves.

Governments in many different ways have to assert that they are strong and they absolutely will not be challenged by people. If they do that early enough along, they do seem really strong. If they do it much later, the movement is actually strong enough to fight back. Now they have 18 people, their families, their friends to deal with rather than a few hundred, which can quickly get much larger. That would be intimidating for the government to have to deal with.

I am quite sad. I don't know if repression works or does the exact opposite because it did spur a movement. But at least on the west coast of America things have become focused on prisoner support. People are fundraising not to build communities, but to keep people out of jail, or to assist those people in jail to be more comfortable, or to help the people in jail from having huge loans. Maybe repression does work a bit. Reforming prisons is challenging to the government, but not being imprisoned is different from having free communities and no government.


HAKA
TIONAL
ESTIVAL
January 2007
Traditional Crafts • Poetry Festival • Tree Planth
Healing • Camping and so much more
George

WELLINGTON

Emily

At the time I lived in a tent with my old dog in a small patch of bush in Wellington's town belt, just up the road from our activist-run social centre. I liked the bush; it was beautiful, with many birds. Living there was a way to avoid wasting my small income on rent. That morning, my boyfriend and I woke to the heavy crashing of boots and a strange dog barking, then spotlights and shouting by angry-sounding men. It was still pretty dark. When the tent door was thrust open, we had about 12 armed and masked men pointing their guns, with torches mounted on them, in our faces. They ordered us out of the tent and handcuffed us; eventually we were taken and locked up in cells, alone, downtown. They took my clothes and cut off the pounamu my mother gave me; I was made to wear one of those blue plastic coverall suits. After a surreal interrogation and a court hearing packed with our shocked friends and family, we were taken away to prison.

Across Aotearoa, 17 people, including my two brothers and several of my friends, were also arrested that day in the police 'Operation 8.' Two others were arrested or charged but released. At least 60 houses were targeted and raided. A whole town further north was blockaded, and people

photographed, searched and interrogated at gunpoint. The armed offenders squad even sent my 13-year old dog to the pound and told them to put her down as I would not be back to collect her. Thankfully, my animal rights friends rescued her the next day.

Along with the other 16 arrested and slammed in jail that day, I was charged with 'unlawful possession of weapons' under the Arms Act. The charges were based on evidence the New Zealand police had gathered for around two years by monitoring phones, bugging cars and marae, placing hidden cameras outside homes, following people around, placing informants in activist groups and more. This was carried out under the new Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA)—under which we were told we would also be charged. Terrorism charges in New Zealand carry a maximum 14-year jail sentence.

I had never been to prison before. One of my best friends and I were locked up next to each other in solitary for a week at Arohata Women's Prison in Tawa. It was a small concrete cell with a camera, a bed, a toilet and trashy women's magazines. There was a cage outside that opened for a few hours a day to let us shower. We were fed three times a day through a slot in the door and monitored every 30 minutes. Sometimes they would 'forget' to turn the lights off at night or 'forget' to give us our mail. I remember lying on the ground in my caged 'courtyard' to look out under the outside door. I could see three blades of grass. My friend next door could also see three. By the second week we persuaded them to let us into the mainstream, where conditions were not much better; at least we could be with other people during 'unlock' for a few hours each day. We had windows that looked out onto a hillside, and we got exercise time in a gym room. En route to the gym, we were locked into a cage that had some bark chips next to it. I put one in my pocket, but they took it away.

In the third week, we were handcuffed, put on a plane with two guards each and taken to another, bigger prison in Auckland. It was warmer and you could go outside on some grass, but it was still a prison with cameras everywhere and multiple fences with electric and razor wires.

Prison was a huge emotional and mental lesson for us. While it was horrible being controlled 24/7 and barely able to connect with loved ones or the world outside, it was a rare and valuable first-hand experience of our (in)justice system and its tools of psychological and physical control. Of all the prisoners we met, probably 85 per cent were Māori, Islander or other non-white skin colour. Most were poor, ill-educated, unsupported and/or rejected by our so-called 'fair-go society;' they were locked up for bungled bank robberies, drug-dealing or fighting. I didn't meet any pension-thieving CEOs or rapist cops, of course. I was angry at how the prisoners were treated. The rules seemed completely arbitrary, changing from one guard to the next. There are forms for everything that go back and forth for approval for things such as receiving clothing, or phone numbers that you can call. If you have money in prison, you can get over-priced special items like chocolate, toiletries or phone cards. If you have no money you can work, if you're lucky, for about 15 cents an hour. Dental care consists only of extractions. Pregnant women in labour are taken from their cell only when their babies are really ready to come out. Then the babies are taken from their mothers at six months of age. Prisoners can lose their children, partners, homes, jobs and livelihoods while they're locked up, yet this country builds more and more prisons in the blind attempt to protect private property and to make our communities 'safer.' It's just punishment handed down from above; there is no pretence of rehabilitation.

I can't speak much about our case as it is still in the courts. Of the 17 arrested most were environmentalists, peace activists, unionists and indigenous rights activists. Many of us were well-known and thankfully had lots of support from family, friends and other noisy activists. Protests sprang up across the country and even overseas in cities like London, Mexico City, Berlin, Montreal and Melbourne. A few were released early under super strict-bail conditions. After our 26 days in jail, the solicitor general made a decision not to allow charges of terrorism. It was a great day, and we were all released on bail within the next three days.

For about a year we all had mad non-association orders for bail conditions; we were not allowed to leave the country and had to report to the police several times a week. Our phones were (and are) bugged and undercover cops followed us around. Even my mother was so paranoid that we had conversations on paper, and then she'd go outside with her box of matches and burn them.

The police raided houses at least twice more and arrested and charged a further four people. They dramatically increased all our charges to try to lump all counts together; a defendant, for example, went from having nine charges to having 31, each (we thought) possibly carrying a maximum four-year jail sentence. One defendant has now been discharged under section 59a. Another had his charges dropped as a result of our month-long deposition hearing, which found no reasonable evidence against him. In that process the trumped-up charges were reduced back down again with the suggestion to drop more still. Instead, the police laid new charges against five of us for 'participation in a criminal group,' which carries a five-year prison term. After many, many more court appearances in Auckland and Wellington, our trial date has finally been set down for three months in 2011; by the end of the trial almost four years will have passed since we were first arrested. We don't expect that to be the end of it; in fact, some think there may be two trials because of the new criminal group charges. Our collective legal bill is now well over $2 million, with several personal homes under liens.

Early in 2010, Tūhoe were to sign an agreement in principle with the crown on their Waitangi Treaty claim. They were expecting around $80 million in compensation, the return of confiscated Te Urewera land and some form of mana motuhake (independent governance) for their iwi. After many years of painful hearings and negotiations, the prime minister telephoned two days before the big party to say the deal was off. We can only assume it was too much for the National Party's voter base. We now wait. There were many Tūhoe spied on, raided, charged or imprisoned under Operation 8.

On the other side of the island, Te Atiawa and Taranaki iwi entered into negotiation with the crown in 2010 over their grievances, which have been described as a 'holocaust' by the Waitangi Tribunal. These included the naval shelling and armed invasion of Waitara and several other Māori communities; the sacking, imprisonment, murder and rape of the non-violent community of Parihaka; and the theft of almost two million acres of land to support the military and a massive national dairy economy that is often dubbed 'the backbone of the country.' There were at least eight people from these two iwi who were spied on, raided and/or charged and imprisoned.

At the top of the island Ngā Puhi began their claim in 2010 with hearings of evidence that outline the gross injustice they suffered under the crown. Again, several people who were spied on and raided and at least one defendant come from Ngā Puhi.

Maniapoto, Tainui and some other iwi are also represented among those who were targeted under Operation 8.

Many more disturbing events occurred in the past two years that are of concern to defendants and targets of Operation 8. New Zealand now 'officially' has a rotating SAS unit and continues to have 'reconstruction teams' in Afghanistan. A bill was put to parliament suggesting mining in our protected national parks. That provoked one of the largest protest demonstrations for decades. That bill has now been stopped; however, state-owned mining operations are still expanding every few months into the less-protected wilderness areas such as the Waimangaroa (and Happy Valley), Coromandel, Westland and Southland. An emissions trading scheme was signed last year, which instead of decreasing our emissions, will see them simply traded off within industry or to poorer countries; ironically, half of our emissions come from agriculture. Last, but surely not least, the government advances draconian laws against workers' rights to better conditions such as the 90-day 'fire-at-will' bill, along with restrictions on ACC compensation and unions' access to worksites. The Seabed and Foreshore Bill, against which we saw the largest-ever protest

march by Māori, was finally repealed but looks to be replaced with similar legislation that is only slightly different in wording.

Interesting times are ahead.

As for me, I got out of Wellington and went 'home' to my dad's whenua. My old dog passed away recently and I now have a baby with my partner. We await our trial, and his—our—possible deportation as he is not a New Zealand citizen. I don't think I or any of the defendants have recovered from this experience and probably never will completely. It totally changed our lives and will continue to affect us for a long time. I used to write a bit and felt that I could say anything I damn well pleased. Now I struggle to write this, worrying what the police might read into my words. I would like to say boldly that I'm still an activist and am not scared of the state, but that would be a lie. I'm still an activist but not like I used to be. Let's just say: I'm recharging and taking a new look at things... then I'll be back.

WELLINGTON

Urs

I remember hearing birds singing that morning, tui and others. I was just waking up in a tent in Wellington's town belt when I heard people yelling and screaming. *What's going on? Are they just on their way home after a wild night out and have stumbled across my girlfriend's home?* Then torchlight fell on the tent. 'Get out of the tent! Get the fuck out of that tent!'

I was naked and scared. 'I'm just putting on some clothes...' 'Get out of the fucking tent! Hands in the air!' I put on a singlet, some undies and pants, kissed Em and stepped out of the tent. Cops were all around me. One was standing right in front of me, pointing his big gun right in my face. He was wearing all black and a balaclava. He was yelling at me, 'Put your hands in the air! Get the fuck on the ground! Get on the ground!!!' I lay down, face down in the muddy earth. 'Put your hands on your back!' He handcuffed me. A police dog was right in my face. Em had gotten out of the tent and was lying on the ground not far from me with a cop sitting on her back. He was hurting her hand. I yelled out to her: 'You know your rights, aye?' 'Shut the fuck up!' (That was the cop.)

Probably around ten members of the armed offenders squad (AOS), a unit which 'provides police with the means of effectively and more

safely responding to and resolving situations in which there is an actual or threatened use of firearms or other weapons against members of the public or police,' had surrounded the tent. Their guns, it turned out, were Bushmasters, XM15 M4A3, a military-style weapon which can be either semi- or fully-automatic. These cops were positioned all around the tent. Some got lost in the bush and only found their way to the tent after a few minutes.

After I was handcuffed, plainclothes cops started to appear. They were wearing bullet-proof vests over their ties and shirts. I was taken up to Aro School, shivering from being cold and scared. I asked for my jersey; the cops put it over my shoulders and then placed me in an unmarked police car. Detective Robin Hutton placed me under arrest. Two other cops were in the car. They put on face masks, saying that I had been staying with someone who has TB and that I might be contagious. 'Were you aware that the person you were staying with has TB, Urs?' I didn't even look at him.

The car drove off to the Wellington Central police station, avoiding Abel Smith Street (where our activist community centre was being raided). I had been processed at that police station four times before, after being arrested at protests, and have waited for my comrades to be released outside the station countless times. But it was the first time I was taken to an interview/interrogation room.

My arresting officer read out six charges for 'possession of weapons' and one for 'participating in a terrorist group.' He wanted to know what I had to say. 'Look Urs, I'm sure you have lots of questions as to why you are here and we, too, have many questions.' 'I don't have any questions whatsoever and I'm not going to answer any of your questions.' That was it—end of interview! I couldn't believe it.

While riding down to the police station I had prepared myself mentally for the interrogation. *What tactics will they use? Good cop/bad cop, like on TV? Telling me that Emily had told them 'everything'? Offering me a deal? Threatening me with Guantánamo or beating the shit out of me?* Well,

I was ready for anything really. But not a lame attempt at confusion: the TB story was supposed to scare me, e.g. 'Do we have enough face masks for all the people in the court room later this afternoon?' I should mention that I did not see a doctor in the three and a half weeks I spent in jail following my arrest—TB my arse! They made a really lame offer of cooperation: 'I'm sure you have lots of questions,' and another go on the way to the holding cells: 'We have some tapes we would like you to listen to so you get an idea what this investigation is about. Would you like to listen to them?' 'No' is what I said; *Get fucked* is what I thought. They knew.

After the failed interview, I was charged with six counts of possession of weapons, which took forever because the cop had to write everything down. They didn't charge me with 'participating in a terrorist group,' section 13 of the Terrorism Suppression Act (TSA) passed by parliament in 2002. At the time I didn't know that the police needed consent of the attorney general to prosecute me under the TSA. I was confused, to say the least.

I rang a couple of our activist lawyers. One was down there in no time and, wearing a face mask, joined me and the two cops who had tried to interrogate me. From then on he did the talking: 'My client is not making a statement,' and 'No, my client does not want to give you a DNA sample.' After I was photographed, the arresting officer took me down to the holding cells where I was fingerprinted, stripped and given a blue jumpsuit (with hood) and put in the big holding cell. At toilet time, I went for a walk and looked for Em. Instead I saw Ira, Em's brother, in another cell and, while being processed, Valerie, another Wellington anarchist, walked past. The cops said we would appear in court at 2pm so they drove me there in an un-marked car. The capitalist media were there already, of course. As we were waiting for the garage door to open, cameras surrounded the car. I tried to hide my face, and Hutton said: 'I'm really sorry about this, Urs.' *Horseshit you were!*

We appeared in the Wellington District Court that same afternoon. News was coming in from raids across the country. Rūātoki, a small

Tuhoe community at the foot of the Urewera forest, had been blockaded by armed police and every car was stopped and searched. Arrests were reported in Auckland, Hamilton, Whakatāne, Rūātoki, Palmerston North and us in Wellington. My lawyer said that we should try and get bail straight away while the other lawyers weren't so keen. We four activists decided to make a collective decision: we would make a bail application later that week.

The courtroom was packed with our friends, everybody looking confused and concerned. *What on earth is going on here?* My friend's kid was in the courtroom. 'Hi Urs,' he yelled out. 'Remove that child'—the immediate response from the judge. I replied, 'Love you, Frog!' the nickname that I used for him. I can't remember exactly what happened in court, and that would happen to me over and over again: I was too busy looking at my friends and comrades in the dock and courtroom.

Ira and I were then taken to Rimutaka Prison in Upper Hutt while the two womyn were taken to Arohata Women's Prison in Tawa. That was the start of 26 days of incarceration.

When we walked into our new home, HM2 at Rimutaka, late on October 15th, the other prisoners already knew who we were. 'Here are the terrorists, here comes Greenpeace.'

Between 40 and 60 prisoners live in one unit, usually sharing a cell. During the day, we'd get two hours in the common wing area and two in the yard. Twenty long hours are spent in your cell. The wing had a pool table, a public phone and a few tables and chairs. The yard is best described as a cage, some 20 metres long and 8 wide, where we played rugby, touch and basketball.

We spent our yard and wing time with the same people. The others were all members of the Mongrel Mob. Unlike the prison in Auckland, gang members are separated at Rimutaka. They were nice guys, looking after us and giving us new nicknames. Three Nazi-skinheads in our unit abused us verbally. 'Greenpeace sucks!'—*Um, yes, point noted*. But we

never spent any time with them (lucky for them: the Mobsters would have given them the bash!).

It took a few days to work out how my new 'home' worked—'Sweet Home Rimutaka' we called it. Filling out form after form, getting used to things taking forever (or never taking place). On Thursday, after only four days, I had my first visit, which was fantastic! Over the next three weeks, the visits, along with the letters and messages of solidarity and support from Aotearoa and around the world, kept me going.

The move to Auckland came unexpectedly. I had another court case in Wellington relating to a protest in 2006 and thought that I'd stay around for that. On Thursday morning of the second week, we were woken up early and then taken to the Receiving Office. I gave one of my most brilliant speeches ever; it provoked the five guards to stare at me in total silence. 'Three things: Firstly, what you are doing right now is illegal. Moving us to Auckland is illegal under your own laws given that the alleged crime did not happen there, nor am I from there. I do NOT consent to being moved to Auckland. Secondly, we are having a High Court hearing to challenge the move to Auckland. Thirdly, I appear in the Wellington District Court before the court appearance in Auckland.'

Instead I was transferred north. Feeling good, I boarded the bus that was taking us across the North Island to Auckland. However, that bus ride was one of the most humiliating experiences in this whole saga. We sat in tiny individual cages with cameras pointed at us. I was cold and not exactly comfy. At least we stopped at some interesting sites. It makes a trip so much more 'fun' when, instead of stopping at the Levin playground (which has a giant hamster wheel) and getting fish'n'chips in Taupo, you get to check out Linton Prison, Rangipo Prison (our lunch stop—cup of tea and three sandwiches) and Waikeria Prison.

Auckland was different. Wing time was all day, from 7.30am to 5.30pm. The time in the wing was spent with around 50 other prisoners. After spending our first night in unit Foxtrot, we were moved the follow-

ing morning because of concerns for our safety in that unit. We ended up in Echo for two weeks.

Some of the people I met there: the suitcase murderers (they were actually called 'Suitcase 1, 2 and 3'—number 4 was chopped up in the suitcase); a guy who chopped his wife's head off with an axe when he found her in bed with someone else; 'Dog Dog,' a Mongrel mobster from Dogtown (a.k.a. Waipawa) who talked about the mob all day; Luis, who was on bail for dealing pot but was re-arrested for breaching his bail conditions (24-hour curfew) because he went to work (he is a baker). 'How can I pay the bills and buy food for my kids? Where should I get the money from?'

There was a Maoist prison guard—I am not joking! I was called in to the principal corrections officer's office one day for a security assessment. We talked about the books I was reading (books about the Wobblies, Angela Davis and the Paris Commune) and he said: "Well, I need to make sure then that you don't steal my badges behind you on the wall." I turned around and there were badges of Lenin and Mao on the wall and above the door. I cracked up laughing.

And there was Nik, Assole and TJ—the Monopoly posse. We would play several games a day. The bank usually lost. I developed a polygraphic theory: if they don't crack after being challenged the third time, they usually tell the truth. An example: 'You landed on Queen Street!' 'No I didn't! I had a six.' 'No you didn't, you had a five. You owe me $2000!' 'No, I don't. I got a six.' 'Liar, you had a five.' 'Ah yeah, true, I did.' I hope that's not how they talk when being interrogated by the cops.

And of course there was Tūhoe freedom fighter Tame Iti.

Here is what I wrote to the anarchist and activist community of Wellington while I was inside:

'I need to be quite frank here, as I would rather create debate than fall into a trap of not communicating or misunderstandings. Anything I say in this paragraph does not go against what I wrote [earlier on]; I'm truly thankful to everybody who is standing up right now—too much!

'I do not think that what happened on 15th October has to do with civil rights. The police actions of that day targeted a particular tribe in Aotearoa, Tūhoe, as well as people active in various activist groups who, more or less, identify as anarchists (or libertarian communists or anarcha-feminists etc.). As an anarchist, the state is not something I look to for protection; it is not an institution that in my opinion will do anything for the struggle against "capitalist-colonialist-patriarchy." In fact, the opposite is true! The state's justice system, police force and armies are protecting the interests of the ruling class, not the indigenous peoples, not the anarchists, not the workers, not womyn, not the environment.

'Therefore, I don't want rights, I want liberation!'

'So now you might say/think: *Ah, he's just a mad anarchist and I simply don't agree with his politics!*—sweet, all good. Having different ideas around social organisation is a challenge every movement faces. And the last thing I want is for you to leave this movement that's emerging! :-) So what am I suggesting? I propose that we shift our collective focus away from the "rights," the "legislations" and "acts' and instead look at what these recent attacks by the state are really about: Te Mana Motuhake ō Tūhoe!

'Freedom for all political prisoners around the world! Free Mumia Abu Jamal! Free Marco Camenisch! Free Leonard Peltier! Free Tame Iti!'

'Solidarity with all the people around the world— Burma, Oaxaca, Tonga, Tūhoe—who are experiencing the vicious brutality of the state.

"Solidarity with workers who have recently been on strike on the trains in France and the port of Auckland!'

'Get behind Te Mana Motuhake ō Tūhoe!'

I think this pretty much sums it up and is of course still true now, almost three years after the raids. Perhaps it is somewhat simplistic and obviously full of slogans. But I wasn't exactly trying to write a masters thesis in my eight-square metre cell.

Postscript 2010

I wrote most of the text above in early 2008. Now, in 2010, that day in October 2007 seems like a long time ago. I still think about it, but not every day any more. Maybe it is because the raids have simply become part of my life. It is only when I meet someone new, and the raids come up in conversation and people are like 'Wow! You were one of the "terrorists"' that I realise again the sheer madness of that day and the month that followed. We are not the only ones who vividly remember that time.

My comrade and co-accused Valerie wrote about how deeply traumatising that month in prison was for her in an article titled, *The process is the punishment: Operation 8 two years on.* We all experienced that time differently, and I was always under the impression, and so were people who knew me and visited me, that I was fine and coped really well with prison. And I think that is true; I was lucky. But in recent months, I was able to think about the raids on a more emotional level, not just political or legal, and I have been wondering if I suffered more deeply, at places I don't even know. It is hard to know, I guess. I carry it with me and own the feelings.

Life has changed. I have moved out of the city, met a lot of new people, and Em and I have a baby to look after now. The crown seems determined to get convictions out of this rubbish, and a trial is lurking on the horizon. We all entered not-guilty pleas last year, and we will fight these charges to the bitter end. If I get convicted, and possibly even deported, I will not have any regrets. In my head and heart, I feel free.