

Officials fly in to foreshore furore

Runanga accused of selling out iwi

by Marianne Gillingham

ANGER over local foreshore and seabed rights erupted at Gisborne Airport on Monday morning as a group of officials representing the Prime Minister's office and Ministry of Justice arrived for a two-day tour of the East Coast in continuing negotiations with Te Runanga o Ngati Porou.

Amid chants of "runanga kupapa" (runanga traitors) protesters from several East Coast tribes said they had not been privy to the deal being negotiated between the Crown and the runanga.

Spokesman Tui Marino said it was a corporate deal for the runanga which would deny hapu and iwi their interests in assets in the same way they had been denied any benefit from the fisheries deal.

"Only the runanga have been receiving the assets — not anyone they are purporting to represent.

"The runanga is selling out assets worse than the foreshore and seabed deal."

He accused runanga chairman Apirana Mahuika of being a traitor for "selling out iwi assets".

He also challenged him over what he called the secret nature of the negotiations, which some hapu had not known about until they read it in the paper.

"You went straight past our marae and did not consult with our kaumatua," he said.

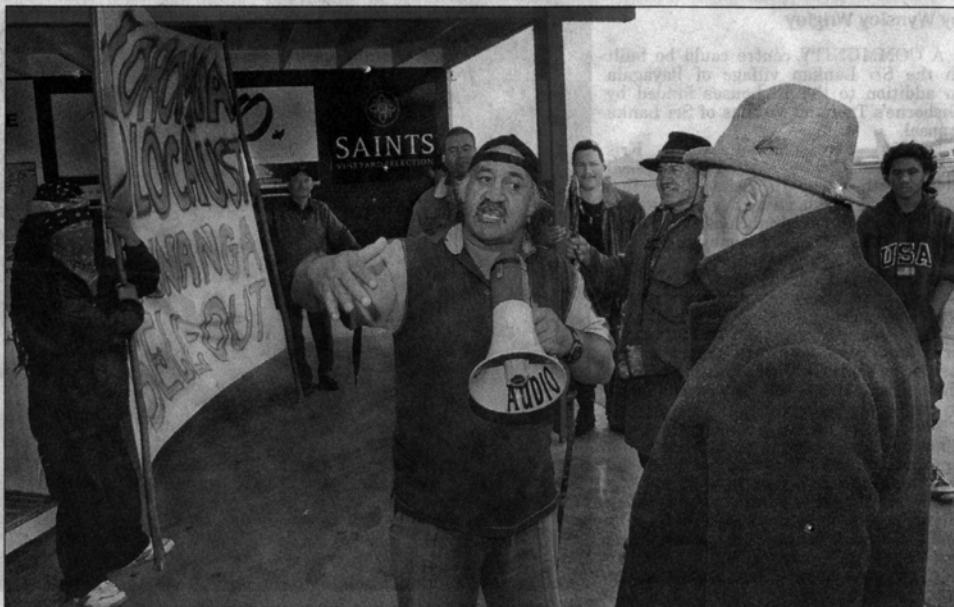
"You only consult with kaumatua you know you have got round your little finger," he said.

When approached by The Herald, Mr Mahuika made it clear he did not appreciate publicity over the visit in The Gisborne Herald on Saturday.

His son, Te Runanga o Ngati Porou lawyer Matanuku Mahuika, said the runanga was negotiating the maintenance and interest of the different East Coast whanau and hapu in the foreshore and seabed.

Although the runanga was doing the negotiations, it was doing so to "facilitate the interest of whanau and hapu".

He confirmed that whanau and hapu did claim



"Horomia Holocaust — runanga sells out", says the banner of some of the protesters at Gisborne Airport on Monday morning as Te Aitanga Hauiti spokesman Tui Marino accuses Te Runanga o Ngati Porou chairman Apirana Mahuika of not representing his tribe in the runanga's negotiations with the Crown.

Picture by Paul Rickard

ownership interests, but were not seeking fee simple title as was being purported.

Asked about access for all to the coast, Mr Mahuika said the iwi regarded themselves as owners now and had never denied anyone access.

The public would still have access after any agreement negotiated with the Crown.

The scenes at the airport were just a "family row", he said.

Mr Marino said the runanga represented only Ngati Porou, which was a small area of people around the

Waiapu River.

It was usurping the mana and interests of other iwi, including Te Aitanga Hauiti and Ngati Uepohatu by "doing secret deals with the Crown for their own".

This was a straight breach of the Treaty. "You are selling out the rights of our children and our mokopuna."

Other protesters asked Apirana Mahuika for a share of up to \$200,000 the runanga was being paid by the Crown for negotiating expenses.

In response Mr Mahuika threw them a 50 cent coin.