

The Treaty of Waitangi

On the 6th of February, the Treaty of Waitangi was signed between European men and Maori chiefs. The document was an argument that the Maori acknowledge the queen as their ruler, and the British would give the Maori the right to rule their own country and keep their customs, also getting protection from the British. When the French were seen as a country that wanted New Zealand for their own benefits. The British had to act fast in making New Zealand rule under the queen, so the Treaty of Waitangi was created, but the document had so/ne errors in it and had started turmoil, about wither the Maori were taken advantage of, or if the British had good intentions of the Maori at heart. The text of the treaty was written in English by William Hobson and then was translated into Maori by Henry Williams, where most of the arguments had come from the translation of the treaty. In over a few days the treaty was created and signed by over 500 chiefs, but many of the people now are wondering wither the Maori chiefs knew what they were signing, most were given gifts if signed so it seemed that bribery was one of the main reasons why the chiefs signed. However because of the intentions of protecting the Maori, the Treaty was seen as a great opportunity for some by allowing more trades and a better life style. Although some chiefs did not sign, Hobson announced that the whole of New Zealand was under the rule of the crown; therefore taking back what the treaty was offering the Maori- a choice. The issue over the Treaty is still being debated in this day in age and may have different opinions of whether this Treaty was a good thing for Maori or whether they were taken advantage of for the benefits of the British.

The sources of Ranginui Walker and Wikipedia show the negative view of the Treaty in how the British used dirty tactics to get signatures by the Maori chiefs. These sources seem to think that the British were in the wrong for taking advantage of the Maori.

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A statement by Ranginui says that "each chief who signed the Treaty was given two blankets and some tobacco", which gives evidence that the methods used by the British, were to try and bribe the Maori chiefs to sign the document, and in return would receive European goods, telling us that not all the chiefs knew what they were signing, and clearly stating a negative view on the fairness of the Treaty. Also in the Wikipedia source it states that "the English and Maori version differ", and continues to say that 'the most critical difference revolves around the interpretation of three Maori words: Kawanatanga (governorship)... rangatiratanga (chieftainship) ... and taonga (property or valued possessions)", telling people of the bad translation used by the British, indicating another way the British jeopardised the Treaty in order to get the chiefs to sign. After all this, Hobson announces New Zealand to be under the rule of the crown even though not all the chiefs agreed or even got the chance to sign the treaty.

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Both of these sources referred to the English version of the treaty and the differences it had to the Maori document that was translated wrongly, and both show the deliberate and great efforts made by the British to get New Zealand to rule under the queen.

The sources for *Our Nations Story* and Keith Sinclair both have high opinions for the Treaty being created. In the New Zealand's textbook, *Our Nations Story*, the author expresses that Britain didn't want New Zealand in the first place, but the missionaries were determined to

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make New Zealand a better and safer country, but in order to do that there must be some sort of government. For Keith Sinclair he proposes that the British had the best interests for the Maori, and that "The Treaty of Waitangi was intended to lay a basis for a just society in which two races, far apart in civilization, could live together in amity." Both sources also express the need for the Treaty to be signed because "affairs in New Zealand were so bad that our country might fall an easy prey to the French ... the British government was forced to act fast". The threat to the British when hearing of the French arrival, who were looking to settle in New Zealand, made the British think it was in the best interest for the Maori people that they be under the British government, so no outsiders could take advantage of them and buy land. Also letting the French have New Zealand would have been a bad move for the British, military wise, because New Zealand would of been under the French rule and therefore giving them more resources to soldiers and military ground.

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My perspective that I support with would be the one by W. Colenso: *The Authentic & Genuine History of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi*, because he gives an actual perspective of the time the Treaty was signed, and truly wishes that the Maori come out better off after the Treaty had been signed by them, and this is shown by him when he questioned whether the "natives understand the articles of the treaty which they are... to sign?". It gives a clear indication of the events that happened at the time and gives us an honest recollection of what happened at the signing, so we decide if the European were taking advantage or actually trying to protect the Maori.

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Whether Hobson had good intentions for the Maori by creating the Treaty, he did it in a way that wasn't fair, taking the rights of the Maori to decide whether to sign the document, by bribing and mistranslating the treaty to insure the Maori chiefs signed. The reason why the Treaty was created so fast, was to insure that New Zealand was under British governorship so no other foreign country could take advantage, and when The British heard the French were looking for some more land in New Zealand, they had to act fast. The main issue with the Treaty was the translation to Maori, which wasn't done in the right way and therefore has started many wars that could have been prevented. In conclusion I feel the Treaty was created for the right intentions but where taken advantage of and it misled the Maori.

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