

CHURCH SUPPORT FOR WAIHOPAI PLOUGHSHARES

PRESS STATEMENT FROM THE SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSIONER OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

10 March 2010

The Social Justice Commission of the Anglican Church has worked to support the Waihopai Ploughshares and defend their action to peacefully pursue justice and protect the rights of the marginalised.

The Anglican Church has committed itself to pursuing non-violence and building peace at the highest level, and the practice of non-violent direct action and civil disobedience has a strong history in this country and beyond - from protests at Waitangi, resistance of American nuclear submarines entering NZ, opposing the Springbok tour for example. Anglican involvement in these actions has been significant.

I realise that many in the church will feel uncomfortable with the actions of the Ploughshares, and those in leadership may believe they cannot take sides. Clearly, we have much work in the church to be done and the witness of the Ploughshares to us and the world is an important one, upholding biblical teaching (e.g. Romans 13).

I hope the trial serves to allow the both the reasons behind the actions of Ploughshares and the work of the spy base at Waihopai to be better understood and appreciated by everyone, for to do so would be to the benefit not only of this country, but those whom are persecuted and killed out of our gaze.

This trial is especially poignant during this period of Lent, as we approach a time when Christians remember Christ and his own trial and non-violent resistance of death's power over humanity.

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