

# New honours system includes more Kiwis

THE abolition of damehoods and knighthoods has allowed New Zealand to recognise many talented and hard-working Kiwis who refused to accept titles.

Among the first to accept one of the new honours was author and professor of English Vincent O'Sullivan, who said as he received his Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit that he would not have been a starter for a knighthood.

"The most gratifying thing is it's the first year of the new honours system which puts far more of an emphasis on New Zealand and New Zealanders without necessarily feeling that we still trail on the coat tails of the Empire," he said this month.

He could not have accepted the honour under the old system, Professor O'Sullivan told the *Evening Post*, because he could not hold egalitarian views and be part of the hierarchical system at the same time.

Others who have refused knighthoods include former Prime Minister Jim Bolger and author Maurice Gee, who are republicans like Professor O'Sullivan.

And former Governor-General Dame Cath Tizard did not mourn the passing of titles: "I don't think it matters a toss," she told *Grace*.

Meanwhile, proponents of the honours system are trying to take the fight to retain knighthoods to Buckingham Palace, after the Government abolished them this year.

The Trustees Association argued that the abolition of titular honours was a breach of the Treaty of Waitangi, but after unsuccessfully seeking support from the Waitangi Tribunal it wrote directly to the Queen for Imperial Honours. "The immediate recognition of the status of knights and dames involved with charities flows on to the profile of the organisations," executive officer Errol Anderson said.

Republican Movement president Dave Guerin said if people wanted to receive British honours, "then they might as well go and live in Britain".

● Professor O'Sullivan also receives this month's *Onya*, at [www.republic.org.nz/onya.htm](http://www.republic.org.nz/onya.htm)

## Maori Council wants constitution review

THE Maori Council has demanded to be part of a constitutional review taking in matters like republicanism and abolishing appeals to the Privy Council.

Attorney-General Margaret Wilson has ordered a review of the Privy Council appeal, but Maori Council executive chairman Maanu Paul said the review should encompass a wide range of constitutional issues surrounding national identity.

"The Maori Council calls upon the Prime Minister, the Hon Helen Clark, to join with it to jointly conduct a constitutional review that includes the Privy Council, republicanism and the role of the Treaty as the basis of our New Zealand constitution," Mr Paul said.

Dave Guerin supported the call for a review, saying that it must genuinely involve all New Zealanders. "A decision to abolish the right of appeal to the Privy Council is timely, but people have to own that decision," he said. "We need to get this debate away from Wellington and out to the rest of the country."

Monarchist League chairman Noel Cox said he would oppose such a review, because it was motivated by "certain Government members' republican sentiments".

## spoken

"I see this whole debate not in terms of republicanism, or should or shouldn't we have a written constitution. It's about determining what it is we as New Zealanders really care about."

— *businessman Hugh Fletcher*

"When was the last time you heard the Queen putting the New Zealand perspective around the world? She can't do that, even if she wanted to. The rest of the world looks at her and sees England."

— *National MP Wayne Mapp*

"What's happening around the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Queen Mother is a major celebration of the monarchy and I, as a republican, think that the monarchy is a feudal relic that should be done away with."

— *Green MP Keith Locke*

"The question [of standing for the Queen Mother] came up and I took the action I took. At the time I felt it was important to point out that we are a Pacific country, we are Aotearoa."

— *Green MP Nandor Tanczos*

"Perhaps in the old days — whenever they were — you simply chose an icon and stuck with her. And although it's true the Queen Mother hasn't done much, perhaps that's the point. Perhaps the idea was to go for an icon who was least likely to can off the pedestal. By definition, you had to chose someone who was fairly unimaginative."

— *NZ Herald columnist Kate Belgrave*

"What's that?"

— *the Queen Mother on spotting an ironing board "below stairs" (Reuters)*

## Republican Movement calls for nominations

THE Republican Movement is looking for keen republicans to get behind the wheel of the organisation for the coming year — and they have to be cool.

Nominations for the Republican Movement national council, the core group that steers the campaign for a republic, close on September 1.

The new council will lead the movement through a year that promises to be easily its most exciting and high profile yet.

And one of the key strategies on which the council members will be working is to make republicanism cool and fashionable.

Yes, it sounds like a strange focus for a political lobby group — but if the idea of a republic is to catch on, it must be of interest to more than just Wellington's suit-wearing Dominion-reading political groupies.

Republican Movement ideas guru James Shaw writes from London of an "ideavirus" — making it cool to be a republican without relying on an expensive advertising campaign.

"What about the republican logo being worn as much as the Nike logo?" he asks. "Sponsor a young designer at the Wearable Art Awards ... Get Jonah Lomu to shave the logo into his hair at the next big match."

Movement president Dave Guerin cites Hotmail and collapsible scooters as ideaviruses that took off without advertising, simply because they made sense — ideas that move, grow and infect everyone they touch.

Retiring Republican Movement secretary Evan Roberts, writing from Minnesota in the United States, suggests proclaiming our homes as individual republics — instead of nuclear-free zones, we would have "monarchy-free zones".

"We need to take the republican message out of its obvious contexts ... Jewellery, hairstyles, clothing, tattoos are not now associated with republicanism, because it is seen as a narrowly political issue.

"So get people to suggest the craziest places to put the republican message — there'll be lots of ideas

that deserve to die, but among them might be the idea that spawns the virus."

The national council is not just about managing the money and maintaining the membership database. It is about broad directions, and ideaviruses are just a taste of the strategies that it considers.

Members of the council need to be willing to commit at least five to ten hours a month, and be able to contribute to implementing the strategic plan.

Nominations for president and council members must be sent to Dave Guerin by midday on September 1, and must include a short manifesto of about 200 words outlining what you will do, and what skills and experience you bring.

The council election will be held at the movement's **annual general meeting on September 9, 1pm**, in Wellington. Postal votes must be received prior to the meeting.

● *Nominations should be mailed, emailed or faxed to Dave Guerin, care of the Republican Movement.*

## Seven things that you can do for the republic

**1** Join the movement — and give us money! There may be a million people out there who want a republic, but we need you to put your hand up — and then down, to reach for your wallet.

**2** Give us **more** money. We love members with deep pockets, and the average chequebook has 50 cheques — that's enough for one donation each and every week except Christmas and, of course, Queen's Birthday.

**3** Sell 10 other people on joining up as well. It's not that hard — the republic has more uses than Amway and is more all-encompassing than Tupperware!

**4** Talk about a republic at the pub, in the work cafeteria, on the bus. That's all it takes for people to start thinking about it.

**5** Put signs at the front door declaring your home a "monarchy-free zone" — it's one small step to a republic.

**6** Stick the bumper sticker on the back of your car (when we've printed one) and wear the bright green and white Republican Movement t-shirt (when we've produced it).

**7** It sounds tired, but do write letters to editors and phone talkback radio. And it's not as tired as the country's handful of monarchists will be, trying to monitor all those papers and radio stations and respond to us all.

