**SIR PITA SHARPLES (KNZM CBE)**

**TĀ PITA SHARPLES**

Iwi: Ngāti Kahungunu

Sir Pita Sharples (KNZM CBE), a pivotal figure in Māori language revitalisation, has dedicated his life to promoting te reo Māori and cultural identity. As co-founder of the Māori Party and former Minister of Māori Affairs, he played a leading role in policies aimed at normalising te reo across Aotearoa, including advocating for the language as a fundamental right under frameworks like the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Beyond politics, he made enduring contributions through education and kapa haka. He founded Te Rōpū Manutaki in 1968, a Tāmaki-based kapa haka that has been a cornerstone for urban Māori to express cultural pride and identity. This initiative reflects his vision of creating spaces where young Māori could thrive, reconnect with their heritage, and embrace te reo Māori. He was also at the helm of the establishment of Kura Kaupapa Māori, in particular the first kura, Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi which was opened in 1985.

Throughout his career, he also expressed concerns about the decline of te reo, describing it as being on "life support" and emphasising the need for widespread community engagement, better government support, and improved media representation. He highlighted the importance of fostering an environment where Māori is spoken naturally, including in public spaces, to integrate the language into everyday life.

Sir Pita's multifaceted legacy includes political advocacy, community leadership, and arts promotion, exemplifying a lifelong commitment to strengthening Māori language and identity. Sir Pita was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, for services to the Māori people, in the 1990 Queen's Birthday Honours. In the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honours, he was appointed a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit, for services as a Member of Parliament and to Māori.

**TE REO MĀORI**

Kua tuku a Tā Pita Sharples (KNZM CBE), he pītau whakareia i te whakarauoratanga o te reo Māori, i tōna katoa ki te whakatairanga i te reo Māori me te tuakiritanga ā-ahurea. I tana tū hei kaiwhakatū o te Pāti Māori, ā, hei Minita Take Māori o mua, he nui te wāhi ki a ia i roto i ngā kaupapahere i whai ki te whakataunoa i te reo puta noa i Aotearoa, tae noa ki te kōkiri i te reo hei mōtika tūāpapa i raro i ngā angamahi pēnei i te Whakapuakitanga o te Rūnanga Whakakotahi i ngā Iwi o te Ao mō ngā Tika o ngā Iwi Taketake.

I tua atu i ngā mahi tōrangapū, e mau tonu ana āna i takoha ai ki te mātauranga me te kapa haka. Nāna a Te Rōpū Manutaki i whakatū i 1968, he kapa haka kei Tāmaki kua noho mai nei hei tūāpapa mō ngāi Māori noho tāone ki te whakapuaki i te ahurea me te tuakiritanga. E whakaata ana tēnei kaupapa i tōna moemoeā ki te whakarite whaitua e tōnui ai ngā taiohi Māori, e hono ai rātou ki ō rātou takenga, e mānawatia ai hoki ko te reo Māori. Nāna hoki i ārahi te whakatūnga o ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori, arā, te kura tuatahi, ko Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Hoani Waititi i whakatuwherahia rā i 1985.

I te roanga o tōna ao mahi, i whakapuaki ia i ōna māharahara e pā ana ki te wheroku haere o te reo, i kī rā kei te ‘taupua ora’ te reo, ā, i āki i te matea kia whai wāhi nui mai ngā hapori, kia pai ake te tautoko mai a te kāwanatanga, ā, kia whanake anō hoki te whakakanohi mai a ngā arapāho. I kōrero hoki ia mō te hirahira o te poipoi i tētahi taiao e kōrerotia noa ai te reo Māori, tae ana ki ngā wāhi tūmatanui, e whakauruhia ai te reo ki te ia rā.

Ko ētahi āhuatanga i te whakareretanga matatini a Tā Pita ko te kōkiritanga tōrangapū, ko te ārahi hapori me te whakatairanga toi, ko ia te whakatauiratanga o te whakamomori mauroa ki te whakapakari i te reo Māori me te tuakiritanga anō hoki. I kopoua a Tā Pita ki te Commander of the Order of the British Empire, i āna ratonga ki a ngāi Māori, i ngā Tohu Hōnore o te Huritau o te Kuīni i 1990. I ngā Tohu Hōnore o te Huritau o te Kuīni i 2015, i kopoua ia ki te Tohu Tā i āna ratonga hei Mema Pāremata, waihoki i āna ratonga ki a ngāi Māori.