



“Some are more equal than others”

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Leader NZ First**

Address to: Political Study Students: POL 111, Victoria University, Wellington
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Good morning and thanks for the invitation to speak to you.

It's always interesting to talk about politics and there are many important issues we could devote our time to today.

Perhaps we should briefly mention at the start the reported policy of Victoria University to restrict the numbers of New Zealand students attending courses to gain a university qualification. You no doubt already know what limits are placed on the fee paying overseas students, if any at all. We are not against exporting education. We have done it for many years and part of this was a programme of aid to countries like Malaysia under the Colombo plan. During my term as Treasurer we reached an agreement with the Chinese government over education visas and a key part of that agreement, at their request, was to ensure that the students returned home when their education was complete. In Beijing, I gave a guarantee that would happen.

New Zealand First is alarmed our own students might miss out on a tertiary education to make way for overseas fee payers. Our obligation is to educate and qualify our own best and brightest so they can go on to better themselves and to lead this country back to its rightful place in the scheme of things. We will be taking a very hard look at this situation when we return to Parliament next year – that's a promise.

There are other matters of concern for students of politics that we could also raise today.

For example we could bemoan the death of democracy in Canterbury, where a coup led by some in the dairying industry has toppled the elected members of Ecan – the local regional council. We don't like these coups in places like Fiji and we do everything we can to restore democracy there but apparently it's a different story in our own back yard – or cow yard as the case may be. It would have been better to rely on the good sense of the people of Canterbury to sort out their regional council. If the operative law was defective we should have fixed it. The action of sacking elected councillors is a direct challenge to our long established democratic traditions.

Nor is it right to see democracy perverted in the Auckland region, which will lead to the systemic asset stripping of ratepayers by individuals and groups who are only accountable to their neo-liberal mates.

And in the world of corporate finance we have watched impotent statutory authorities stand by whilst the elderly are robbed of their life savings by unscrupulous individuals in finance companies. These shysters have maintained their lavish lifestyles while investors go on the breadline.

It's a sorry state of affairs and it brings us to the topic chosen for today's address which is "some are more equal than others".

Some of you have heard of an individual called Eric Blair who wrote great works of political satire under the name of George Orwell. One of these was called "Animal Farm", which should be compulsory reading for any student of politics. Hands up those who have read it please. The complete phrase is "all animals are equal and some are more equal than others". The theme and general message of Animal Farm are timeless and universal. Today we will talk about them in relation to some of the myths that prevail about Maori and how some Maori are more equal than others under the political arrangements made to govern this country.

Despite some popular opinion, the bleatings of the separatists and the wailing of Treaty travellers, most Maori are leading perfectly normal lives in New Zealand. Most have jobs, work hard, pay their taxes, bring up their families, enjoy a bit of sport and don't get too screwed up about life. They enjoy, in the main, pretty good relations with non-Maori and they do this to the extent that there are a lot of mixed marriages in New Zealand with a large number of olive skinned offspring.

We are constantly hearing about the large number of Maori in prison – against a back drop of another simple fact which is that most Maori are not in prison! It is true that too many young Maori males have fallen on the wrong side of the law, but if you look at a lot of these cases you will find that they have committed stupid crimes while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The gangs are something far worse but their origins of alarming growth stem partly from economic and social conditions last century when many Maori lost their jobs as part of economic restructuring in industries like the freezing works and government departments like the old Ministry of Works. Most Maori thoroughly disapprove of criminal gang activities and frown on their swaggering, in your face, patched presence.

So, you might ask what is the problem?

The problem is that New Zealand is heading down a road that will surely lead to separate states within a state –and a form of race based governance – unless we have the intestinal fortitude to stop it.

You see, there is a common mistaken belief that Maori are one large indigenous block of people sharing the same beliefs, aspirations and practices. Nothing could be further from the truth. Maori share a common tradition and culture but have vast

differences of opinion over most other things – just like everybody else. In fact in the Far North where my ancestors created mayhem for the colonists we fought among ourselves when we could not find a common enemy. It was just what we did and still do to some extent. You could say we are just like our cousins in Scotland and Ireland!

So let's look at what Maori are entitled to in New Zealand?

They are entitled to full citizenship of their country. They are entitled to adequate housing. They are entitled to a good education. They are entitled to good healthcare. They are entitled to jobs with a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. They are entitled to a future. They are entitled to practice their culture and maintain their traditions. They are entitled to have serious past injustices addressed.

These are simply the rights of full citizenship and they are rights that all of us should take as granted and we should have the maturity of nationhood to help sort out some of the wrongs of our colonial past.

But now comes the tricky part.

There are some Maori who believe that they are entitled to more rights and privileges than anybody else. They belong to a class that has been bred to believe that they, and they alone should have unfettered access to the pockets of taxpayers. They manage to achieve this by manipulating the system, guilt-tripping white liberals and waving their own version of the Treaty of Waitangi. They are the gravy train riders, the dippers into the public purse, the Browntable, who ride on the backs of ordinary New Zealanders – both Maori and non-Maori.

These people now have their own party in Parliament – it's called the Maori Party but it no more exists for ordinary Maori than the National Party. They convince ordinary Maori that they are victims of white oppression and that they, and only they, can correct these injustices by receiving vast sums of taxpayers' money which somehow never gets filtered down to those who really need it, but in whose name and numbers they purport to act. They have convinced themselves and a number of other Maori – who have never read any of the court judgments over the issue – that they own the foreshore and seabed.

The government has made a serious mistake over this. Its proposal that nobody should own the foreshore and seabed out to the two hundred mile limit is a legal nonsense. And then, to grant all sorts of rights and rights of veto, plus the prospect of freehold ownership to some Maori only is grossly irresponsible.

The legislation New Zealand First passed with Labour guarantees customary rights to Maori and a shared governance over specific areas of the foreshore and seabed such as on the East Coast with Ngati Porou. It avoids the term customary "title" because in some cases the Maori land Court can convert customary title into freehold title and we were not prepared to let that happen. This legislation also guaranteed unfettered access to waters around NZ for all New Zealanders because they all owned it in the name of the Crown. The existing legislation works and it has probably saved Maori millions of dollars in legal fees!

The latest case of interest was when Dr Pita Sharples of the Maori Party sneaked off to the United Nations and made New Zealand a signatory to the declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. This, in part, recognises the rights of indigenous people to self-determination, to maintain their own languages and cultures, to protect their natural and cultural heritage and manage their own affairs. That's when the government really started coming unstuck because it became clear that it was creating an expectation among Maori that Maori would be free to set up their own states within the state – in effect.

So two things have happened.

John Key and his cabinet ministers have been going around the party faithful warning them that some racial issues are coming and they need fixing. However, the party faithful have told John Key to think again – and that is why Tuhoe – the children of the mist – are mystified about their knock back over ownership and governance of Te Urewera National Park. The deal is off. Tuhoe are upset and the prime minister is scared to go there in case, in his words, he forms the main course in a hangi pit. So there you have it.

National bends over for one pet policy of the Maori Party after another and yet when a genuine issue like that of Tuhoe turns up they back flip. They can't work their way through it. Tuhoe, cut off, isolated and forgotten must surely now realise that the Maori Party's numerous unreasonable so-called 'policy wins' has now seen them sold up the creek. This is the first, of soon to be many Maori, to learn where support for the Maori Party really gets you.

Meanwhile back on the gravy train all tickets are now being clipped with Whanau Ora – which is the Maori Party version of that old card game "Happy Families". Apparently if someone is playing up, or having a rough time within a family, Whanau Ora treats the entire family through some Maori provider in a holistic way – whatever that means. Welfare provision costs taxpayers huge money. Why would you duplicate a system that already exists for everyone and create a separate one exclusively for Maori? It's not as though Maori don't use the present system.

The real social problem that has to be addressed – and one which Maori leadership fails to grasp – is the proliferation of single parent Maori homes without a male partner and a generation of children brought up under this system. The answer is not to keep pouring another set of welfare dollars into perpetuating this social nightmare - it is to do something for the women. The best method is to educate and mentor them out of it. It is pointless to set up yet another set of social service providers because we already have them.

Social welfare in this country works. It has worked for the massive majority. Over the generations social welfare has taken people out of nikau palm huts with dirt floors and placed them in first world houses with first class amenities.

It might surprise you students to learn that New Zealand was once the social laboratory of the world. Sociologists and political scientists came here to study the

elements of a world leading nation. We looked after our children, our young people and our families and it was done without anything called Whanau Ora.

However, if the objective is to replace Social Welfare then the legs of its credibility must first be kicked out.

Enter the Maori Party with the preposterous claim that it is all one great failure. No evidence of this is provided. The Whanau Ora report is filled with empty rhetoric without any element of rigid analysis or research. It contains just one theoretical example worthy of the Tui ads.

A solo mum suffering from a failed family life magically has her destiny turned around with the help of the same family that failed her in the first place. It appeared all she needed was a tax payer outsider to enable her family to work positively for her. Mysteriously the architect of her demise becomes the architect of her recovery. Yeah right.

That's what happens when leadership has a soft heart and a head to match.

There was a conversation in a Porirua bakery when this policy was announced. A Maori woman came into the bakery while the owner and a customer were discussing Whanau Ora. She wanted to know what they were talking about and when it was explained to her she wanted to know whether she could get a job there and how to apply for it! In short, she did not want a handout, or a team of highly paid fern-waving holistic do-gooders in her face – she wanted the dignity of a job so she could pay her own way.

Whanau Ora is just another way for the professional gravy train riders to advance their own radical agenda. The poor have become cannon fodder for their cause.

When the National party entered a coalition arrangement with the Maori Party, the people were given some surprises.

- National gave no indication before the election that it would fly the flag of the Maori Party on Waitangi Day. A flag chosen at 22 Hui where less than 1000 all up attended.
- It did not say it would create a position of “no ownership” of the foreshore and seabed but with customary title available – and the possibility of freehold if the Maori land court so ruled.
- National certainly did not say it would sneak off in the dead of night and sign the UN declaration that creates avenues for separate development – just like during the bad old days of South Africa.
- And just think for a minute – if the Labour Party had proposed Whanau Ora - the National Party would have screamed separatism and racism until they ran out of breath.

The conclusion you can reach from that outline is that there are new partners in crime ruling the New Zealand political scene – neo-liberal National and corporate Maori. They have forgotten about those people at the bottom of the heap – the ones the Maori Party are supposed to represent. The increase in GST, the change

to the tax system, cutbacks in government expenditure will hurt, most of all, those people on low and fixed incomes. Many are Maori. They must find it bewildering to learn that they are actually going to be worse off at a time their representatives in Parliament are crowing about the gains they are making. But the gains are for those at the top of the heap.

This is where New Zealand First enters the scene.

In another life, when I was appointed Minister of Maori Affairs – it's 20 years ago now – the Maori Development Act was passed. It is as relevant today as it was back then – let me quote:

Particular responsibilities of Ministry of Maori Development

(1) The responsibilities of the Ministry of Maori Development include—

(a) Promoting increases in the levels of achievement attained by Maori with respect to —

- (i) Education:
- (ii) Training and employment:
- (iii) Health:
- (iv) Economic resource development:

The whole idea of Maori development is just that. It is about the future of ALL Maori – not just the select few. It means breaking away from this creation of handsomely paid professional victimhood. Maori are not victims and it is irresponsible to keep pinning that label on a people who succeed above expectations when they get the education and the opportunity to show what they are made of. The “golden age” for Maori will not come from Whanau Ora, flapping a separatist flag or fighting over a beach at low tide. It will come from within the schools, the universities, the trade training centres and the development of the resources within the land and sea. It won't rely on a Treaty. It will rely simply on the hard work and commitment of people equipped with a team spirit, wonderful sense of humour and who grab life with both hands.

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