

***“Malice In Blunderland”***

**Rt. Honourable Winston Peters  
Address to Grey Power AGM  
College House, Ilam University  
Christchurch  
Tuesday 6pm 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010**

Thank you for your kind invitation. Tonight is a good time to look forward and touch on a few things worth looking forward to – and also about some of the strange things happening here. To quote Alice in Wonderland – things just get curiouser and curiouser. So – with due respect to Lewis Carroll – this speech tonight is titled “Malice in Blunderland”.

Over the past few days, you have been hearing from government ministers. They have carefully explained how well they are treating the elderly and how much better off you are going to be when the tax system changes - and you start paying more tax. In fact, you have had your heads filled with figures for some months now about how well off you are going to be. The facts unfortunately are different – you will not be better off.

This is why:

There has been a change to the way superannuation is calculated. Your own experts have already worked out that you are already losing as a result. Superannuation levels are always playing catchup. They reach 66 percent of the net average wage briefly (and then fall below that amount for the rest of the year). But as we mentioned they are below 66 percent anyway. Further, despite all the talk of achieving parity with Australia, in real terms the net average wage is not rising so pensions will effectively fall again. Official papers not yet released say that those on super and on low incomes will be hardest hit by the forthcoming tax changes. That is because the overall tax take by the government will not change but those on the highest incomes are going to get tax cuts. Someone has to pay for these tax cuts. It's as simple as that.

You've been promised an extra two percent by John Key – but GST is going up two and a half percent – do the maths on that!

Worse, electricity prices are soaring from government demanding a bigger return.

For home owners the rates are going up – by five percent or more in some cases.

And while price rises are hitting you from all sides, services are being cut.

For example, district health boards are cutting back on home help services to the elderly as they try to live within tighter budgets. This is a foolish short-sighted move because these services actually help keep older people out of hospitals.

Make no mistake the razor gangs are back. Just like they were in the early nineties.

Benefits are being cut. Solo mothers and other beneficiaries are being told to go and work at non-existent jobs and since this government was elected tens of thousands of jobs have disappeared.

The prime minister's answer - build a bicycle track from somewhere to somewhere else.

New Zealand appears to be governed by a system best described as “seat of the pants”.

One of the most curious things we saw recently was a proposal to make New Zealand an international retirement home. Although there are an increasing number of our own elderly people with genuine needs the government wants to import thousands of old people from other countries. We know this sounds odd – but it's true – the government is happy to penny pinch and cut back on our own elderly but will be rolling out the red carpet for wealthy foreign retirees. This idea was floated and rubbished the last time National was on the Treasury benches but it has resurfaced – just like many of the other policies of the nineties. New Zealand will be struggling to meet the challenges created by our own ageing population. Why would we want to import thousands of people to create even more strain on our social services. Elderly New Zealanders have raised families, paid their taxes, and made their contribution so why should we flood the country with elderly immigrants who have contributed nothing to our economy?

It's interesting to note that American researchers (University of Michigan Richard E Nisbett) have now found out something that we have known for a long time. The research says older people are indeed wise, both in knowing how to deal with conflicts between people and accepting life's uncertainties and ever-present change. It is not a question of how many facts someone knows, or being able to operate a remote TV channel-changer, but rather how they deal with disagreements among people and their social wisdom. Older people are also more likely to recognise that values differ among people, that things change over time and that other people have a point of view. This documented research shows, perhaps, that we should have fewer bright young things in Parliament and more white hair and wisdom.

## **Separatism**

The wisdom of Solomon is needed to deal with the renewed problems over the foreshore and seabed issue before it threatens to engulf us in a tidal wave of separatism. The area in question is from the high water mark to the 200 mile exclusive zone. Now there is some vague suggestion that it be designated ‘public domain’ with nobody owning it. However, that same area is being claimed by the Maori Party to belong to Maori. Under present law it belongs to the Crown on behalf of ALL New Zealanders.

This matter was started by Maori land court judge Ken Hingston deciding that the Maori land court could rule on the foreshore and seabed and customary title. Now he is highly placed in the Maori Party.

Under existing law the Maori Land Court can convert customary land titles into freehold land which can be on sold. There is no clear way to counter this - that we have seen – in the new proposal released by the government. If this proposal – or something like it – becomes law there will be a stampede of iwi and hapu to the courts to claim Maori customary title to the coast and the sea out to the 200 mile zone. There will be hundreds of court cases.

There are large gas and oil fields off the coast worth billions of dollars. Any use of these resources should be for the benefit of all New Zealanders – not just some.

New Zealand First insisted that the word title be removed from the original foreshore and seabed legislation for the very reason that holding title means ownership. We could see

the writing on the wall. We had to ensure that ALL New Zealanders owned it – not just some based on race.

Everybody in the Beehive connected with this issue is spinning like a top but it is plain that the existing legislation is better than anything in the latest proposals. Even the prime minister is keeping the existing legislation as a fallback position.

### **Whanau Ora**

And speaking of race issues the government has moved its agenda of separatism from the foreshore and seabed to a social programme called Whanau Ora.

Whanau Ora literally means “healthy families”. In practical terms it means “gravy train”.

The Whanau Ora taskforce suggested money currently spent by health, education, justice and social development agencies be pooled into a Whanau Ora trust. This trust would in turn set up regional panels that would fund a single agency or person to work with families facing problems. Eventually hundreds of millions of dollars will be siphoned off the budgets of mainstream social services and handed over to Whanau Ora for disbursement.

There are some good Maori organisations– like the Maori Women's Welfare League – which we ensured got funding when I was their Minister. But Whanau Ora has the potential to turn into a disaster at huge expense to taxpayers.

The public discussion about this has avoided the real issue. That is the cultural collapse in the Maori world and a significant family collapse in an increasingly mother led society of Maoridom.

If there are problems with social welfare, and health and education services let's fix them but there is no evidence that separatism will solve the problems facing Maori.

Many Maori are brilliant achievers but many unfortunately fail in educational achievement. The problem is that too many Maori parents do not value education enough. They do not seem to understand the link between academic success and moving up the employment escalator, a more fulfilling life and a better future for their families.

Some youngsters come here from Asian countries with barely a word of English and in a few short years they are topping our exams. They are driven to succeed because their parents understand the need for a good education.

Maori are achievers in sport, music and in the armed services where they compete on equal terms. The head of our armed forces is again a Maori. Maori have always been leaders in our Army without separate race-based systems.

Go to functions involving former service people. The first thing you notice is how well they get on together and how proud they are of the job they did serving their country. They are not divided into Maori and non-Maori and would be deeply offended at any suggestion of different treatment on the basis of race.

Whanau Ora is belatedly being touted as available to all New Zealanders – irrespective of

race. Our response to that is – yeah right! It's described as a bold Maori-based welfare initiative. It is not inclusive. Just remember that the minister in charge is Tariana Turia – and the department in charge is Te Puni Kokiri.

The Ministry of Maori Development was set up when I was Minister of Maori Affairs to provide oversight of the delivery of services to Maori, not deliver the services itself.

In all my years as a politician I have always stood for one law for everybody. It is sad to have to say this but NZ is now well on the way to separatism.

The Maori Party flew its separatist flag on Waitangi Day, the foreshore and seabed is open to seizure in the guise of customary title, and now hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are to be siphoned off social services for the race-based Whanau Ora programme.

Maori have always done well when facing challenges on equal terms with everyone else.

No country has ever progressed by setting up separate systems for treating people differently. However, the way things are going under the tawdry National and Maori Party deal we will soon have to set up a new Ministry of Pakeha Affairs with “Pakeha Aura” key to its mission statement. Everybody else has got a Ministry, why shouldn't you have one?

### **Serious Fraud Office**

Another curious fact has emerged with the Serious Fraud Office. It has a new director who is trying to quickly deal with criminal activity involved in shonky financial firms.

At least \$3billion has gone missing and \$3 Billion more is still at risk..

Many elderly investors entrusted their life savings to some of these finance companies and some have lost everything.

The new SFO director is particularly concerned about the time delays in investigating some of these companies and their practices.

Well, we can give you one very good reason for time delays which nobody has mentioned publicly and it is this. In 2008 when the SFO should have been investigating finance companies, some senior members of the Serious Fraud Office were involved in politics and a rearguard action to avoid being reorganised into the Police. They wasted months in an investigation into my party, and turned up nothing. But boy how they tried.

### **New Policy**

Though New Zealand First is not in Parliament we continue to work for the elderly.

When we learned the Supergold card free off peak travel on public transport was under threat we sounded the alarm. At first government denied it, then the transport minister Stephen Joyce had to admit it, publicly grovel, then pull his head in.

New Zealand First will not only protect the concessions provided by the Supergold card but we will extend them when we return to Parliament next year.

**We are announcing the first of these tonight.**

**The cost of medical care is a big item for many elderly people. Too many avoid going to the doctor for checkups.**

**We will bring in a scheme allied to the Supergold card that will provide one free health check a year with your GP and we will cap future doctors' visits at ten dollars.**

**We believe that this policy will actually help reduce the overall cost of health because problems will be picked up before they get serious.**

**There will be other initiatives coming and these will be released next year but moving the Supergold card into healthcare is a logical extension to those benefits available now.**

**And you won't have to spend half a day filling out a form the CIA would be proud of.**

### **Political Involvement**

This week we have had some very curious statements from Labour, the Greens and from National's senior citizens minister. Labour and the Greens are to hold an inquiry into the state of aged care and John Carter says he does not want Grey Power involved in it.

First of all I want to say that Labour and the Greens have been missing in action for a long time over the issue of caring for the elderly so we suppose it's better late than never for them to wake up to the facts we've been pushing for years about the plight of our old people.

I am sure you remember which party actually picked up the Price Waterhouse Report on Age Care neglect and found the \$390 million to address it.

And as far as Carter's remarks are concerned – the National party has continually proved that it is the natural enemy of the elderly. The last party to slash super was National and it has the same minister of finance again.

### **Conclusion**

There is something missing in New Zealand politics at the moment. You can sense it whenever some of these curious ideas come floating out from blunderland. What is missing is the voice of ordinary New Zealanders - the people who don't go along with separatist claptrap and dumb ideas like making this country an international retirement home, or selling our biggest farming operation to the Chinese. We respectfully suggest that voice is represented by New Zealand First.

Our party is called New Zealand First because all our policies and positions place New Zealanders First.

We are on the road back – and with your help—we can make a better future for us all.

**ENDS**