

Project 2058 – Where will you be and what will New Zealand look like then?

Leadership New Zealand, Wellington
New Zealand's Strategic Direction: Building a Blueprint
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Ladies and Gentleman

In 2058, your sons and daughters, your grandchildren will be applying to go to University; but what will they be learning?

- they will be sleeping, but in what building?
- they will be travelling, but in what vehicle?
- they will get sick, but how will they get well?
- they will meet - much as we stand here today...but what problems will they try to solve.

You are here because that conversation in 2058 matters to you....and if I am correct, when you think fifty years out – you have a neon light flashing 'danger ahead'....but you cannot define the danger, although the sign seems clear, what stands behind the sign remains blurred.

Project 2058 is about trying to make the blurred background clear, or at least less pixelated!

But what I have been thinking about recently is what would it take for us not to need to be here tonight – what would it take to be relaxed about our future.

What would New Zealand need to look and feel like right now – to make us feel comfortable and at peace, so that we did not need to come together to talk about New Zealand's strategic direction...I think this is something worth exploring...

For me – it is not a bound Blueprint signed by the Prime Minister (although that would clearly help), but something far more definitive:

What I want to hear from politicians:

Is not Next month....Next year, in three years time... but

'In 2020 when we are carbon neutral;

'In 2035 when we celebrate 200 years of the signing the Declaration of Independence by becoming 100% energy renewable,

'in 2040 when we celebrate 200 years of the signing the Treaty with pride' and so on...

What I want to shout from the mountain top is:

'I am a New Zealander' - I am not a Pākehā - I do not want to be defined by what I am not, rather by what I am. I want the freedom to be me, no labels - I have no other country - I belong to this country and this country belongs to me. As Michael King said before me: 'I am an indigenous New Zealander.'

What I want to see when I walk around our city is beauty:

No more plastic bags floating in the sea, no more traffic jams, but more sculptures, more art, more history...

I want to see a sculpture of King Tāwhiao, the second Māori King - outside Te Papa. He became the second Maori king in 1860 (150 years ago this year) and reigned for thirty-four years during one of the most difficult and discouraging periods of Māori history – he reminds me of Winston Churchill – *'never, never, never give up'* – he was a class act.

'Tāwhiao left a legacy of principles from which his people would draw a future dream for Tainui: the rebirth of a self-sufficient economic base, supported by the strength and stability of the people.'

He was a strategic thinker.

What I want New Zealand to build on is a solid foundation:

I want a written constitution that New Zealanders want to *'Preserve, protect and defend'* – not because they want it, but because they want what it can deliver – a free, independent and diverse people

What I want to feel is a team spirit:

a shared vision that New Zealand's future is exciting and going to be a great journey, I want to know we have something to show, something that could be an example to the world, and most

importantly, I want to feel that we are kind, we feel ...and that we want to make good. Divided there is little we can do, but together – as Winston said '*Let's move forward together*'.

This reminds me of another inspirational leader – JFK – he said:

To inform, to arouse, to reflect, to state our dangers and our opportunities, to indicate our crises and our choices, to lead, mould, educate and sometimes even anger public opinion

It seems to me that 'Building a Blueprint' should be all of the above -- – but by itself it is not enough. We need good thinkers and even better leaders – King Tāwhiao (1822-1895) and Julius Vogel (1835-1899) in my view were both.

If you remember your history, as the late 1860s drew to an end, New Zealand faced a depression - gold production fell and wool prices slipped. In response, Julius Vogel, the then Colonial Treasurer believed New Zealand could only grow if it was able to attract people and capital. In 1870 he obtained massive loans from the UK to embark on an ambitious public works programme which invested heavily in railways and roads – he was in effect solving many problems with one bold plan – arguably the first blueprint for New Zealand.

This man did not stop there. He retired to the UK where he published in 1889 a futuristic novel *Anno domini 2000*; or, woman's destiny. This was four years before New Zealand women won the right to vote. Here he predicted that by the end of the millennium women would hold the highest posts in the New Zealand government and that poverty would have vanished. Here are some of this other predictions:

- *Air travel is universal, in lightweight aluminum 'air-cruisers' powered by 'quickly revolving fans'. (This was 16 years before the Wright Brothers' flight).*
- *Hydroelectricity is a major power source and large dams are constructed on the outflow from Lake Wakatipu*

- *Tourism, fishing and horticulture are important sources of foreign exchange for New Zealand and we become a world-class wine producer*
- *By changing soil chemistry, central North Island land is brought into productive use.*
- *New Zealand is a leader in Antarctic research*

To combat the dangers ahead, I believe that this nation of ours should commit itself to achieving shared goals that are tough and long-term. I believe we can be the example, and more importantly, the world needs examples...

Lastly, New Zealand doesn't just need a good Blueprint; it needs a good journey towards a Blueprint. To be useful - a Blueprint demands inquiry, public scrutiny, and reflection - from this comes understanding – and from understanding comes support or opposition, all parts are necessary.

Perhaps our role today is to be the crowd that creates the moral imperative, the crowd that signals the end as well as the beginning and lastly, the crowd that finds the big idea and supports the leadership that unites us ... so we can bring the big idea to fruition...so we can make that 2058 conversation a positive one.

Only with debate and criticism can a country grow....and so Leadership NZ, thanks for creating the space 'to grow New Zealand'!