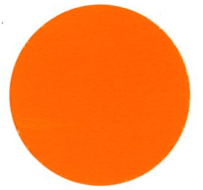


Flavell, 2011



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Te Ururoa Flavell Speech: Hopuhopu Chambers, Ngaruawahia

Friday, 29 April 2011, 9:26 am
Speech: The Maori Party

Raukura Hauora o Tainui Annual Hui
Thursday 28 April 2011; 9am
Hopuhopu Chambers, Ngaruawahia

Te Ururoa Flavell; MP for Waiariki

It is an honour to be with you at this Raukura Hauora o Tainui Annual Hui. Thank you for the invitation. I was, kind of, wondering why they invited me to me instead of Whaea Tariana.

Celebrating Whanau Ora is quite straightforward. We have had great feedback, so that part is easy. I have my own stories too and I might share one or two with you.

From what I have seen, the reason for your very existence can be traced back to the challenge of Kingi Tawhiao Potatau te Wherowhero,

Ki te kahore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi
Without foresight or vision the people will be lost

When Kingi Tawhiao shared that message, he did so to encourage the people to appreciate the urgency of unification and strong Maori leadership.

I would suggest his words are just as relevant today as it was in the 19th century.

And it is a message I see translated into your own organisational profile,

Mehemea karekau ana he whakakitenga, ka mate te iwi

It seems to me that that vision – faithfully carried through the generations – has been driven by the needs of the people.

The purpose of Raukura Hauora o Tainui Trust is blatantly clear – for people in Tainui to live a life of quality wellbeing regardless of their age.

So I come to you today, to learn from your leadership, and to share with you our ideas around how best to achieve this vision.

Of course, none of us can ignore the context which we currently face. We all know this is the silly season and very soon you will be bombarded with slogans and billboards, pleading for you to place your trust in this politician or another.

The Maori Party has always had a different approach.

As the independent Maori voice in Parliament, our direction has been proudly and consistently driven by the people, for the people.

We are not about to change now and tell you that we know best how to sort out solutions in your own backyard.

In the lead up to the 2008 election we promoted a simple three letter word.

IWI – which broken down - stands for Influence With Integrity.

When you say in your organisational plan that where there is no vision the people will perish, I doubt that any one of you would believe that vision can only be provided by the Crown, the Government, a political party or even individual politicians.

The vision you hold in this rohe is a vision which springs from the whanau, the hapu and iwi which live in this land.

I would expect that Te Raukura Hauora o Tainui is motivated by the most powerful of forces – the responsibility implicit in ‘arohanui ki te tangata’, the opportunity for ‘tautoko i te iwi’.

This is an organisation which is working to uphold the challenge of tino rangatiratanga – self-determination and ownership of your own health gains for Maori, by Maori.

In the end, when working with our people, we have a vested interest to get it right. It's about our survival as a people, as Matua Whatarangi Winiata always reminded us.

That is what we mean when we speak of Influence with Integrity. It is about being about to reach your whanau, to help them shape their own direction, for your example and your tautoko to be a powerful influence in enabling them to drive their own destiny.

We in the Māori Party know a lot about this. When we first arrived in Parliament, it seemed that all we could do was defend our position as Māori.

Press releases were easy, because there was so much to do. And while it is easy to claim the moral high ground, and say you will do this and that, it is all actually meaningless for in opposition, there is little influence. You make very few gains.

In our current arrangement, we certainly cannot fix every ill of the Māori world. But we have made gains, and we do have influence. And that can only be achieved by working with the majority partner. I can tell you, it is so good being able to influence change.

This concept of influence is an important one.

Of course not all influences are positive – for instance, the Maori Party has led a vigorous campaign against what we might describe as social hazards.

I look at some of the influences on our people – and I despair.

The influence of alcohol, of drugs, of gambling, of tobacco, the predatory impact of loan sharks exploiting the vulnerability of some of our families by lending out money at huge return rates.

Other influences are less obvious.

I see our people being influenced by philosophies and programmes and beliefs that are not home-grown. We see our rangatahi influenced by American rapstar lyrics, or the music of killer hiphop.

Of course none of us are immune to outside influences.

But the question I have always asked of myself – is what is the basis for influence that is drawn from our own kaupapa, our own tikanga, our own histories, our independent Maori voice?

We must have our eyes open to other ideas and external influences – but most important of all is that we are comfortable in our own identity; the very essence of we are.

I was privileged to hear Tamati Kruger of Ngai Tuhoe speak a week ago while facilitating a hui in Rotorua for the Ministry of Social Development on domestic violence and child abuse.

Tamati started by talking about how our people get really excited about trips to Hawai'i, the Cooks, Rapanui, Niue, Samoa, and so on. Their excitement is about returning to our past, to see where we came from, what we looked like, how we may have done things.

We even have jibs about who is tuakana and who is teina based on our time apart.

There is that element of pride in our past.

When Samoan, Niuean, and Tokelauan come here, they probably look at where they are heading.

Tamati went on to say that that is the same in a sense, in terms of the relationship between kuia, koroua, and mokopuna.

The kuia and koroua see in their mokopuna, their past, themselves in some cases as they watch the moko play rugby, or netball, or do kapa haka.

They set levels of behaviour for their moko based on lived experience.

The mokopuna look at the koroua and kuia saying that's where I am heading.

Often, the koeke are viewed as grumpy, but still very protective of their aspirations.

Tamati then talked about the fact that, generally, the koeke and mokopuna come together over a common enemy – the parents. And that the relationship is cemented by the way – you do this for me and you can have a free range on handbags and wallets.

The point I was making, was that Whanau Ora is in action. And it is INFLUENCE – and influence can work both ways.

Let me return to the concept of influence with integrity.

Integrity is a great ideal – it is about adhering to moral and ethical principles; being of sound character; it represents honesty.

But it also brings into being the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished – we might refer to the integrity of the final product as representing unity and wholeness.

It is about the whole picture – not just attending to our physical health or our intellectual growth, but recognising that all sectors are related; all areas of learning are linked; and that our worldview provides the framework from which we understand the world.

To cut to the chase - it is the concept of influence with integrity that provides the basis for Whanau Ora.

People more influential than me, have always said “ko te reo Māori, te matapihi ki te ao Māori.” In other words, part of the road to wholeness as Māori is the ability to speak our language. This is not often spoken about, but I encourage you to think about it. If all of our people could speak our language, surely that would contribute to their well-being.

The key expectation we have with Whanau Ora is that whanau will see a difference in the way that services are provided to them. A key worker – known as a navigator – will ensure that the services that whanau require will be available for them. If a particular service is not available then the navigator will enlist the appropriate service locally.

Importantly – this is not a one-size-fits-all approach.

As you probably know there are 25 approved provider collectives, with some 158 providers. Each Programme of Action will reflect the differing needs of each provider collective – and in that the transformation anticipated by each whanau.

In addition to that there are currently nearly 180 whanau involved in the Whanau Integration, Innovation and Engagement fund – including some 4000 individuals.

Of course, none of this will be new to you – as a member of the Waikato-Tainui Te Ope Koiora Collective you will already be dealing with many of the challenges of Whanau Ora on a daily basis.

No doubt the most immediate of these challenges is working with Hauora Waikato Maori Mental Health; Ideal Success Charitable Trust; Solomon Group Education and Training; Waahi Whanui Trust; Nga Miro Health Trust; Te Kotahitanga; and Raukura Waikato Social Services.

How you work together; share experiences; collaborate for the common good of your whanau will be vital to the success of Whanau Ora.

I know that in particular the leadership this Collective has shown in streamlining your back-office functions across the collective is ground-breaking and may be influential and inspirational for many other providers and sectors outside of Whanau Ora.

I would hope that other sectors will be watching your progress and supporting the development by similarly working with you.

And most of all I hope that the better alignment of services; the focus on outcomes, and the associated action research plan will provide you with all that you need to enact the vision – not just of Raukura Hauora the provider – but significantly the wellness of whanau within this rohe.

Finally, I have only just heard about the concept of the 'barefoot doctor' that Te Puea instigated.

This is the notion of flaxroots health care – providing wellness to all who need it regardless of income or status.

Raukura Hauora o Tainui is well-known for your commitment to providing services for whanau – to enable them to increase their wellness no matter what.

This is precisely the vision, before us now with Whanau Ora – that all of our whanau have the opportunity to restore themselves to their true potential.

When we will know that our vision has permeated into the heart and soul of our communities when all our whanau are:

- self-managing;
- living healthy lifestyles;
- participating fully in society;
- confidently participating in Te Ao Māori;
- economically secure and successfully involved in wealth creation; and
- that they work together, are strong, and are nurturing

I thank you again for the honour of speaking with you and I encourage you all to continue with the most important work behind you – of upholding the legacy of your tribal vision – of making the difference that the people need – and of doing all that you can in achieving influence with integrity across all your whānau.

