

Council

**Wednesday, 29 March 2006
Commencing at 5.30 pm**



Photography by Woolf

This report is dedicated to

Mr Seiichi Kinoshita

**Mayor of Kakogawa
June 1986 - June 2002**

**Order of Merit of Japan
Member of the NZ Order of Merit (MNZM)**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN
THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN, WAITAKERE CITY,
ON WEDNESDAY, 29 MARCH 2006, COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM.**

PART B - REPORT OF THE MAYOR

COURAGE UNDER FIRE

The EcoCity has been our core battle cry for the past 13 or so years and although I believe there's a lot of life still in it these things do have a shelf life and either they get whipped up to a family size or economy package or they simply fade into obscurity. Even though there is residual recall any idea worth its salt has to be continually renewed and revitalised.

When I met the consultants bringing together the new Waitakere City investment marketing strategy we discussed the birth of the EcoCity concept and how things are perceived once they become reality. As all of us in the room had come from marketing and advertising we shared common views on how a sea change takes a generation to actually become reality.

While it was new for the west, the EcoCity concept is now the norm for a lot of cities around the world. There's nothing special any more in cleaning up the environment or recycling paper and glass. Everyone is committed to doing just that. From Invercargill to Kaitaia, any smart Council has got on the Waitakere bandwagon and delivered sustainable solutions to their communities. Some do it better than others but Waitakere I believe stands head and shoulders above the rest. I know because I read the papers, the greatest source of information on how democracy is being delivered and whether elected members stand together or hide under the desks when the going gets tough.

The going does get tough in the middle year of any term. The first year is always a bit nervous because a number of new Councillors are being guided or corralled into the way of the Council. In the third year some people want to get out because it's too tough and others decide the job is theirs for life and that they'll have another go. Having another go means they'll want to be elected so they'll do everything possible to make sure their judgements are in favour with the punters. The victims in this are the ratepayers who see two wasted years of a Council term while they wait for delivery or wisdom or indeed to see pigs fly. But you may have noticed on the news that this really did happen, in Waimate due to a freak tornado, so please don't give up hope. Even in little New Zealand the impossible can take place.

The serious business of Council is to deliver wise decisions with integrity and not be bullied or harangued by pressure groups or angry letters either to us directly or the local paper. I believe in protest although others might differ. I've always been, and will remain, a protester and I'm glad I still feel like that - intolerant to dishonesty, things that are downright unjust and marginalised communities and individuals. Although I consider myself the enemy of nonsense I am also the friend, I hope, of the fair minded.

So in this our middle year we have had some rocket fuel to get things going - Huruahu Creek and the closure of the Te Atatu South Library. To be honest I think we could have handled these situations better. Not that I don't support both decisions and outcomes because I do. But, in hindsight, we could have been more direct by actually stating quickly and right up front, in a clear and precise way, the pool was going to be filled in for safety reasons and the library was going to be closed because it was not viable.

I think in both these cases the community felt there was a chance to change the Council's mind and this is where democracy fails. We are elected to make decisions and although consultation is important somehow I believe it should not overrule decision making. Elected members have a mandate to make decisions to run the Council and the City, ably assisted by the advice of officers and staff. That's the job. And a decision, unless it's overturned by a court, becomes the reality.



Councils that waffle and waiver get fired. It's as simple as that. The decision on the boundaries is also in this category. The Council, in its majority, has made a decision. It wasn't the decision I thought it would be. I made up my mind based on history and the weight of opinion and comments made in the survey. I simply felt this was a case of the people most affected knowing the issue and being clear and concise in their thinking and response. The Council collectively decided otherwise and this is a classic case of what Hemmingway would call courage under fire.

Although I believe one should come to a Council meeting with an open mind it's human nature to be persuaded on an issue by friends, colleagues and the media. But once a Council has made a decision it should stick with it. And those on the Council should learn very quickly to live with that decision. I know that as sure as night follows day the next election will arrive and those that have had the courage of their convictions might just make it back.

By making these sometimes unpopular decisions a City like Waitakere continues to evolve. Making big changes is challenging and it does take courage.

Therefore, I am for ever on the lookout for new ideas in the same way as I was 14 years ago when I stood for election. There isn't a day goes by when I don't read newspapers, magazines and bulletins or listen to the radio, all the time trawling for new ideas, trends and policy that would make life in this City better for future generations.

While speaking at the health hui a few weeks ago I transgressed from my speech and told the audience I was the enemy of smoking and indeed I am. It wasn't until I moved back into the speech I remembered Hone Harawira was in the audience. Hone, who has made a very impressive debut into politics, would like to see cigarettes banned from everywhere and as drastic as that is, so would I. After all, Tim Shadbolt (the most popular Mayor in New Zealand's history) declared the west the first smoke free City in the country. It hasn't quite caught on as Mayor Tim would have liked, and I think Hone will be hard pressed to find support for his outright ban, however I reminded him I had heard a magnificent speech on the topic by Lester Brown, the President of the Earth Policy Institute, one of the most enlightened environmental messengers alive in the 21st century.

Indeed, I am in awe of Lester Brown. Hearing him speak on the true cost of our wants and needs is more than interesting. He is one of the great thinkers about the consumer world and the lack of true costing when we speak of damage to society and the planet. Like me, he believes cigarettes should be around \$70 a packet. Why? Just visit your local hospital. You will wait in line while smokers with hacking coughs, collapsed lungs and emphysema take up beds, ward space and doctors' time. How do they get there? Because greedy governments pick up the cigarette tax and the cigarette lobby continues to insidiously work in the corridors of power and out on the street. There isn't a movie that picked up the recent Oscars that wasn't homage to smoking.

That good man Lester Brown also says the true cost of petrol should be around \$80 a litre. Why? For the same reason outlined above. This Council is a servant of the motor vehicle and the plea that this form of transport is the only one that gives personal space, individuality and the right to travel as and when wanted. If you doubt me, stand on the Te Atatu over bridge any fine morning and look at the one driver cars heading towards the city. Pollution, health damage and the degradation of streams and oceans come from the worship of this personal form of transport - the most popular, fastest and personally tailored mode of transport since the chariot. We pay the price willingly to get our fix. We will not be punished by parking charges, high fuel costs or traffic jams. We must have our own personal space no matter how hellish it may be or how costly!

These are the issues Waitakere should be grappling with and this is where courage under fire will really hit home - when a Council decides to take on the truly big issues of society. And we should. We should make decisions that matter.



Let me give you a few of my own personal suggestions:

- That no new house be permitted in Waitakere unless it has a solar energy source. Smaller and smarter they no longer look like swimming pools. They are as compact as an enlarged basketball and can easily heat a house and supply hot showers for a family.
- That developers be charged with building, as part of the consent process, high quality but affordable housing. I am so concerned about the lack of affordable housing for our younger people I believe it is up to the Council to start making policy. By the way, if you want to know how this works look at Rhode Island. I've become a friend of the former Mayor who set up this enlightened policy and Rhode Island, known for its upmarket lifestyle, has set new standards of excellence and affordability for all. So should we.
- All householders are encouraged to move to energy efficient and saving light bulbs. Why? Because household power bills will continue to cripple our consumers and community.

And while I'm on the subject of power Waitakere should investigate the future of wind. Power is going to be the most expensive commodity in the next two decades and for this reason we should start looking at alternatives now. Wind energy is growing fast and I urge every community to think about how abundant and cheap it is and about its clean and benign attributes.

M1-M20 At a recent Transpower Auckland stakeholder's function I attended Chief Executive Officer Dr Ralph Craven spoke at some length. It was a speech with a sting in its tail for Auckland. He confirmed there would be electricity supply problems in Auckland in 2010 or possibly before. That means that even this year Auckland could see 6000 home without power and then the situation will become worse. It's serious. Dr Craven made it his business to inform us that without government prudently moving towards a solution Transpower could not guarantee reliability and security of power. It's the word security that should send alarm bells through every Councillor. Read Dr Craven's speech notes as attached at pages M1 to M20 and be aware about what awaits us.

- As for cars and smoking, I'll let society take care of them and believe me they will. In the next century, and I don't have to be Nostradamus to know this, people will look back in bewilderment and horror at how we allowed such madness to continue for so long.
- Global warming? Believe me, it's no longer a myth. As President Clinton said on his recent visit to New Zealand, with the population growth of the planet coming close to three billion people being added between now and mid century, the vast majority will live in countries where the water tables are already falling and wells are going dry. When the former President of the USA has embarked on a worldwide campaign (the Clinton Global Initiative) to resolve the world's problems of poverty and global warming in the next 15 years (because that is all Clinton is giving the planet if we can't sort it quick) there is a real deadline for a resolve. Clinton said that unless we pay serious attention the planet, and indeed all of us, is possibly on the verge of a returning ice age. We are seeing the decline of our environmental support systems, the loss of basic resources, collapsing of fisheries, melting ice and rising seas. New Zealand and indeed our own City will not be immune. I believe it's never too late to state the obvious. We got elected to govern but we also got elected to think. And without a doubt it takes courage to think these days and even more courage to speak aloud those thoughts with the courage of conviction.

We should also be aware of the huge social change that could impact on this City and indeed New Zealand and we should be mindful we are working on a global scale as well as a local one. Nothing brings this home more than the social changes we read about each day. Not just articles in magazine that few would read but the realities of impending crisis. Two things that loom large for me are oil and China.



Let me put it this way. If you take oil, and by that I mean for transport and the building of motorways, are we sure there is a security of supply? I doubt there is. And there is a notion China is out there now competing for oil also. It's about consumption. If China one day (and it will be soon) has three cars for every four people (that's US style and New Zealand too) it will have 1.1 billion cars. The whole world today has 800 million cars. And so to provide roads, highways and parking to accommodate such a vast fleet for four wheeled gas guzzlers, China would have to pave an area equivalent to the land it now plants in rice. And it would need 99 million barrels of oil per day. Yet the world right - at the moment of writing this report - produces only 84 million barrels a day.

Let's not even talk about India which, by the year 2031, is projected to have a population even larger than China. These countries are dreaming the American dream and in doing so China now consumes more than the US in the basic commodities of grain, meat and coal. So before we start racing in to more motorways and ignoring rail and electrification we'd better think seriously about the next 10 years and just where we fit into all of this. I believe social change comes rapidly and with the force of a whirlwind. The collapse of the Russian communist state, the Berlin Wall and South Africa in our lifetime shows just how quickly these things happen.

M21-M33 Clinton touched on them and to be honest that was good enough for me to put it on my thinking agenda. It should be on yours too. So I thought I would appraise you with a stock take of Auckland's policy work streams - the most up to date that I could find is at March 16, 2006 - as attached at pages M21 to M33.

M34-M59 I've also attached at pages M34 to M59 a presentation of Auckland Regional Transport Authority's reporting to the Mayoral Forum on March 17. I applaud Auckland Regional Transport Authority's mindset of "moving people, moving freight" not "moving cars and trucks". Of particular interest is Auckland Regional Transport Authority's achievement in terms of upgrading the rail system. To be honest I think it's been snail pace but at least now they've produced a document that sets out a timeframe for the challenges of "urgent need". I will remind Auckland Regional Transport Authority of this phrase in a year's time. You will also find in this presentation a business case for rail electrification. This is a master plan not a master work.

Let me leave the last word to Lester Brown who by now I hope you are intending to Google up tonight.

"It is hard to find the words to express the gravity of our situation and the momentous nature of the decisions we are about to make. How can we convey the urgency of moving quickly? I think tomorrow will be too late."

And he adds, "one way or another the decision will be made by our generation". Of that he has no doubt. But it will affect life on earth for all generations to come. In a way this is why we are in local government. To make decisions, small or large, liked or disliked - because in the end they must be made and they matter.

MILESTONES

Investiture

It was with pleasure I last week attended the investiture at Government House in Wellington of our good friend and former Kakogawa Mayor Mr Seiichi Kinoshita. Kakogawa as you know is our Japanese Sister City. Already an Order of Merit of Japan, Mr Kinoshita was awarded a 2006 New Year Honour being made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for his services to international relations between New Zealand and Japan. The award was the result of Waitakere City Council nominating Mr Kinoshita to the government as a very worthy recipient of such an honour because of his commitment to Kakogawa's Sister City Waitakere and indeed all of New Zealand.



It was a very special and moving ceremony and Mr Kinoshita wore full Japanese costume. As you will have noticed I have dedicated this report to Mr Kinoshita and the photograph on the front page gives you the full effect of his costume. He really did look stunning and I was pleased to see this great man, and a very good friend of this City, receive the well deserved honour. Waitakere has a wonderful relationship with Kakogawa and Mr Kinoshita has played a huge part in that.

Obituary - Jure (George) Garelja

It was with much sadness we received the news of the passing of Jure (George) Garelja who lived and worked in Oratia orchards since he set foot in New Zealand in 1940. Jure was a bridge used by many Dalmatian migrants to keep in touch with their family and cultural roots in Dalmatia, at the same time helping them integrate successfully into their chosen new country. An Oratia identity, Jure brought a little of the Mediterranean to this part of the world and was a good, popular and highly respected man. It was following extensive interviews with Jure that in 1994 Victor Kurte wrote a book called From Olive to Apple, a wonderfully descriptive account of peasant life in Dalmatia.

In 1947, after nine years in New Zealand, Jure bought 13 acres from his cousin Ivan Sunde and planted eight acres of that in apple trees. He was so proud to own his own orchard and in 1952 became a New Zealand citizen. But Jure never forgot where he had come from and that's why he was so successful in his work with new migrants.

Over the years Jure was heavily involved in community affairs and served on a range of committees. With an inherent ability to draw people to him, Jure had a quick wit and impish sense of humour. Oratia and indeed Waitakere is a sadder place for his passing. Jure is survived by his sons Peter and David, daughters in law Raewyn and Evelyn, his three brothers and sister, four grandchildren, many nieces and nephews and a multitude of cousins and relatives here and overseas.

Happy Birthday

The Hardware, that dazzling success of a café in Titirangi, is celebrating 10 years since its transition from hammers and chisels to great coffee, service and music. If they'd let me, I'd sleep there. Late at night I stop off and even though they are putting the chairs on the tables they make me a coffee. Brent Gore and his wife Theresa have a great team and the Hardware is an absolute gem of a café, it's become Titirangi's main attraction. I can only wish it another decade of success.

From Longdrop to Takahe

Sadly it's farewell to Andre Groevenveld and his wife Shelley who turned the Titirangi deli into the Longdrop starting Titirangi's restaurant culture. From a tiny shop that sold cheese, pickles and croissants the smart Dutch born Andre, who I proudly gave citizenship last year, created a stylish, beautifully designed eating place with great food and stunning views. Well known, popular and a great host, Andre was part of the new re-design of Titirangi. The café's new owners, Cherie Nilsen and Taten Smeele, are young locals who have renamed the establishment Takahe and have given it a fantastic new start with an edgy menu and a feel that's very surf and beach culture - perfect for the younger diner. It's a very fun restaurant and I hope it will do very well.



Moka Changes Hands

While I'm on the subject of restaurants one of Waitakere's best known, Moka in Henderson's main street, has changed hands. Eric Harmon has taken over from Cyprian Suha Besin and his wife Diane who had taken over from the original team of Leeza, Elaine and Richard Corban who established Moka's great reputation for cuisine and ambience. You will catch Moka in *Sione's Wedding* and in all the good magazines. It's been a great success and you will usually find me there on Friday mornings after the gym or a swim. Over the past few years one of the nice things about Moka has been seeing the same faces, like those French restaurants where locals go to read the paper and enjoy great coffee, along with the rest of the community. Moka is an integral part of Henderson and when we are all in the new Waitakere Central complex I am sure there'll be much politicising and scheming over the coffee cups. I wish Suha and Diane all the best for the future.

Opus Dei at Corbans

You can name on the fingers of one hand the great contemporary dance troupes of New Zealand. Limbs and Black Grace come to mind. Now add Mau. This dazzling and truly amazing performance group is led by Lemi Ponifasio who I consider one of the most genius choreographers in this country. I am so pleased this City hosts this stunning dance group, based at Corban Estate. The name Mau (Vision) is a reference to the 50 year Samoan independence movement and the group's performance, often done in shadows and thin shafts of light, incorporates amazing physical feats with a multi-layered soundtrack of music, sound and sense. As one scene dissolves to the left another emerges either centre, out of a dark area or unfolds behind an object or shape. It is truly unearthly to witness and be part of.

Lemi is hugely gifted and is unafraid to create strong unsettling performances. Opus Die combines traditional Pacific Island ceremonies with dark figures walking slowing from the shadow around the vast perimeter of the Corban lawn area, then revealing our very own Audrey Chan in full Cantonese Opera costume singing a lament. In a stunning climax a young Samoan boy in pristine white tunic washes himself in a cava bowl of blood. If that doesn't stop you in your tracks you are not human. The point is not to shock, rather to take you to a new place of stunning realisation. Lemi works with Laingholm designer Helen Todd and his performances are faultless in delivery. The cast includes Delicia Sampero, Min Kyoung Lee, Charles Koroneho, Clement Fua and James Paplii.

Mau will take Requiem, a work composed of ancestral ancient chants, oratory, incantation, songs of love and songs of the frigate bird, to Vienna for the celebrations of Mozart's 250th birthday. The group headlines the programme and will then move on to the USA. Here is a performance group of huge power which will be at Sky City later this year - don't tell me you didn't know.

A Big Welcome

M60-M63 The Equity Justice Project has come to Waitakere and I went down to meet the 12 young lawyers working out of our community law office on a pro bono basis to bring equal access to justice for all in Waitakere. It's a fantastic commitment by these students and one I whole heartedly applaud. David Dickinson and Titirangi's Claire Achmad are the student directors and their extraordinary paper, which I am including a few pages from as attached at pages M60 to M63, sets out their purpose and their vision. I am pleased on your behalf to welcome the Equal Justice Project to Waitakere.



Infratil Awards

I was delighted to attend the inaugural Infratil-Waitakere City Community Awards last month. Around 250 people attend the event at The Trusts Stadium. Keep Waitakere Beautiful won the Supreme Award and received an all-expenses-paid trip to Greymouth to represent Waitakere at the annual TrustPower National Community Awards. Founded with the Waitakere City Council in 1993, Keep Waitakere Beautiful is a registered not-for-profit trust which co-ordinates programmes to reduce litter, weeds and graffiti, as well as educating the community.

Waitakere City is the first city in the Auckland Region to hold these awards and nominations were received from more than 80 community groups. Infratil's managing director Lloyd Morrison said Waitakere City produced an outstanding number of entrants of a high standard. And he was right. Waitakere has some extraordinary volunteers - people who devote hundreds of their leisure hours each year to help others in their community. These awards are just a small token of the City's appreciation of their work. It's our way of saying thank you to the ordinary people who keep our communities ticking day in and day out. Congratulations to Keep Waitakere Beautiful for an extremely well deserved win and congratulations also to category winners Drug Arm, Laingholm Roundabout, United North Piha Lifeguards and Big Buddy.

Councillor Judy Lawley attended the Greymouth awards on my behalf. Her hosts TrustPower poured on the hospitality and we owe them, and Infratil, a huge thank you. As this was the first year Waitakere had been part of the awards our representatives were given a special welcome at the ceremonies in Greymouth attended by 20 groups of people from all over the country.

The national winners were Kihikihi Eventing, a group which developed a large area of land in Kihikihi for horse and other events, and the Taupo Cycling Challenge organisation which runs this annual event in Taupo. The judges decided these two were the clear winners because of the huge voluntary input and impact on their districts. Once again, thanks to TrustPower and Infratil and we look forward to next year's awards.

New Owner for Tegel

It looks as though Tegel, our second biggest employer and a flagship company for this City, will soon have a new owner, PEP or Pacific Equity Partners. Heinz put Tegel up for sale last year with a range of other businesses to concentrate on its core business - sauce. The price tag is estimated to be around \$250 million and I think it's just great a local company can command such a huge amount. I am sure it's worth every cent. I agree with Tegel's Managing Director Bruce Scott as quoted in the NBR that the sale is positive for the company and I think Waitakere generally. As you all know I am very keen to attract new business to this City because we need business to thrive and I think the interest in a local company by such a big and key player is very encouraging.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Report of the Mayor be received.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE CITY