

Council

**Wednesday, 25 March 2009
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON VALLEY
ROAD, HENDERSON, WAITAKERE, ON WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 2009,
COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM**

6 REPORT OF THE MAYOR

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council resolve to:

Receive the Report Of The Mayor.

This Mayoral Report arrives just days before the Royal Commission on Auckland Governance lays down its plan for Auckland's leadership, transition and all, one supposes. Let the games begin.

Does this make the moment half empty or half full? There are those of course who cannot wait to get rid of what they see as petty squabbling councils and all they stand for. All in the name of hopefully getting a lower rates bill.

As with every other restructure in the last twenty years to which we were told "*There Is No Alternative*", no restructure ever saved anyone any money, so don't hold your breath. Who in local government in Auckland can think about anything else?

Well, me, for one. We have to get ready for the state of the world, not just the next structural change. Beyond our little worlds, we are dealing with massive global crises.

What I have been waiting for over the last six months is for someone to stand up and tell me what is happening. No-one has been able to tell us what is happening. In the absence of that, for someone to stand up and come up with a plan. Any plan.

There is a slow slide in the world towards something that we cannot yet quite see.

I believe this slide will pass quickly over the smaller, punitive virtues like thrift and boot camps and scapegoats.

Instead it is going to put a new colour on the hard values of who owns what we do, who tells us what to do, who is leading the way, who we really get to believe in. Those are the values that willingly or unwillingly, last a lifetime.

This era is sliding between two kinds of crisis: environmental and financial.

On the environmental side, there are already prophets of doom who are telling us that no matter what we do, we cannot turn the world around. All we can do is hunker down for a much harsher, drier world.

This is the same feeling of welling fear that made people build concrete bunkers in the 1960s.

But with the sound of financial towers crashing around our ears, this crisis of the environment has been pushed into the too-hard basket.



Perhaps like the previous Prime Minister's call for a national plan for sustainability, it worked better as a branding and less as a call to action responding to a clear and present danger.

Perhaps we were wrong.

With those crashing financial towers, as real in this present age as the crashing of the Twin Towers in New York in 2001, we fear for our children and the kind of career opportunities that they might have. For those near 65, we fear for ourselves.

Those institutions that we pinned our best hopes upon, icons of progress and innovation, they too seem to have had feet of clay - Fonterra, Fisher and Paykel and Chrysler.

All that is solid has melted into air.

Except every generation has to find a new way of working through whatever the world throws at it. Humans have to survive and thrive - we have no choice. Wilfully ignoring the world will not make it go away.

But I am not going to be told to be afraid.

Late in this report, you will read of the extraordinary Mau Forum, where the world famous lecturer and opera Director Peter Sellers told us to seek joy in a creative solution rather than hanging our head in fear or ignorance. This was picked up so strongly by the young people in the audience from Rutherford High and Waitakere College. Fear is not on their agenda, or in their world.

In a previous era, a previous crisis, President Roosevelt said that the only thing that we have to fear, is fear itself.

And it was from President Roosevelt, and in New Zealand Michael Joseph Savage, that a whole new way of dealing with the world was born.

In the 1930s, our grandparents may remember Michael Joseph Savage leading a new government that had the vision to protect the young and the old, to build houses and to personally carry the furniture in for them.

That era began a new kind of society, giving us a new confidence about our nation leading us through another world war and emerging the stronger for it.

What that now-distant memory tells us, just within the reaches of the living, is that we can all become part of the public good to make ourselves collectively better. It was an era in which people said: we pay our taxes, and we want you to use them and lead us out of this.

That left us an ideal of what good government could be. And that is part of the answer to ideals that will lead us through these twin threats of environmental and economic danger.

But it is not the only source of our ideals. Others will remember what it was like in the heady days of the 1960s and 1970s.



Whole liberative movements were borne from nothing, and, person by person, have now changed our politics and our leadership and most of our major institutions permanently.

There were the ideals within the feminist liberation movement, where female leadership has now shifted from a crude joke to a simple and unremarkable thing.

There were the ideals within the Maori nationalist movement, which has turned thousands of lives around, and revolutionised Parliament itself.

There were the ideals of the peace and anti-nuclear movements. They fought the law, sometimes the law won, sometimes, as in the Springbok Tour, they accelerated the entire South African Peaceful Revolution. You can never tell where the spark of liberty will travel and alight.

And there were the ideals of the environmentalists. What they have left us with is a wiser concern for the balance of quality of life and business, and a willingness to keep the most beautiful of New Zealand precious and pure.

Each of these movements have left us with a clearer sense of who we are. Each one makes us more confident about our own definition, the values that hold us together and shine during a crisis like this.

And I'm telling you one thing:

These values are true, and I will never let them go. They are the most important new values within living memory.

Within the next two years, we will see the environmental come back front and centre onto the agenda. Within the next two years, the world is not likely to become completely stable again.

Oil is finite. The state itself has limited power. The whole of the world's environment is finite. Money is mortal, not immortal.

A consequence of the world shrinking, is that we can feel all its edges. We have become the biggest threat, and the only hope, for our own species' survival. We can see the limits of us all.

What I see emerging now is a Third Power. It is not as stable as a nation, because it doesn't have the breadth of institutional support.

It is not capitalism, because it has to carry out the public good by its very nature.

It is not in international agreements, because we are too busy making businesses and communities hang together and work.

It is not sheer community will, because decades of neglect and decay have slowly shrunk our volunteer institutions.

It is the City. The City is the Supreme Work of Man. Cities, not nations, are the new "gods" that dominate this planet.



The City is the new lens through which the light of the future will be poured, concentrated and fractioned into its constituent colours.

The City is where democracy began, over 2,500 years ago, in Athens. While the Spartans to the north ran the largest boot-camp the world has ever seen, Pisistratus and Solon forged the first democratic constitution in Athens.

Athens had grown strong by freeing the individual from the worst forms of servitude. The individual had become free through the protection of the City.

Cities are where the transformative power is, where the people are, the moods and the money. Cities are also where the careers, executives, projects and new leaders are already rising.

In almost every poll you can find, long-term trust of public institutions particularly Parliament is going down, down, down.

The City is where the twin crises of financial collapse and environmental damage are converging together. And it is there that the robust response of humanity will need to be made.

It is in the cities and the business, trusts, councils and volunteer organisations that the power to keep us all together will emerge.

Nowhere in the world does a City truly dominate a country as does Auckland. Not even Paris or London generate more cost, more production, more social and cultural energy, within their own countries.

Aucklanders need to step up and be the leaders that we know they can be. Leadership will be found in the space where people bring pools of money together from a variety of sources and build stuff that lasts.

Look for the leaders that have delivered new broadband, new town centres, new neighbourhoods, brought in new shops and industry, built new train and bus stations, and pulled all sorts of people to work to make those dreams poured into wheelbarrows of concrete reality.

They are the new breed - the Strategic Brokers.

These kinds of leaders are not just capitalists, or just volunteers, or just politicians, and they are certainly not the media.

They are the City's strategic brokers who bring it all together - the money, the community, the vision.

This is what dreams are made of. Dreams are built; built with our collective hands, our collective money, our collective will.

When we can see the benefit to our house, our section, our neighbourhood, then we can begin to trust leadership again; and probably not before. Because it is in our neighbourhood that we will see the negative effects of environmental and financial collapse. And it is there that we must see the recovery, if we are to put our faith in a new set of leaders, and a new set of values.



So what I am calling for today is almost the reverse of what the Royal Commission has sought to do by simply reorganising the administration. I am calling for us to name our values. To name what it means to transform and lead a City.

Today I am calling for a commitment by Auckland to New Zealand. Auckland needs to look back to Athens and rediscover what democratic leadership of a young country should look like.

This means putting a name to the values that it should live by. This is not an era in which to reshuffle the deckchairs. This is an era for a manifesto for Auckland; A proclamation.

First, Auckland should stand up and turn to New Zealand and apologise.

It should apologise to New Zealand for years of chronic waste and disorganisation.

It should apologise for decades of feudal squabbling that pulled New Zealand back when it should have been steaming ahead.

It should apologise for the waste, crime and poverty that it afflicts on its own people.

And then dust itself and say:

We know that you are the heart and the soul and the true economic might of us all.

We promise to try and pay our own way in the world.

We promise to blame no-one but ourselves for our problems.

We will live up to our promise of not simply saddling you with social chaos; we will deliver the kind gateway that will make us all proud.

We promise to be the commercial and social and cultural leadership of New Zealand to the world.

Any Aucklander should be able to look someone from Gore or Suva in the face and say: we are your South Pacific capital. We bring people together from disparate towns and islands and introduce them powerfully to the world, and pull them up out of poverty and the daily grind.

For the last 17 years, I have not waited around for someone to stand up and tell me what is happening. I have not been waiting for someone else to come up with the plan.

It is up to us now to name the shift in value, to really name what is happening. To name the truth hard enough, so that the world begins to stabilise again.

It is up to us to take the City we are in, wherever we are, and build.

On the eve of the Royal Commission's Report being handed to the government and then on to us, I recall the Arthurian Legend of Camelot. Camelot seemed to be a place that has survived for a couple of thousand years on what they did and in some way, in that perfect place, they got a lot of things right - if I recall including the climate. I hope that Waitakere might just have that kind of legendary mindset about it, if the Royal Commission decides that we will not exist.



For this City has been bold enough and strong enough to try new and different, and yes wonderful, solutions to complex problems, and the success I think has been extraordinary. Much of it has been real and tangible, and some of it like Camelot has been in its telling, and those that have heard about how good it has been, is part of legend and fable.

There has been a lot of remarkable people working and serving here at this City. Some are acknowledged and some are not. Some are thanked, and some die unrecognised, and that is called history.

The projects and the commitments are stacked as high as the building - we were never fearful of taking on a new challenge, or a new dream. If you want to know how we have done, look around.

And I will see you on the other side.

Tarara Day

Two Sundays ago there was an outpouring of thousands of people converging into Ranui at Birdwood Estate to celebrate the coming together of Maori and Pākehā - creating what is known as Tarara.

Prime Minister John Key graced us with his easygoing presence - he had come fresh from starting Round the Bays, and he complemented me on my greetings to the 70 odd thousand runners assembled. The Mayors had all been asked to make a speech, but Mayors Banks and Williams had done their conventional wind-up, which was apparently very inappropriate given the occasion of celebration. The Prime Minister seemed to admire my message.

He also seemed to admire my dazzling māori cloak, given to me by Te Whanau O Waipareira, and was delighted to wear it when he made his speech. In fact he looked damn good in it, I think he deserves one for himself.

It was a phenomenal event, and I thank Linda Cooper for joining with me to celebrate this event. It will be repeated in two years time, and promises to be larger.

A big thanks goes out to both our own events team and to Te Whanau O Waipareira and the Croatian Society for making the whole day happen.

IN MEMORIAM

Geoff Moon by Steve Braunias

Geoff Moon was a gentleman and more than a scholar. He left England for New Zealand on a whim, and became this country's best, most astute photographer of birds. He showed infinite patience, boundless energy and, perhaps most importantly, a sympathetic understanding in his pursuit of bird images. He maintained a subtle and discrete presence in their habitat, in part thanks to his ingenuity at building lightweight hides, which he positioned near but never too close to birds. The results were very often astounding; for a while he specialised in intimate studies of kingfishers and moreporks. But he practised his expert craft on a great variety of bird species, and produced many excellent books. His first book, Focus on New Zealand Birds, was published in 1957. Shot almost entirely in black and white, it includes photos of the town-dwelling silvereye, shore dotterels, and forest bellbirds; it's a beautiful book, a collector's item. But every home in New Zealand ought to have a copy of at least one of his books.



He was an immediately friendly man, with an excellent bedside manner - much of his career was as a vet in Warkworth. Witty, modest, boyish, he had the ability to share his passion with anyone. When he appeared at the Going West literary festival in Titirangi in 2007, he held an audience spellbound with his enchanting stories and wide knowledge. Once again, he made people aware of the fascinations of bird life in New Zealand. His highest praise was reserved for anyone who explored our bush, our shores, our islands. That's when he'd say: "*They're a real go-er.*" Geoff was a real go-er. He was besotted with New Zealand in its quiet, natural state and he enriched our lives with what he saw with his sharp eye - and what he felt in his heart.

Miro Sumich
May 1920 - 6 March 2009

I have known Miro since I had my children at the Oratia School. He was the most charming of men, always known as Miro the apple man by the local kids.

He came to New Zealand from the former Yugoslavia at 16 years of age, his father having been here for 12 years already. His mother and sister Milena stayed behind. Miro and his father bought their orchard in 1939 for 900 pounds from an old Russian.

In the same year he met the lovely Doris Borich at his aunt's place on the Parris land. He courted Doris, taking her to the movies at the Delta in New Lynn and to dances in the Oratia hall. They were married in 1945, and so have had 64 years together, first in the original small house on the orchard, which is still in use. They later moved to the current house, with their four children John, Helen, Glenda, and Geoffrey.

Miro cultivated his orchard with apples, pears, and exported Chinese Gooseberries as Kiwifruit.

After 40 years Miro and Doris went back to Podgora, and thereafter went back several times, but his heart was in Oratia. He tended the orchard for 58 years until it was sold in 1997. As he said "*I remember when I sold the orchard I cried and cried, and then they showed me the cheque and I laughed and laughed.*"

Miro was a man with a huge heart, a real love of family and community and a worker for many causes. He became the longest-serving P.T.A committee member of Oratia School, and later of Henderson High School. He was heavily involved in the fundraising for the Oratia Centennial. The wonderful three-sided clock on the new hall was donated by Doris and Miro.

He loved to talk about current affairs and political issues, with dinner-table conversations wide and varied and he was a loving and gentle father. As his son John told me, physical punishment was not part of his household, unlike many others of the 1950s and 1960s.

He took neighbourhood kids for trailer rides at the school fairs and teachers were always welcome to bring kids to the orchard. He loved practical jokes and would spray the kids while demonstrating watering to them. He was boundlessly generous and hospitable to all who came to him.



The family told me Miro was the Ultimate Supervisor, whatever anyone was doing, Miro was right behind them checking to see it was done right. Spraying, Miro finally accepted the danger - so the workers would be kitted out - but Miro would be walking behind getting the spray in his normal clothes.

In his retirement, the Dalmatian cultural choir was a highlight. He had a great love for it and a fine voice. He grew enough pears for his family and friends, and the birds as well. When I was leaving Doris's place the other night, John ran after me, saying, in a pretty good Miro imitation "Wait, wait", and handing to me a big bag of pears.

Erratum

In the Mayoral report of October 2008 there was a tribute to Ross Bethell and to his passing. Some clarifications have been pointed out by Vicky Bethell:

- Ross was not installing a water tank, he was out on his tractor working, and didn't come at 4pm as arranged. His wife Vicky, recovering from a broken leg, was unable to search for him and sent his cousin John Worley, who found him slumped on the tractor;
- Ross died from a sudden abnormal heart rhythm (cardiac arrhythmia) caused by damage to his heart from a virus;
- The casket was brought to the funeral by his wife Vicky who drove Ross's beloved International truck with John, Lee and Jessy, escorted by the volunteer fire brigade; and
- The major artwork was painted by Allie Eagle.

MILESTONES

Titirangi Music Festival 2009

Three cheers for the amazing David Parker and his team who have produced yet another cracking wonderful myriad of sounds and performances in Titirangi. David, who is a very fine musician in his own right, brings together one of the Auckland region's best music festivals. It just happens to be our very own. On Sunday, 15 March 2009, they showcased the festival with a great children's day.

I felt that this was exactly what was needed. When I went to give the prizes to the most promising young musicians, which turned out to be ukuleles, behind me was a wall of kids with their own orchestra made from recycled plastic pipes. I love this week and the people that make it such a success. I would hope that the Councillors find time to go to at least one or two of the events around the village.

Tempest: Without a Body

I have been trying to educate people for the last ten years on the sheer genius of Samoan-born, Waitakere based Lemi Ponifasio and his Mau dance experience. This man and his amazing group tour internationally, but he is hardly known here, and all of this amazing incredible performance and experience comes out of the Corban Winery sheds.

Let me tell you if you don't know already, what he does and what it's about.



He has created something that responds to the crisis, destruction and panic of our times. This theatre will only work if you are able to understand the archaic and sublime fear of confronting chaos. The rest of us mortals just held on to our seats for dear life. In some ways this work reminded me of Henryk Gorecki's "*Third Symphony of Sorrowful Songs*" - music and theatre as vast tides of sound that take the audience from chaos and rage to something resembling silence, or at least space for reflection.

A key part of it at the beginning is the introduction of an angel, who screams at you. It's a signal for the end of a kind of history, similar to what was reflected by the philosopher Walter Benjamin, and a quick commentary is enclosed below:



IX

My wing is poised to beat
but I would gladly return home
were I to stay to the end of days
I would still be this forlorn

-- Gershom Scholem, "*Greetings from Angelus*" [tr. Richard Sieburth]

"There is a painting by Klee called Angelus Novus. It shows an angel who seems about to move away from something he stares at. His eyes are wide, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how the angel of history must look. His face is turned toward the past. Where a chain of events appears before us, he sees one single catastrophe, which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it at his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise and has got caught in his wings; it is so strong that the angel can no longer close them. This storm drives him irresistibly into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows toward the sky. What we call progress is this storm." - Walter Benjamin



Thoughts on the Mau Forum

This forum was for a number of visitors including the world renowned Director Peter Sellers and others to discuss and debate with our creative community the reasons for drama, dance, and music in our lives, and in these particularly difficult times the reason to rediscover joy.

These forums are absolutely masterworks, and I was amazed, surprised and stunned to find that a keynote speaker - here at our own Council - was the Head of State of Samoa, His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese. He is what I can only describe as a philosopher-King, a very rare and thoughtful person indeed. His Majesty came to deliver a spellbinding lecture on the fragrance of Samoa. I thought you might like to enjoy this lecture in its written form. A very interesting paper, of which I felt myself totally captured, and later that night at a ceremony at the Corban Winery Estate to Launch his book *Su'esu'e Manogi In Search of Fragrance*.

To give a taste of his book, here's a passage from a chapter:

I was asked: "Why do you need to understand the Samoan indigenous reference?" My answer was: "As a Samoan you need it in order to know yourself, to protect yourself and to find yourself in your search for meaning and for God."

The question of what God is I will come back to. Knowing oneself, however, is to seek one's cultural heritage and to locate it in a lived and living cultural reference. In Polynesia we are often asked: "Where is your tūrangawaewae (or as we say in Samoan your tulaga vae)?" This is a question about place. Knowing your indigenous reference is a question about identity. Both are core to the question of Maori and Pacific Island leadership.

During my political career I was sorely tempted to take up an international post. Taking it up would have meant that I had to leave Samoa. At the time of considering this post, by chance I met in Apia one of the elders of my family, Ga'opo'a by name. At the time he was over one hundred years in age. I remember he grabbed my right arm, took it in both of his hands, and massaged it gently (as we say in Samoan, lomi). He looked into my eyes and said very slowly: "Tupua, tautuana, ma oe le atunuu". Roughly translated, "Tupua, bear in mind the land of our fathers." I knew then that I could not take up that post. I could not leave Samoa. Why might you ask?

To answer this I want to take you on a little journey. Not a long journey I promise, but one that is hopefully interesting and of relevance to your own upcoming navigations through the questions/dilemmas/challenges/riddles of Māori and Pacific leadership.

And take you on a journey he does. In case you haven't guessed it, this leader names the value of the local and the regional just as we have for the last twenty years. For it is for twenty years that we have sought to bring together a set of disparate suburbs, to grow leaders out of them, to let it become a place that people could belong to.

M1-M14

It is indeed a delicate thing to presume that you can really make something as ineffable as a sense of identity stronger. We didn't presume we would. Instead, from all the countless meetings, protests, initiatives, projects, partnerships, and people, it just happened. I enclose his lecture which is attached at pages M1 to M14.



Only history will really tell whether we did any good or not, whether in fact we're any different from civic leaders who are only ever seen in the hallowed halls of Council buildings. Something tells me that it's our boldest, most courageous plans that will show people that we really make a permanent and lasting difference to where we have worked for so many terms of office.

Wait for the piles of complaint letters to this one. People will focus on crime, rates, debt, complaints about lack of consultation, too much of this, too little of that.

I have confidence that Waitakere will be seen as not just another regulator. It will not be seen as something that just managed rubbish and dogs and noise control. A body of representatives that understood the price of everything and the value of nothing.

Waitakere City began as half of Waitemata County and its amalgamated boroughs, without a major industrial centre, without a functional passenger rail system, without too many assets, without much. What the Council gave it was vision and style, the two things you need for a sense of belief and no-one can ever take that away because it's where you're from.

The final lecture Mau Forum

This forum was a conversation between Lemi, Peter Sellers, and myself, ably chaired by Mark Allen. We were very pleased at the audience, who had come from all over Auckland, but in particular schools from Waitakere had brought together some really extremely smart young people.

M15-M18

This well promoted form covered the topics of creativity, global warming, and drifted into recycling, the end of the world, and the discovery of ourselves and hope. I was particularly fired up as in September I will be going with Hadyn Smith from the Waitemata Harbour Cleanup Trust to view and experience firsthand the great garbage patch off Hawaii. I had received a chilling paper from George Preddey, a futurist, forecasting pretty much the end of life as we know it. I have followed George and his submissions to scientific forums over the years, and he is an extraordinary mind. He is someone who needs to be listened to (attached at pages M15 to M18).

So the Mau Forum got a large dose of Preddey channelled through me. Take some time to read Preddey's chilling paper, called "*The Coming Cull*".

For two hours, the speakers and the audience interchanged ideas, beliefs, and visions. This is the kind of thing that you read about that happens in larger cities - and we are doing it here in Waitakere. If you missed it, you missed an outstanding night. I would like to thank Lemi, Naomi, and the Council for their generous support and enthusiasms for the Mau Forum.

Congratulations to the fantastic Mary Woodward, one of the matriarchs of the Bethell's family and author of the definitive book on the Bethells' dynasty. The former Miss New Zealand turned 80 two weeks ago. A great friend of the City and the coast.



Knights and Dames in the west

No points for naming them, because there aren't any. Somehow the Royal Sword passed over our heads without touching down. Although we've had many successful goes at the minor orders, the west has always missed the biggies. On the serious side:

- Arise Sir Graeme Douglas, for services to business and the community;
- Sir Peter Babich, for our magnificent wine industry;
- Sir John Barnett, for Outrageous Fortune and making westies famous;
- Sir Dean Buchanan, for outrageous and wonderful art that graces our building and civic flyover;
- Dame Dorothy Wilson, for being eco-smart and giving me the best political advice; and
- Dame Ann Magee, for services to smart thinking.

And of course, to the interesting rather than straight worthy:

- Dame Margaret Jones for services to protesting and keeping us all honest;
- Sir Brian Heron, services to plumbing, the amazing apprenticeship scheme, and for services to fun and good living;
- And Arise Sir Te Warena Taua for services to catering;
- Do your own list and send it in; and
- Chew yourself up, but no nominating yourself.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE