

About the Author



Dr John Robinson

Dr John Robinson is a research scientist with broad experience including in the social statistics of Maori. His recognition of fundamental flaws in the interpretation of nineteenth century Maori demographics led him to consider the history of those times in several books.

Yes, we have apartheid

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In New Zealand there is separation into two people: the minority 'indigenous' Maori, and all the others, who are second-class citizens.

This division is by race: in legislation, "A Maori is a member of the Maori race". A count is made of racial identity, where any drop of Maori ancestry, no matter how little, places a person into that privileged group.

There are separate rights, which are constantly added to so that the division has become increasingly absolute. Different and vastly unequal voting rights, many specified special powers over the sea, rivers, lakes, mountains – and all water systems. Different education and health systems, different rights in law, where the old tribal *tikanga* is given special status. The list of divisions and special treatment is extensive, and steadily being increased.

The intention is for an end to democracy. The intended future is set down in the *He Puapua* report to Government, where the aim is for two unequal systems of government (the "Vision 2040").^[1] In the general parliament, Maori will continue their existing enhanced voting rights and their own party. Then there will be the separate Maori organisation following some form of *tikanga*, with a tribal system dominated by chiefs (largely determined by chance of birth). A third body, paying particular attention to the dictates of *tikanga* (and thus giving further power to the Maori minority), will meet to sort out a way to combine the rulings of the two systems.

That would be the fully developed New Zealand apartheid, expanding still further the current apartheid with its extensive division by race. The country is to be completely broken apart; with tribal rule, and no belonging or real citizenship for others.

New Zealand is well down that road: equality is gone, national sovereignty is gone with the Waitangi Tribunal and the courts holding that sovereignty remains with individual *iwi* and *hapu* across the country. This is a broken country.

The destruction of a way of life has been building since the 1975 formation of the Waitangi Tribunal (48 years ago). That tribunal was given the task "to provide for the observance, and confirmation, of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi". As there are no principles stated in the Treaty, such principles must be derived from the text. There we find (Article 1) that sovereignty is with the British Crown and (Article 3) all New Zealanders are British citizens. All equal. As was made abundantly clear by Hobson at Waitangi, we are one people. There is only one principle set down in the Treaty: equality.

Yet that basic principle, the very first principle of the United Nations ("All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights"), has been set aside by the Waitangi Tribunal and by the Human Rights Commission, with their insistence that we are two unequal peoples.

There is an alternative.

Recently America has been remembering, and celebrating, the 60th year anniversary of the civil rights movement 1963 March on Washington. It was there that the Rev Martin Luther King Jnr made his celebrated "I have a dream" speech, where he voiced his hopes for a better future of equal rights.

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character."

Just imagine that here! We too could turn away from racism, from division, and return to equality as one people.

We must follow the path of 20th century fighters against racism, such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, by demanding equality, taking a lead from the 19th century British campaigners who succeeded in getting slavery banned across the British Empire in 1834. The aim must be now, as it was then, solidarity among all people, living in freedom without division by accident of birth.

The first step must be a firm statement of the direction the country must go in, the basic principles that must guide all policies. These are:

- **equality (we are one people),**
- **equal democracy,**
- **sovereignty of one united nation and**
- **freedom of speech (wiping out the false 'Tiriti' restriction).**

None of these exist here today.

The list of actions required to bring about that preferred society is long, covering so much of New Zealand institutions, law and, indeed, way of life. The task of turning back the revolution to division, which has so largely succeeded, will take years of determined effort. Let us – and all political parties that wish to represent us in Parliament – start by setting down the above clear and unequivocal direction for the future of New Zealand: to equality and unity, away from different rights and division. **No political party can be allowed to remain silent on these basic principles.**

Each of us, as individuals or groups, must then approach politicians with concrete suggestions of what needs to happen next to restore the belief that we are one people. What has gone on over the last few years should be the wakeup call, that New Zealand needs to urgently repair our democracy so it is resilient to any such attack in the future.

Obviously there must be an end to the absurd Three Waters project (with a complete reversion to the previous Council ownership, refusing any idea to only revisit or revise policy), as well as to other recent extreme policies of co-governance such as the separate health system. These can only be first steps; it is important to appreciate how much co-governance has been introduced over the years.

The National Party is firmly on the fence concerning these actions; leaving the present core policy – that we are divided into two people with different powers – intact. A recent reply to a question makes it clear that their form of co-governance lite will remain. "Past local co-governance arrangements that were made in the context of Treaty settlements have worked well. These were restricted to the management of local natural resources, like rivers, by local *iwi* working closely with local or central government." They must be forced to recognise what is at stake.

The National Party share responsibility for what has happened, and must commit to undo the actions of the previous John Key National government which provided the springboard for the recent considerable extension of division. Putting it right must include repeal of their Marine and Coastal Area (*Takutai Moana*) Act 2011 (passed in line with Maori Party wishes, and entirely contrary to previous National Party policy and statements), with a return to the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004 (passed by the Labour government, and criticised by the National opposition at the time as giving too many special rights to Maori)

The National Party must also commit to withdraw from the 2007 United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (which is contradictory and, by its own definition, racist) which they signed in 2013, when Peter Sharples flew secretly to New York, after Helen Clark had previously turned it down.

The 1975 Waitangi Tribunal has for 47 years been building up a false and divisive picture of history, with no recognition of the principle of equality. It must go.

As must separate seats in parliament and councils. This is hardly radical; after all, the Royal Commission on the Electoral System in 1985-6 recommended that, with the introduction of the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) system, the Maori seats should be abolished.

An open discussion of the past and the future direction must build on the assertion of freedom of speech, with a positive policy of protection for public debate and a refusal to tolerate the mob action that has been disrupting meetings opposed to co-governance. Government must rescind current controls over mainstream media (which demand submission to a completely reformulated 'tiriti').

The principle of equality, asserted above, insists that all claims for different treatment by race (Maori) and a special place for an ancient tribal culture, *tikanga* (based on the pre-Treaty way of life which included warfare, cannibalism, slavery) must be removed from all legislation.

Such policies (my selection of some key issues being just a few at the head of a long list), following on those clearly stated principles, will set the stage for a determined move towards one people in a unified and proud nation. They will provide the direction towards a future in which we are all equal, without division by ethnicity – all belonging in our own country.

[1] Robinson J L 2021, *He Puapua: Blueprint for breaking up New Zealand*, Tross Publishing