



THE NATION

Episode 33, 23 Oct 2010

Front Page

HONE HARAWIRA

Interviewed by DUNCAN GARNER

DUNCAN My guest this morning is the Maori Party's most outspoken MP, Hone Harawira. Hone, kia ora, welcome to the programme.

HONE Kia ora Duncan.

DUNCAN Tena koe, welcome to our whare if you like.

HONE Thank you very much.

DUNCAN Do you want your party to vote against the Foreshore and Seabed bill and why?

HONE HARAWIRA – Maori Party MP

Well I think given the concerns expressed by Tariana Turia, by Pita Sharples, by Te Ururoa Flavell, by Rawiri Katene, and the vote that I've taken, I think unless National agrees to come back to the kaupapa of Maori title there's very good reason why we should be voting against this piece of legislation.

DUNCAN That's not gonna happen is it, so do you want the party...?

HONE Well I don't think it's being helped by the fact that John Key has publicly agreed with Rodney Hide, to include something of this piece of legislation when he wouldn't allow us to include what we wanted in the Super City bill.

DUNCAN And Tariana Turia this week said she'd like to go back to the people over the series of hui coming up to decide whether or not to support it. Do you genuinely think though that the Maori Party's gonna walk away from it, cos I don't believe it?

HONE Well I mean the situation is such that a lot of concern is now being expressed by Maori all around the country about this bill. I mean the Minister himself of Treaty Negotiations says Maori will

have to prove exclusive use and occupation of that piece of foreshore and seabed since 1940 without disturbance, and according to tikanga. Now that would take out the whole of the South Island which was taken under proclamation, and according to our research 98% of all claims.

DUNCAN Well I just don't think National's going to move on this, and if that is the case, how comfortable are you sitting in this National/ACT coalition and would you like the Maori Party to walk away from it?

HONE I think the things that we've been able to achieve in terms of the tobacco tax, the tobacco inquiry, the flag, the constitutional review, Whanauora, those sorts of things couldn't have been done by Labour, couldn't have been done by National, they required the National Party to be at the table, so I'm thankful that we're there, that's number one. Number two I doubt that Labour would have bought the sorts of things that we wanted to do anyway, so it was important in this first time that we stepped up to the plate and showed no fear in that relationship with National. Now having said that we are slowly being pushed further and further against the wall and I think as we get closer to the election we need to differentiate ourselves, and if this bill proves to be a real problem and Tariana said so herself, is that people said no, might be time to walk.

DUNCAN So you're advocating to walk away from the formal coalition with National and ACT?

HONE I didn't say that at all Duncan. No, no, no I didn't.

DUNCAN You said we need to differentiate ourselves from this...

HONE Absolutely, I mean that's the role of every small party in coalition with a big partner, is to clearly differentiate yourself. This Foreshore and Seabed bill, number two, Tariana said quite clearly that if our people say we're not buying it then we'll walk away. Now that's walk away from the bill.

DUNCAN Walk away from the legislation.

HONE Walk from the bill, now that's a whole different ball game to walking away from the coalition.

DUNCAN You made an interesting speech this week in parliament, it didn't get much coverage, but I noticed it, and I want to quote this to you so that viewers are aware of what you said. 'If I (you) go quiet who carries the Maori flag in parliament? Who takes those issues to the edge? Who speaks for the hearts and minds of ordinary Maori and who will say it exactly how they mean it?' I

mean that's a swipe at your leadership, cos what you're saying is that you're the only person there carrying the flag.

HONE No no no, that's a swipe at the other 122 MPs in parliament quite frankly.

DUNCAN What about Pita Sharples?

HONE How many MPs do you see, Maori ones, Pakeha ones, are gonna take issues to the edge? Name one.

DUNCAN But when you say that, I mean are you saying that Tariana's not bold enough, Pita's not bold enough?

HONE No, I would never ever say Tariana's not bold enough, ever, but what I will say is consistently on any Maori issue I will take things to the edge, and I think my party members all around the country recognise that in me, and congratulate me for it. So now if I'm not doing it, if I don't do it Duncan, who does it?

DUNCAN So would you describe yourself as an activist or an MP?

HONE An activist. An activist before I came in, and activist MP, and hopefully an activist still after I get out of parliament.

DUNCAN But you want to stay with the Maori Party?

HONE Absolutely. The issues that I believe in, absolutely, are Maori Party issues.

DUNCAN Now, one of the biggest Maori Party issues in 2011 may be the choice between National or Labour. How uncomfortable are you with dealing with the National Party right now, and could you do it again?

HONE I am uncomfortable in any coalition that's going to reduce our mana to being one of a subservient party. Now that's going to happen with National or Labour, but you have to line up whether or not you think you can achieve certain things in that time, and as there's incremental change and there's major change, I recognise that if you're a party of five at the moment and seven after the next election, you're not in a position to demand major change, but you are in a position to make certain changes incrementally while still hanging out to major issues.

DUNCAN But hasn't the Prime Minister reduced your mana in the last couple of weeks by doing this deal which will add the word free access effectively into the legislation? I mean doesn't that strip some of your mana, because it was the deal that your party did with the National Party, not the ACT Party, they were voting against it? Hasn't John Key stripped your mana from you?

HONE Yeah he has. I mean he came out very – when Rodney Hide threatened to resign over the Super City bill if the Maori seats went in, John Key came out and publically said, this is Rodney's bill, he's my Minister of Local Government, I will back him on this, there'll be no Maori seats. Now when it come to this bill, John Key should have had the courage to say Rodney toddle off back to your corner, you've had your bill, this is Tariana and Pita's bill and I'm gonna back them on it.

DUNCAN And the whare didn't, and the fact that he didn't, does that make you want to not do another deal with National in 2011? If it came down to a choice who would it be Hone? Who would it be?

HONE Ah, the Greens.

DUNCAN Yeah but the Greens are never gonna be the majority.

HONE If it comes down to choice for me as to who we go into coalition with, first will always be the Greens.

DUNCAN Okay, I want to move this interview into sort of looking at biculturalism if you like and multiculturalism. Do you dislike Pakeha?

HONE No, not at all.

DUNCAN What do you think of them?

HONE What a bad thing to say. You and I get on alright don't we Duncan?

DUNCAN Fine, absolutely fine, but what do you see when you see a Pakeha New Zealander.

HONE I see a Pakeha New Zealander.

DUNCAN And do you dislike them in any way?

HONE Why should i?

DUNCAN So what is your problem then with your daughter bringing home a Pakeha?

HONE Oh-ho-ho!

DUNCAN Well if you don't dislike them what's the problem?

HONE I think Duncan you know that a lot of Pakeha families may not say so openly but would have difficulty with some of their

children bringing home a Maori or another ethnic minority. All I'm saying is the same thing. Would I deny my children the right to go with whoever they chose to go with in the end? I'm still seriously pissed off with one of my daughter's who's going with a Maori guy. You know what I mean?

DUNCAN You don't like him?

HONE No I don't particularly like him, but at the end of the day that's my daughter's choice and you have to live with it.

DUNCAN So what are the shared values then? I mean for instance between Pakeha and between – I mean what do we share in common?

HONE Okay, well you and I are going to the Rugby League tonight, what's wrong with that? And if you're up my way come Christmas time you're welcome to come for a barbecue down the beach, and you're welcome to come and swim with me and the nephews, the Papa, any time.

DUNCAN So what makes us New Zealanders?

HONE Well you're a Pakeha New Zealander right, I'm from Aotearoa, I'm Maori, we happen to share the same space. Is there a problem with that for you?

DUNCAN So if I was an Asian and brought an Asian baby into the world here in New Zealand, would an Asian baby have less rights than a Maori baby or a Pakeha baby?

HONE Oh no hang on hang on. We can get into all those sort of technicalities.

DUNCAN But they're New Zealanders.

HONE No but the fact of the matter is, I don't have an issue with it at all. Do you hear me saying Pakehas have gotta leave the country? Do you hear me saying Asians have gotta leave the country? Somalis, Tongans, Kenyans, Samoans? Not at all. What's the problem?

DUNCAN But does a baby born to an Asian, or an Indian New Zealander...? Seriously. I genuinely want to know if you think

HONE Well I have a granddaughter who's Samoan, what's the issue here?

DUNCAN Indian?

HONE None whatsoever. Well I don't have a granddaughter who's an Indian, but if I had a granddaughter who's an Indian what would be the issue here?

DUNCAN But you still haven't answered my question which is – is a baby born from Indian descent or Chinese descent.

HONE You know the Governor General?

DUNCAN Yeah.

HONE Well why would I have a problem with it? That's Paul Henry's problem not mine.

DUNCAN What about in terms of shared values? Do we have shared values?

HONE It's funny you know I went to a Tangi for an old Pakeha guy that had been part of our community all his life. His Mum came to the Tangi, she must have been about 90 something I guess. She stood up and she said this is wonderful, it's the first time I've ever been to a marae and what I'm experiencing here is wonderful. I was shocked, I thought 90 years in this country she'd never ever been to a marae. It's kinda difficult to share values with a people who won't even bother to come across to that eh. It took a whole 90 years for her to come across, whereas me right, I've been to the rugby, I've been to primary school, I've been to secondary school, I went to university, I've been involved in all these Pakeha institutions all of my life, and yet you ask me about shared values. I'm happy to share mine. It seems to me though that a lot of others aren't that willing to share what we have.

DUNCAN That's what I want to ask you. Do you think Pakeha then are racist? Do you think Pakeha fear Maori? That Pakeha New Zealanders don't want to engage with Maori? Because you're saying you engage with the Pakeha institutions.

HONE Yeah, yeah yeah, I think certainly if you look at all of the right wing bloggs and racism, it's absolutely rampant in this country. I mean they're using the Paul Henry issue to take shots at me again, and I'm thinking to myself, I didn't even say anything about the Paul Henry issue, well hardly anything – why are they still going on about it, and yet there's more attacks coming against me over the Paul Henry thing, and I'm thinking to myself it just seems to me that these people just want to hate somebody who's pro Maori.

DUNCAN So you think there is that generalisation that Pakeha generally do not like Maori?

HONE I don't know whether that's a generalisation, it's not a generalisation that I share.

DUNCAN I just want to look forward. There's a number of people saying, around parliament and also in the wider arena that Hone Harawira is the next – one of the Co-Leaders of the Maori Party. What do you say to those people that suggest that you would potentially be able to lead the party?

HONE I have no ambitions at this time for leadership of the party. I'm not naturally of a mind to be that kind of tactful, or to compromise or to be nice about things I genuinely don't like, and I recognise that you've got to have some of those sorts of skills at the level of a leader of a political party.

DUNCAN So one of the Co-Leaders stands down, you wouldn't put your name forward?

HONE Actually I've already suggested that if it's Pita who stands down I'd recommend Te Ururoa.

DUNCAN Alright, good to get that on record.

HONE No problem.

DUNCAN Hone Harawira, thanks for coming in today, appreciate your time.

PACIFIC MEDIA WATCH PROJECT

Research and educational resource provided by the Pacific Media Centre | Creative Industries Research Institute
School of Communication Studies | AUT University | Private Bag 92006 | Auckland 1142 | Aotearoa/New Zealand
pmediawa@aut.ac.nz | www.pacmediawatch.aut.ac.nz | creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/nz/

