

in business — indeed rarer — as the Maori. Because there is no equal opportunity.

But the Pakeha woman may have it easier than the Maori man — because they will play as individuals. They will not crack business for a long time because the discrimination explicit or implicit will deny them equal opportunity, so instead they will go into areas where individual achievement is hard to deny — the professions. 50% of the Law Schools, Medical Schools.

Pakeha world

Now considering the Maori. The Maori in business today must acknowledge that whether its fair or not it is a Pakeha structured business world — the individual dominates. When we appoint someone as Sales Manager we appoint him, and every friend, every relative he has, is irrelevant. He and he alone must do the job. When we look at the options open to us we look at their individual educational qualifications and work history. That of this brothers or sisters is irrelevant. If a Maori is going to get the job offer he might want he must get it as an individual.

Now you are perfectly entitled to say that if that is the basis we have to have it on, we don't want it. And some of my colleagues much more knowledgeable in employment and job advancement than I, say to me, that just as I advise women to crack the professions first that I should advise Maoris to crack their own small business first. Because in your own business you can organise how you want — in someone else's business you must accept his organisation (until you get to the top and can then change it).

This may be good advice — that the Maori's competitive advantage is in the team approach of its own small business. I was therefore fascinated by John Rangihau's example in the 1850's of this incredibly quick and effective response and involvement by the Maori in establishing its own business enterprises. It shows it can be done.

Fair share

Today, of course, a hundred years later, we like to think our management skills have advanced — so small business is even more difficult. I will be quite honest and say that I personally have always had a reasonable amount of confidence I could survive as a manager — I never have had any confidence I could be a successful owner/operator. It requires skills and we do not all have them. But neither does the Pakeha have a monopoly on them. It is abundantly clear the Maori has his fair proportion.

Some of my colleagues suggest that you have a greater proportion with that key entrepreneurial skill. I think, however, whatever the position is, is irrelevant. Because the truth is, all groups — by race or sex or creed have considerably more potentially good owner/operators than are participating in the game. There is a load of talent out there. That is not the constraint. The constraint is in the mechanism by which we get that talent to surface, and then having been identified we give them the resources and the assistance to put it together.

As some of you may know we in Fletcher Challenge along with our colleague major companies want to assist — and in a low key and patient way consistent with the seriousness of the issue, and in areas in which we have competence and can do something that is mutually sensible we will assist.

One such project over the last year has been the Te Kaha project. Following the closure of the Te Kaha Dairy factory your

people established a fish processing unit. You showed the initial entrepreneurial element. With the counsel of Sir Norman Perry we became aware that Fletcher Fishing could maybe assist you by providing some money to upgrade a few plant items and providing marketing outlets but more importantly by providing a little bit of management assistance in analysing the business, highlighting the need to improve quality control, implementing this and improved marketing and accounting systems.

Our partnership has been working together now for some 9 months and I think we have the confidence of people in the area so that we are attracting other fishermen to increase the volume.

Needs commitment

I think this example highlights that Maori small business has great potential if you see it as being something you want and you are committed to. This commitment coupled with an idea is the critical ingredient of small business. But then do what all good businessmen do. Get good advice, and get it before the event and not after.

Of course the best source of advice long term must be experienced managers joining new small business. And the best source of that experience is getting Maoris up the management ladder in existing companies, which leads me back to a few words about education.

I am afraid it is a Pakeha business world and the Pakeha has fashioned education to fit that business world. We are in difficult employment times. The result is that business can choose — and its initial employment decisions are heavily determined by educational performance.

I had the pleasure two years ago to have a day at Massey University — Business Studies Department. I have never been so impressed by the commitment to crack that educational qualification barrier to the Maori in business as exists in that School.

We are all very interested in the current joint approach with the Maori Affairs Department. I believe what is being tried now will succeed because it resembles the approach of the Maori Affairs Apprenticeship Scheme which is to ensure the social environment in the initial years of study reinforces the importance of the continuity of the educational process. If you want success in business you must believe in individual educational success.

Mutual support

The Apprenticeship Scheme takes three years involving the first full year at Carrington Technical Institute and holidays working with Housing Corporation or Maori Affairs and with the boys staying in a Maori Affairs Hostel. The second year they are in flats administered by Maori Affairs and work full time.

This total mutually supportive environment may be an important way to educational success. Fletcher Development and Construction currently has 15 Maori Affairs apprentices in our employ in Auckland and over the last 10 years 23 have completed apprenticeships. It is this initial step that is so vital.

Well you are probably wondering when I am going to speak to my topic "New Zealand and Growth Opportunities". I have chosen to speak in this order because you have all heard many times about Growth Opportunities and another broad brush speech you can do without. If such a speech has any worth it must be in the context of Maori employment,

Maori involvement in business.

New Zealand has had a difficult six or seven years. We all know that the loss of one billion dollars that first has had to be taken each year out of each of our pockets and given to OPEC, and second has had to be changed from being produced as houses or mowers or tents and instead made into an export product, has had traumatic impacts on the economy and society.

Much of that impact has fallen on the low and semi-skilled manual and factory worker — the areas in which the Maori is disproportionately engaged. It has also meant little or no growth and hence denied opportunities for new employment.

Chances better

Well what of the eighties. The chances are it will be better. This last year is the best for growth in domestic activity for seven years. Provided there is not a third oil shock and the US recovers from recession, our terms of trade should improve, and the effort that has and is going into export creation, should relax the balance of payments constraint sufficiently to allow continuing growth at the 2-3% and maybe higher level.

The balance of payments is the key. The Government cannot let you spend another dollar on anything unless someone creates another 30 cents of exports. So what does this mean for the Maori and business.

It means a somewhat easier climate. We should not see the savage amount of employment contraction in existing domestically oriented business. It will be better — but it will still not be bright. All business is fighting to survive and this means reduce costs which means reduce people.

There will be an increasing income differential and increasing difference in security between those with some skill and those without. Eventually electronics will take many jobs involving little skill.

New opportunities

Against this growth means new employment opportunities. Some of these are on us now — horticulture. An area that would appear to be amenable to the small team approach. Major construction projects — the opportunity to acquire skills and to go on and organise labour-only gangs or alternatively subcontract elements of their business to small autonomous groups.

A good example is the forestry contractor. Our Tauhara forest is largely logged, harvested and transported by independent forest contractors consisting of an owner/manager and half a dozen to a dozen employees. There is good potential to expand this type of business in many areas.

It should be remembered that manufacturing has had its zenith — it is a declining percentage of the workforce. The service area will dominate the cities — not factories — and Maoris may well find more opportunities there.

Our nation's future is somewhat brighter. But in truth in business the opportunity for an individual business or individual person exists largely irrespective of national cycles. New Zealand has \$20 billion of economic activity each year. That is enough to get started on. There will be successes and failures in good as well as bad times.

In business there is no substitute for a good idea, a strong commitment, hard work, and the utilisation of good advice.

No reira, Tena Koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou Katoa.