

# SuperBlues

60 plus - National at Heart

## SUPERBLUES NEWSLETTER APRIL 2011

### Prime Minister as Statesman: John Key sees unity in the face of tragedy

Prime Minister John Key summed up for all New Zealanders in his address to the nation at the Christchurch Memorial Service in Hagley Park: "We have seen the coming together of a city and of a nation".

"All who were caught up in that earthquake, all who have seen the images and read the stories have been horrified by its scale and by its callous disregard for so much that we hold dear. It felled buildings, destroyed roads, caused terrible injuries and tore up the very earth we walk upon. It has left scars that will never be erased from our land, or from our hearts.

"Today, in the aftermath of this tragedy, and reminded of life's fragility, we come together to share in the unbreakable strength of the ties that bind us. The ties that bind the community of Christchurch, and that bind us as citizens of New Zealand and the world.

"We have learned a lot about our capacity to do good. There is much talk that ours is a soft generation, focussed only on money and individual gain. What I have seen in our country, and especially here in this city since February 22, puts the lie to that.

"I have seen people who are resilient, capable, practical and compassionate. New Zealanders have been generous and brave. We are resolute. The city will be rebuilt."



*Rt. Hon John Key and Mayor Bob Parker*

### Message from the President, Bernadine Pool

Confronting the stark horror and loss of life in Christchurch, and a short while later the almost unimaginable tragedy of events in Japan, has made the first quarter of this year a most difficult period for many of our members. Our hearts go out to those who have suffered grievous loss.

Further afield we have seen terrible man-made events occurring in Libya with the regime turning on its own people. Other Middle Eastern states face turmoil. We can expect that events in that region will have repercussions for some time to come.

At home, while politicking was largely suspended in the aftermath of the Christchurch earthquake, we have seen a still-ambitious Winston Peters re-entering the political stage. We've noted Phil Goff seeking to reassert himself as an alternative to our Prime Minister. While public opinion polls have continued to reflect well on National and the Prime Minister there is a growing focus on the prospect of National facing a tight election in November to withstand the challenge of a coalition based around Labour, the Greens, NZ First and the Maori Party. Complacency in our ranks is not an option.

We have this month circulated a letter to our MPs emphasising the importance to National of the 60+ age group as an essential support group for the party. The records show that it is those voters in the SuperBlues age category, more than any other segment of the population, that turns out to vote on Election Day.

The Prime Minister has delivered on his promise to maintain universal superannuation. He and his Cabinet have compensated for the increase in GST. We can, however, expect that we will be assailed by other parties in coming months on a range of issues. These include National's unequivocal commitment to maintaining superannuation levels. It is therefore appropriate for SuperBlues groups around the country to begin gearing up to engender their community support for local candidates and the party vote.

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Gathering support for National is not a task that begins when the official election period gets underway, just after the Rugby World Cup final at the end of October. It is an ongoing election year need, especially now that Winston Peters is on the road aiming to rekindle a constituency among us. Promises made when in opposition, or when bidding to become again an MP, are often more blandishment than real. But they can be effective.

It is therefore essential that we in SuperBlues seek to join up with Grey Power and question assertions made by those who seek a change of Government. I find that my membership of Grey Power allows me to challenge assertions about

National policy that are less than accurate. It is essential also that we provide opportunities for Ministers and MPs to mingle among those of the 60+ age group to spread their messages across local communities. Morning and afternoon tea functions and luncheon get togethers often provide an opportunity to bring in others in the community who can get fresh perspectives from your discussions and those of an MP that you may have present for the occasion.

National Policy Advisory Groups are meeting with Ministers and MPs this month to discuss the way ahead. SuperBlues will be at the table. We will urge our Ministers and our MPs to make themselves available for SuperBlues functions around the country.

The challenge for SuperBlues this year is to make sure that the highest voting block by age in the country retains the loyalty for National that it showed three years ago.

## A City that is really hurting - Christchurch Central MP Nicky Wagner

We have had a traumatic few months but the last four weeks since the 22 February earthquake have been the worst. We are a small, connected community and everyone has lost someone or something. We are all feeling the pain but everyone has pulled together and worked hard to recover.

The Prime Minister at the National Memorial Service offered words of genuine admiration and encouragement – I pay tribute to the resilience of every Christchurch citizen who has done what must be done; who has resisted despair and had the bravery to go on.



*Shovelling silt*

These have been such difficult days. Here in the beautiful Hagley Park we see the face of a city that is broken but not beaten! Let us today re-commit ourselves to the resolve to rise again'.

I wish to echo these sentiments. I am proud to be one of these Christchurch citizens myself but I am also proud of how the people of New Zealand, the Government and even those overseas have responded to the hardship, trauma and uncertainty Christchurch people are experiencing.

The rebuilding of Christchurch will be the Government's main priority this year. The Prime Minister has committed to providing the necessary resources to make this happen over the coming weeks, months and years. We all appreciate that it will be a long and complex task which we will need to work through together, step by step.



Kia kaha Canterbury.

**Nicky Wagner**  
Christchurch List MP