

Foreign owners come from locked-gate culture

In Prime Minister John Key's dismissal of criticism of the Lochinver sale as "rhetoric" (Aug 5) he referred to 2007, when a nearby property, Poronui, changed hands to a US owner. He claimed Labour and Winston Peters did nothing. What Key didn't understand was that Poronui Station had been in foreign ownership for almost 40 years before 2007.

The first foreign owner was a US church in the 1970s. Restricted public access was a vexed issue in the 1970s and has been ever since. The point is that foreign owners come from a culture of private estates, locked gates and payment

by the public for access.

This is foreign to New Zealand's egalitarian society and under law paying for shooting or trout fishing rights is prohibited. No one wants a feudal society where only the wealthy 5 per cent can afford high fees to go catch a trout, shoot a pheasant or hunt a deer.

It is ironic this year is the International Year of the Family Farm. New Zealand farmers have generally been generous with access for outdoor recreation, in contrast to foreign owners who erect locked gates.

ANDI COCKROFT
Co-chairman, NZ Council Outdoor
Recreation Associations

"Press"
6/8/14

Children's future

Prime Minister Key has blithely informed the populace that the latest purchase of prime farmland – the 13,800-hectare Lochinver Station, near Taupo – by a foreign company is no bad thing for us. The place was run down, says Mr Key, and the Chinese will get it up and running, create jobs and have a ready market in China.

Excuse me! I presume that the New Zealand farmer is not as capable or efficient, then, as foreign-directed farmers. Did not brave pioneering spirit and calloused hands (ever had those, John?) win this country to what is

is? It's run down! New Zealanders made an attempt at purchasing Lochinver Station at offers which would sensibly make the purchase a viable financial risk and their banks would have approved for loans.

How can we compete with the cash-dripping economies of once third-world countries, while the Western world is so deeply in debt, that if called in, bankruptcy would sink us all.

The master Keystroke? Sell off our primary industry and our children's future (and don't forget to vote Act in Epsom).

TERRY HARRIS
Mangawhai

Wrong action

John Key is trying to justify a sale of a North Island station by quoting that more land was sold under the previous Labour government. Surely one wrong action doesn't justify another one.

The sale of our farms will see the profits going offshore, and also give our co-operative Fonterra additional competition on the overseas markets. Hardly helping our local economy.

As voters we need to be logical and look for intelligence rather than looks at voting time.

GARY JEFFERY
Westport

HE SAYS:

The master Keystroke? Sell off our ... children's future.

Terry Harris