

intent and purposes sneaking out of the country to take up an invitation to visit South Africa. We are the unemployed. We are one in four children who appear before the Children's Court. We have a Minister of Maori Affairs of whom it was said last week that he was 'profoundly ignorant' of South Africa. He was on television last night saying, incredibly, that he supported apartheid in South Africa. We are *tū tangata*; we are also members of the Mongrel Mob.

This is the bleak scenario. One hopes that it will not be our future. For there are many positive aspects, and so much optimism about sorting out a future for all of us. The problem is, for we who observe, a matter of timing. There is urgency now. *We* wish to chart a course for our culture towards *life*, not death.

Last week, the Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon, in his speech to the Australian Chamber of Commerce in Hobart, said that leadership must be positive, optimistic but not divisive. He then said that inverted racists were trying to create a split between Maori and pakeha in New Zealand. 'My answer to them is a very practical one. In my party in the House I have three Maori members of Parliament, each of whom was elected for a general seat or what we used to call European seat, where the Maori vote would be no higher than five per cent.' There were a small number of Maori radicals in New Zealand who did their best to exacerbate whatever problems there might be between Maori and pakeha. 'But they are small in number and very small as a proportion of the total. We are an integrated society. Something in excess of sixty per cent of Maori marriages today have one European partner.'

I do not find such comments positive or optimistic. I find them divisive to a degree that can barely be tolerated. Mr Muldoon is making the mistake of assuming that where you have integration of people that you have integration of culture also. Integration of people does *not* automatically make for integration of culture.

We still have a long way to go. We still need to force a reconsideration of New Zealand's monocultural perception of itself. We still require that national identity should be bilingual and bicultural. Only then will Maori and pakeha heritages and culture be enriched. There is still a need for New Zealand to take its Maori personality into account. Despite the bleakness of what I have said, Maori literature has a place in ensuring this occurs. If to be hopeful and to push for change in New Zealand is radical, then here I am, here *we* are.

All of us who write, or who are concerned, about Maori life, have this in common: the commitment to our people. For us, the challenge today is rather as described by Patricia Grace in her magnificent short story 'Parade':