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*A MOVING IMAGE RESOURCE FOR
NEW ZEALAND CLASSROOMS*

ORATORY
WORDS IN THE FRAME

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MICHAEL JOSEPH SAVAGE 1936

Movietone News AO146 (extract)

Fox Movietone 1936. Duration 1:04

Michael Joseph Savage (Prime Minister 1935–1940) was unusual in political terms. Opponents and supporters agreed on his mild and polite manner, with none of the grandstanding antics of so many politicians before and after. Check the elegant wording and syntax in this Australian newsreel piece and compare with one of Savage's more famous pronouncements – the declaration of war on Germany in 1939 (both transcripts contained in the online unit).

PETER FRASER 1941

Heroes of Crete

National Film Unit 1941. Duration 1:33

It's early 1941. One third of the men of the New Zealand Division have been killed, wounded, captured or listed as missing in the horrific campaigns in Greece and Crete. The New Zealand public would have seen these pictures, and their rather distressed Prime Minister delivering this commentary, at picture theatres around New Zealand. He knew how to deliver.

LYNDON B. JOHNSON 1966

Pictorial Parade 184: New Zealand's Day with LBJ (extract)

National Film Unit 1966. Duration 1:52

Lyndon Johnson on his whirlwind tour to drum up more troops for Vietnam, attends a State luncheon at Parliament. Schools were closed for the day, a large staged crowd camped outside Parliament, including a strong protest contingent. The speech is pure presidential delivery.

ROBERT MULDOON 1974

A Bit Mr Churchill's Way (extracts)

Pacific Films 1974. Duration 6:52

A promotional film about Robert Muldoon, made in the year leading up to the 1975 election. Muldoon is seen addressing a public meeting, where the crowd give him an enthusiastic reception. Issues discussed include: Muldoon's leadership style, humour in politics, the superannuation scheme and the Labour Government. The set-up of this piece is interesting. Not many political promotional films include negative voices on its subject. However, it's noticeable that the people used to picture the negative response are generally long-haired, young, and feeding the whole argument that this good old boy is a straight talking tough guy,, who will confidently lead us into the future. If one definition of oratory is the embellishment of particular view, then it's important to understand how modern spin doctors organise the packaging of words and images.

ERUERA STIRLING 1974

Tangata Whenua: The Great Trees (extract)

Pacific Films 1974. Duration 1:19

Footage of Eruera Stirling welcoming visitors onto Mangahanea Marae, Ruatoria, at the annual conference of Maori [University] graduates. The nature of Maori protocol demands ability in oratory. The format of Marae procedure is embedded in tradition (whakatoki, karakia, take...) and speaking rights are never taken lightly. Notice the translation of this particular whaikorero.

WHINA COOPER 1975

Te Matakite o Aotearoa: The Maori land March (extract)

Seehear Ltd. 1975. Duration 5:00

Whina Cooper whips up a storm during the Land March of 1975, using pause and humour to maximum effect.

TAMA POATA 1981

Patu! (extract)

Awatea Films / Merita Mita 1983. Duration 2:11

Tama Poata shows that the oratorical tradition has street credibility. The talking stick gives way for the loudspeaker, the choice of words hint of the speaker's semantic roots.

DAVID LANGE 1985

David Lange at the Oxford Union Debate (extract)

BBC 1985. Duration 4:54

One of New Zealand's best political tongues in action. In this case there's a mixture of prepared debate and off-the-cuff responses to interjections. The Oxford Debate is an annual event, Lange being the first Prime Minister (or international leader) to be invited to speak. The topic was one which had captured the headlines around the world – New Zealand's declaration of Nuclear Free status, and subsequent refusal to allow US nuclear armed or powered vessels into our ports.

WINSTON PETERS 1996

1996 Party Political Broadcast

[1996] Duration 1:43

Winston Peters on behalf of NZ First uses all his personal gravity and charisma, not to mention an immaculate suit, to drum up votes. He copies the old Muldoon trick of eye-straight-at-the-camera.

ELIZABETH II 1999

Her Majesty the Queen's Christmas Message 1999

BBC 1999. Duration 10:11

The Queen's messages to England and her Commonwealth have been a Christmas institution since 1953. The style has loosened over the years without of course going too far. There are the occasional contractions like can' or haven't slipping in, and a preparedness to dish up some

different contexts each year but plenty of elegant phrasing and tried and true homilies remain. A true professional.

SYLVIA CARTWRIGHT 2004

The Tomb of the Unknown Warrior (extract)

TVNZ 2004. Duration 6:52

The Governor-General's speech at the site of the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior. Notice that every vowel and phrase conveys a sense of authority and history.

HELEN CLARK 2005

A Celebration of the Life of the Right Honourable David Lange (extract)

TVNZ 2005. Duration 4:32

Helen Clark's understated speech covers the bases with clarity. While it cannot compare to the speeches of David Lange, she delivers it with a style that is ultimately effective.