



Office of Rt Hon Winston Peters
New Zealand First Leader

11 August 2020

Associate Professor Gehan Gunasekara
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Dear Gehan

Thank you for your letter of 27 July 2020. New Zealand First strongly believes that protecting personal information and the privacy of citizens is paramount in the maintenance of a well-functioning democracy. Ensuring privacy underpins each citizen's sense of autonomy and freedom. Breaches erode both and cause a loss of confidence in governments as the protector of same. There have been too many privacy breaches during the past several years to feel anything other than arch concern at the poor protection of personal information by state and private entities.

New Zealand First's view is that personal information collected in the course of managing Covid-19 be only used to help protect the nation's health position (in an aggregate sense). This is to ensure government can make informed choices about appropriate health responses. Contact tracing apps must be voluntary, despite their severe limitations, and contingency must be built into our contact tracing processes to mitigate against any heavy state regulation that would make the surrender of personal information mandatory.



We would support any move to include a Right to Erasure. As far as the Office of the Privacy Commissioner, New Zealand First would support any future budget bid to ensure that the Office is appropriately resourced to perform its statutory functions.

As for Facebook and Google, the next government should as a matter of priority look at regulating online platforms. They have had a hugely disruptive impact on the media sector, for one, and individual's sense of autonomy is affected by the Wild West use of personal information by those platforms. That said, individuals themselves manifestly contribute to the crass and gross sharing of their own intimate lives. Education also has an important role to play here.

New Zealand First supported the creation of an Inspector-General of Intelligence and we were fully supportive of the 'Op Burnham' Inquiry recommendation for an equivalent Inspector-General of Defence, to be located, in all likelihood, inside the civilian sphere of government. These roles both strengthen the civilian leadership's control of the Intelligence Agencies and of the military and are welcomed by the party.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jon Johansson
Chief of Staff to the Leader of New Zealand First
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