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Trailblazers: The New Zealand Story
Releases January 28, 2017

New documentary explores the ingenuity and ambition of Kiwis who built new lives by seizing the opportunities that resulted from New Zealand's radical economic reforms.

ERIE, PA (January 25, 2017) -- Thirty years ago New Zealand had the most government-controlled economy existing outside communist countries. The government ran every aspect of the economy, resulting in a six month waiting period to buy a car or have a telephone installed. The control over the dairy industry required doctor's permits to purchase margarine, rather than butter, and special permits were requisite to go on vacation and subscribe to foreign magazines, such as *People* or *National Geographic*.

Today, the country is a driving force in international trade, economic leadership and healthy environmental practices. New Zealand is also the global leader in sustainable fishing practices, with many countries imitating its lauded Quota Management System (QMS).

Trailblazers: The New Zealand Story, a new documentary produced by Free To Choose Media and hosted by Executive Editor and Cato Institute Senior Fellow Johan Norberg, explores the ingenuity and ambition of individual New Zealanders who initiated innovative ideas and entrepreneurial leadership as bold politicians instituted radical financial reforms to save the country from economic collapse.

The one-hour documentary, which releases to public television stations January 28, 2017, features extraordinary people who have built new lives for themselves, their families, and their fellow Kiwis by seizing the economic opportunities that resulted from the reforms, including:

- Bill Cashmore, a fourth generation cattle and sheep rancher whose family survived some of the most economically tumultuous years the country ever knew, and is now confident ranching will continue to a fifth generation.
- Roger Beattie, a farmer-turned-fisherman-turned-entrepreneur-turned farmer, who considers himself an early casualty and ultimate beneficiary of the 1984 reforms.
- Roger Rawlinson, a Maori fisherman who benefits from New Zealand's QMS, a revolutionary environmental system that was built on the back of the 1984 economic reforms and saved the country's fishing industry.

(more)

Produced by



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Presented by



Distributed by



- Finance Minister Roger Douglas, a member of the left-leaning Labour Party, who took office in the midst of New Zealand's economic chaos, and implemented the radical economic reforms, which were subsequently dubbed "Rogernomics."

"This is a story of revolutionary change led by an unlikely alliance of farm owners and maverick politicians who broke a system of excessive privileges that was choking the nation," said Norberg.

"The reforms resulted in hardship on the road to recovery and individual stories in this film are emotional and inspirational," said James Tusty and Maureen Castle Tusty, who co-wrote, produced and directed ***Trailblazers: The New Zealand Story***. "They are a testament to what happens when governments give people the freedom to do their best and let the competition spur them on. Today, New Zealanders enjoy access to world markets and reasonably priced goods – from televisions, food, cars, cameras, wine and clothing."

The story of New Zealand's journey from near economic collapse to economic and environmental world leadership includes powerful and thought-provoking personal stories of survival and triumph.

Executive Producers for ***Trailblazers: The New Zealand Story*** are Thomas Skinner and Bob Chitester at Free To Choose Media.

Join the conversation at #TrailblazersNZ.

About Johan Norberg

International commentator Johan Norberg is an author, presenter and editor whose focus is globalization, entrepreneurship, and individual liberty. He is the executive editor at Free To Choose Media and a senior fellow at the Cato Institute. He has authored several books exploring liberal themes, including his newest, [Progress: Ten Reasons to Look Forward to the Future](#) and [Financial Fiasco: How America's Infatuation with Homeownership and Easy Money Created the Economic Crisis](#). His book [In Defense of Global Capitalism](#), originally published in Swedish in 2001, has since been published in over twenty different countries. Norberg's articles and opinion pieces appear regularly in both Swedish and international newspapers, and he is a regular commentator and contributor on television and radio around the world discussing globalization and free trade.

About Free To Choose Media

Free To Choose Media produces thought-provoking public television programs and series, offering non-partisan, powerful stories that advocate for the well-being of every individual, as well as vibrant, fresh perspectives on a range of vital global and national issues. For more than 30 years, the Free To Choose production teams have traveled the world to explore topics such as the economic roots of the Arab Spring and the inspiring stories of entrepreneurs raising themselves and their communities out of poverty, and a look at how innovation and new technologies may be the answer to the world's growing energy needs. Headquartered in Erie, PA, FTC Media is a television production initiative of Free To Choose Network, a global media company. For more information, visit the website at www.FreeToChooseMedia.org.

About WTTW Chicago

WTTW Chicago presents a wide array of ground-breaking content for the national public media system, with series and specials on education, politics, public affairs, science, business, arts and entertainment, health, and religion. WTTW Chicago's landmark series include *Soundstage*, featuring concerts by top pop and rock artists in an intimate concert setting; the popular cooking series, *MEXICO — One Plate at a Time* with Rick Bayless; and the new animated series *Nature Cat*, a co-production with Chicago's Spiffy Pictures which premiered nationwide in November 2015. WTTW Chicago has also served as the national presenting station for such programs as *1916 - The Irish Rebellion*, *inCommon with Mike Leonard*, *Curious Traveler*, *Dream of Italy*, *Islands Without Cars*, *Speakeasy*, *Vintage*, the educational children's properties *Mission to Planet 429* and *UMIGO*, the award-winning children's series *WordWorld*, and many others. For more information, please visit wttw.com/national.

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