

## Characteristics of good and enlightened leadership

[Amber Blanco White](#) was a writer, feminist and scholar who was born in 1887 and raised in Christchurch until she moved with her family to England in 1896. Her parents were the New Zealand social reformer [William Pember Reeves](#) and feminist and socialist [Maud](#). At Cambridge she founded the University's still extant Fabian Society. At 23 she scandalised London society by her affair with the married H.G Wells and the subsequent birth of her first daughter.

In 1938 in the lead-up to the Second World War and with describing the rise of Fascism on her mind she wrote *The New Propaganda* for Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club. In it she outlined the elements of good and enlightened leadership using regal, imperial and presidential examples. Augustus Caesar, George Washington and Alfred the Great were possessed of powers which meant they did not need to be beneficent rulers but in important respects each was. Below are the criteria that Blanco-White identified and that's the point of this post – a holiday quiz for thinking about how the current crop of leaders locally and internationally meet the criteria of good leadership under circumstances of democratic election and supposed limits on leader's power. Take your pick - with TPP, TPIP, Five Eyes surveillance and military power in their arsenals how do John Key, Barack Obama, Tony Abbot, Francois Hollande, Vladimir Putin, Angela Merkel, Frank Bainimarama, David Cameron, Stephen Harper or Shinzō Abe measure up to Augustus, Alfred and George? I'd be interested in your findings

	<b>Characteristics of good leaders</b>	<b>Leader 1</b>	<b>Leader 2</b>
1	Subordinating their own welfare to that of their subjects.		
2	Restoring and keeping peace and order without resorting to force or making the keeping of order the main instrument of government.		
3	Inculcating a spirit of consideration and of respect for the rights and feelings of others.		
4	By setting an example of disinterestedness and conciliation.		

5	Directing people to the possibilities of the future and not dwelling on the miseries and animosities of the past.		
6	Setting up or restoring a system of equal and impartial justice enforcing it on the rich as well as the poor.		
7	Respecting and fostering learning and the arts.		
8	Building and endowing centres of learning.		
9	Being merciful and caring for the poor including welfare/alms and the building of hospitals.		
10	Endeavouring to train their subjects in the proper exercise of responsibility and power.		
11	Strengthening local administration and institutions.		
12	Endeavouring to improve and not debase their peoples and to make their subjects more and not less responsible.		
13	Trusting oneself unguarded among one's people not strengthening their personal position and hold upon subjects.		
14	And finally being prepared to stand down when their period of usefulness is over.		