to bring about a strong, healthy, and prosperous society. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.


[Tararua and Ruapehu are my mountains. Ruamahanga and Whanganui are my rivers. Takitimu and Aotea are my canoes. I am descended from Rangitane, Kahungunu in Wairarapa and Ati-Hau-nui-a-Paparangi. Ngāti Moe and Wainuiarua are my hapū. Papawai and Upokotauaki are my marae. Teoti Rangitekaiwaho Turei and Piupiu Taputoro are my grandparents. Richard Ropata Erura Turei is my father, who has departed this world into the hands of God. Janice Turei is my mother. And I am Metiria Turei. Greetings to you all.]

[An interpretation in English was given to the House.]

First up, I say the biggest thanks and love to my dad, Richard Turei, to my mum, Janice, to Tania, Work, Angie, and Bruno, and, of course, to my gorgeous girl, Piupiu. We are walking a very strange path at the moment, and I cannot express how grateful and relieved I am that we are walking it together. I also say a big, huge love to my Te Whaiti whānau, Uncle Jack, Nancy, and the girls, and to Aunty Cowlen, too; and to the Stanton and Hartley whānau. Kia ora.

And, of course, humongous thanks and appreciation to the Green Party of Aotearoa / New Zealand, to the Auckland campaign team, and to Lynn, Phil, Richard, and all of those who gave the party their support. We have committed to a Green parliamentary presence so that the Green vision can be articulated both in the streets and in the big House. That is awesome. Ehara taku toa i te takitahi engari he toa takitini: my strength is not that of my own, but that of the multitude.

I especially want to thank the team who campaigned in the Tamaki Makaurau electorate: Sandi, Mike, Shane, Vanessa, Gabriel, and Regina. We did an awesome job and gave John Tamihere a bit of a run for his money. Working with all of those people was heaps of fun.

Speaking of fun, I want to pay a special tribute to my political roots.

Kāore he pōuri i Aotearoa
Kāore ngā hipi i runga i ōu pāmu
Kāore he pōuri i Aotearoa
Me noho māhaki tonu tātou.

Kōrero ngā tangata i World War III
Kōrero ngā tangata i World War III
Kei te pai noa iho tātou noho
Kāore he raruraru i tēnei whenua.

[An interpretation in English was given to the House.]
There is no depression in New Zealand
There are no sheep on your farms
We can all remain calm.

Everybody is talking about World War III
Everybody is talking about World War III
We are as safe as safe can be
There is no unrest within the land.

I grew up in a working-class Māori family, and we were poor. But I was most deeply affected in my childhood by my parents, who shared, without question, their meagre resources with many of our friends and family. This sharing was the exercise of our Māori familial values, best expressed as whanaungatanga, where the whole whānau cared for and took responsibility for all its members. Like many Māori, I grew up with this sharing as a fundamental expression of my Māori self.

But I also grew up in a racist society, where the expression of Māori values is considered a failure to cope in a modern society. The notion that a Western-styled, two-parent family unit is the only cornerstone of a decent society is an example. That notion is a racist one. The expression by Māori of our values, like whanaungatanga, is undermined by the perpetuation of such notions. To be a Māori in this society is to be revolutionary by mere existence. My politicisation, my subversiveness, was grounded in my living my life as a Māori.

My personal political journey has led me to the reasonable conclusion that the present State has no legitimacy, and that it must ultimately be transformed into a system that implements Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It is a commonly held view. Noam Chomsky once described a conversation about the nature of the State that he had had with a group of Brazilian activists and anarchists. They have a saying in Brazil that we should ‘widen the floor of the cage’. Professor Chomsky went on to describe the Brazilians’ analysis: ‘We know we’re in a cage. We know we’re trapped. We’re going to expand the floor, meaning we will extend to the limits what the cage will allow. And we intend to destroy the cage. But not by attacking the cage when we’re vulnerable, so they’ll murder us. You have to protect the cage when it’s under attack from even worse predators from outside, like private power. And you have to expand the floor of the cage. These are all preliminaries to dismantling it. Unless people are willing to tolerate that level of complexity, they’re going to be of no use to people who are suffering and who need help.’

We, too, in Aotearoa, live in a cage. We are caged by the State, a political and economic system that relegates basic human needs and ecological integrity to the fringes of our existence.

We can look to a variety of examples in our country: where the ideas of equal opportunity and equality of value deny the reality that Māori have been treated differently and valued differently by our society, and in our legislation, since the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi; where wages are not based on what a family needs to live, but are kept to the minimum a person will work for; where benefit levels are kept below a livable level expressly for the purpose of keeping wages low; where the housing provision is directed to providing a return on investment for landlords, rather than the needs of families and children, who require stability, security, and shelter; where cannabis prohibition laws are used to oppress and imprison Māori and young people; and where we are continually told that our material well-being requires the sacrifice of our environment, on which our lives depend.

But let us give the devil its due. The floor of our cage is wider than that of many other countries, and while the cage controls and oppresses us, it also provides limitations on the worst excesses of private power. We have a minimum wage and a benefit system, which help to alleviate the worst poverty. We have State housing, which provides, for some, some degree of stability.

And of course, the cage can, if it chooses, protect us from external predators, like corporate globalisation. Corporate globalisation is the new wave of colonisation, and impacts on indigenous and non-indigenous alike. Corporate globalisation and the
acceptance of free-trade agreements threaten our economy, our environment, our people, and our sovereignty—yours and mine. I am honoured to stand with my Green colleagues Sue Bradford and Nandor Tanczos, who put their well-being at risk in Melbourne a few years ago in order to demonstrate that threat to the world, and to Aotearoa in particular.

Māori, who of course have a long history of analysing and critiquing colonialist power structures, have a sophisticated analysis of globalisation and its many manifestations, like genetic engineering, biopiracy, and the patenting of life forms.

Māori also hold another layer of protection that could be of enormous benefit to the whole of our society, if only the State would choose to exercise it. Te Tiriti o Waitangi—the Māori text as signed and understood by those who signed it—provides a powerful protection against corporate globalisation, because it establishes an entirely different paradigm for our society, one that does not reduce our people to consumers and our taonga to baubles. Te tiriti was a visionary document that established a very sophisticated constitutional structure, placing Māori beyond the vagaries of the cage created by kawanatanga, and affirming the exercise of Māori social, economic, and political rights and responsibilities.

But of course we know that, rather than adhere to that agreement and help to build that society, the State claimed for itself a monopoly on the use of violence, and through violent and legislative means set out to destroy the tangata whenua. As time has marched on, and as Māori have continued to fight for recognition as a treaty partner, the post-colonial State has co-opted te tiriti, and reduced the tikanga in that document to mere property rights. The State’s approach and subsequent failure to acknowledge Māori political rights are evidenced in the unilaterally defined treaty settlement process, where our taonga are property, and our authority to make decisions is undermined. This co-option of the treaty is merely the State attempting to give the cage a Māori motif.

The Greens recognise that changing this paradigm is an evolutionary process. It will require a long process of dialogue among our whole community. Our Green policy on te tiriti focuses not on what the State can do for Māori, but on working with Māori to develop Māori-defined forums and institutions by which we can begin to implement te tiriti. I applaud that policy.

I know that while I work to achieve the ultimate goal of the transformation of the State, my friends, my family, and many, many other people find daily life extremely difficult. So I now accept my place in the cage, and I accept the responsibility to do everything I can to widen its floor to the maximum that it can be forced. As a legislator I will attempt to make changes to legislation that will in some part relieve the very real distress suffered by workers, beneficiaries, students, children, families, whānau, and hapū.

Everyone who rejects the dominant paradigm dislikes being in this cage, and we do a range of things to express this rejection: we protest and demonstrate; we take non-violent direct action; we engage in decolonisation processes for Pākehā and Māori; we grow our food on public property; we step out of the system altogether and model alternative lives; we survive on the dole, enjoying ourselves; we put our lives at risk to protect the environment; we teach our children to respect themselves and our environment; we vote; we refuse to vote; we create and are artistic; we have fun without buying things; and we work tirelessly for our whānau and hapū without being paid. But always we are working in our personal, social, and political lives towards the dismantling of the cage. I do not doubt for one moment that it will happen. The State will be transformed, as only Te Tiriti o Waitangi has moral authority in this country.

I accept that some may argue that what I have outlined is not transformation but reformation—mere tinkering—but this is not a compromise. It is not complacency. It is a strategy. We empower individuals; we strengthen and support families; we build communities; we politicise the populace; and, as in my case, perhaps, we infiltrate the power structures. Finally, in my own journey of empowerment, politicisation, and subversiveness, I have found myself a member of the establishment, but not now, nor ever, its advocate. Tēna koutou, tēna koutou, kia ora koutou katoa.
DAVID PARKER (NZ Labour—Otago): Madam Deputy Speaker, I congratulate you on your appointment. As a new MP, I feel like Harry Potter arriving at Hogwarts School of Wizardry. I have had no trouble identifying Professor Dumbledore and Hagrid; I am still a little scared of them. My fellow MPs have suggested many candidates for Voldemort, but I will reserve judgment.

On behalf of the people of Otago, I acknowledge my predecessor, Gavan Herlihy. Gavan is a fair and honourable man who served the Otago electorate for 6 years, and I express thanks for his efforts. As Gavan has said, it takes a lot of work to service an electorate the size of Switzerland. Greetings also to Ian Quigley, who won the Otago Central seat for Labour back in 1972.

The coastal part of my electorate borders Dunedin. It extends north, past seaside townships like Karitane, Shag Point, and Moeraki, and past Oamaru, to the Waitaki River. Like the whole electorate, it is rich in history and culture. For example, Karitane—a special place where I spend a lot of time—was occupied by the Ngāi Tahu hapū Kāti Huirapa Puketeraki for centuries prior to the arrival of sealers and whalers. The Māori art still preserved in North Otago limestone caves also bears witness to those pre-European days. Those same limestone deposits were used to build the towering columns and ornate details that grace Oamaru streets.

Between the coast and the mountains, productive farmland earns hundreds of millions of dollars in export earnings, and supports rural towns like Palmerston, Ranfurly, Middlemarch, Ophir, my birthplace of Roxburgh, Alexandra, and Cromwell. Hot dry summers, crystal-clear, sunny winter days, Lombardy poplars in autumn, and schist rock outcrops abound. The big skies and twilight silhouettes captured by Grahame Sydney move anyone who experiences them.

The vineyards and orchards of Central Otago lead on to the jewels of Hawea, Queenstown, and Wanaka. Lakes and rugged mountains are the backdrop for the adventure tourism capital of the world. The electorate extends beyond, to the virgin forests of the Mount Aspiring and Fiordland National Parks.

It is indeed a privilege to serve this electorate. I treasure the opportunity and pledge to do my best, especially for those least privileged.

I owe my presence here to many people. I first acknowledge my mother, Joan, and my father, Frank, in the gallery today. Without their love, guidance, and keen interest in social issues and business I would not be here.

Thanks also to the people I see as my mentors: Jim Guthrie, John Farry, the Hon. Pete Hodgson, and Howard Paterson. A greater bunch of free-thinking friends, advisers, brains, and philosophers would be hard to find anywhere.

I also pay tribute to the people who worked hard for me in what was an intense and effective campaign. It takes great strength of belief and will to persevere, election cycle after election cycle, in seats seen by others as safe National seats. To name names unfairly omits others, but some need special mention: Warren Crawford, Heather Grimwood, Atholea and Tom Shanks, Dougal and Edna Soper, Barbara Duff, Arthur Schep, John Cheeseman, Vern Dunn, Michael Gibson, and Donna Stuut. Thanks also to the activists from Dunedin who collectively walked hundreds of kilometres around the electorate, mostly in sub-zero temperatures. And thanks to the Hon. Richard Prebble, who in advance of the election said that Labour was not fighting any marginal electorate battles. He spurred me on.

My last and most heartfelt thankyou is extended to my wife, Sue, and our three children. Partners of MPs bear an unfair proportion of parental responsibility and domestic drudgery. Neither partners nor children seek election. They do not get the glory, yet they lose the freedom of anonymity, suffer the absence of their partner or parent, and have their own lifestyle choices curbed by our own. Against that reality, the love and support I have received from them is humbling. I cherish them all.

I now wish to touch on local issues. The Queenstown Lakes District Council has only 13,000 ratepayers. Each year, 1.5 million visitors stay more than 2.7 million bed nights.