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THURSDAY, 26 NOVEMBER 2020

The Speaker took the Chair at 10.30 a.m.
Karakia.

CONFIRMATION OF ELECTION OF SPEAKER

SPEAKER: I have to report that, accompanied by members, I waited upon Her Excellency the Governor-General at Government House yesterday, when I addressed Her Excellency as follows:

Following Your Excellency's request, the House of Representatives has elected me as Speaker and I now present myself for Your Excellency's confirmation.

Her Excellency replied as follows:

Mr Speaker, it is with much pleasure that I confirm the choice by the House of Representatives of you as its Speaker.

I congratulate you on your election to this distinguished office, marking as it does the appreciation of the House of Representatives of your impartiality and ability.

I then replied to Her Excellency as follows:

I thank Your Excellency for your confirmation of the choice made by the House of Representatives of me to be its Speaker.

I now, on behalf of the House, lay claim to all its privileges, and especially to freedom of speech in debate, to free access to Your Excellency whenever occasion may require it, and to the most favourable construction being put on all its proceedings.

Her Excellency replied as follows:

Mr Speaker, I confirm all the rights and privileges of the House of Representatives which have ever been granted. I assure you that the House of Representatives shall always have ready access to me, and that I will at all times place the most favourable construction upon its proceedings.

AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER OATH

SPEAKER: I have also received the following authorisation from Her Excellency the Governor-General to administer the oath or affirmation prescribed by law to be taken or made by members of the House:

In accordance with section 11 of the Constitution Act 1986, I, The Right Honourable Dame Patsy Reddy, Governor-General of New Zealand, authorise you,

The Right Honourable Trevor Colin Mallard

Speaker of the House of Representatives

to administer to members of Parliament the Oath or Affirmation of Allegiance to Her Majesty The Queen required to be taken or made by every such member before that member shall be permitted to sit or vote in the House of Representatives.

Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister.

Authorised by Patsy Reddy, Governor-General

25 November 2020

MIHI

SPEAKER: I now call on the senior Māori member to deliver a mihi.

Hon KELVIN DAVIS (Minister for Māori Crown Relations: Te Arawhiti): Tēnei te nihinihi, tēnei te tupua, tau rori ana ki te whare o Uenuku, e here ki reira te ihi, te wehi, te mana, te tapu. Ko te kī kei runga taupokongia atu ki te pū, ki te wānanga, ki a tātou e

hui nei. Ka tau ko te tangikura kia ākina ake ki te iwi nui, kia tau ki runga ki a tātou, tēnei te nihinihi, tēnei te nahanaha, tūturu o Whiti kia whakamaua kia tina.

(Tina)

Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e.

E te Māngai o te Whare, tēnei taku mihi tuatahi ki a koe, nāu nei i whakapūaretia tō tātou huihuinga i runga i ngā kupu karakia, nāu nei i honotia te rangi ki te whenua, te whenua ki te rangi nā reira, tēnā rā koe. Tēnā hoki koe, nā te Kāwana-Tianara i whakamanahia tō tūranga nā reira e mihi kau ana ki a koe mō tēnā tūranga.

E tika ana kia hura tātou ki te wāhi ngaro, ō tātou tini mate, ngā mate nā tātou katoa i pīkaungia ki roto i tēnei Whare. Haere ngā mate, haere. Ko tōku hoa, a Rudy Taylor, tētahi. I tērā wiki kua tukuna atu ki te kōpū o te whenua nā reira, Rudy me te tini, te mano e takoto ana kei runga i ngā marae maha puta noa i te motu. Haere e ngā mate, haere, haere atu rā.

Engari, rātou ki a rātou, te hunga wairua. Kua hoki mai ki a tātou ngā kanohi ora me ngā kaupapa kei mua i a tātou.

Tuatahi māku, e mihi kau atu ki te Pirimia, tēnā rā koe e te Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, kourua ko the Hon Grant Robertson, te Pirimia me te Pirimia Tuarua. Kua kōrero te motu. Nā rātou i whakatau ko kourua ngā kaiwhakahaere o te motu, o te Kāwanatanga nō reira mihi kau ana ki a kourua.

Ka whakawhiti ahau ki te āpitihanga, ki te tumuaki o Te Rōpū Nahinara, the Hon Judith Collins, tēnā rā koe me tō kāhui mema e tautokongia ana ki a koe.

E te tuakana, e Shane, mihi kau ana ki a koe nāu nei i whiwhingia te Tumuaki Tuarua o Te Pāti Nahinara. Kua whakamanahia e koe ō iwi, ō hapū o Te Kapotai o Ngāti Wai nā reira tēnā rā koe mō tēnā tūranga.

Ka huri atu ki ōku whanaunga kei roto i Te Paati Māori. E Rāwiri, tēnā rā koe e te tuahine, Debbie, tēnā rā kourua. Kua kōrero hoki Te Ao Māori—kei konei hei hāpai, hei akiaki ai i ngā kaupapa Māori o te motu. Ko koutou, ko mātou hoki, e kawē ana i tēnā kaupapa nā reira tēnā rā kourua.

Ki a koe e te tumuaki o Te Rōpū ACT, David Seymour. Tēnā rā koe kua puawai tō pāti, tō rōpū, nā reira e mihi kau ana ki a koe. Mahara ake ahau i mua ake nāu nei i mea mai ki ahau tō tino hiahia kia tupu ake tō pāti, nāu nei i tinanahia tērā moemoeā anō. Nā reira, tēnā rā koe.

E te hoa, the Hon James Shaw, me te tuahine, the Hon Marama Davidson, tēnā rā kourua, ngā kaiarahi o Te Rōpū Kākariki, kua puawai hoki tō kourua rōpū nā reira e mihi kau ana ki a koutou.

Me ngā mihi hoki ki ngā Minita o mua, the Hon Eugenie Sage, the Hon Julie Anne Genter, tēnā rā kourua mō ngā mahi nā kourua i mahingia i te Pāremata o mua.

Nā reira, ngā mema hou, huri rauna, tēnā koutou.

Ki tō mātou pāti, ko Te Rōpū Reipa, tēnā rā koutou ngā mema hōu. Mihi kau ana ki a koutou i whakawhānuitia tēnei Kāwanatanga, tēnā rā koutou ngā mema o te kāhui Māori o Te Rōpū Reipa—he mahi nui kei mua i a tātou hei kawē ai i ngā moemoeā, ngā whakaaro, ngā hiahia o te iwi Māori nā reira, mihi kau ana ki a koutou me ngā Minita o te Kāhui Matua. Tēnā rā tātou, ōku hoa, Minita Māori a Peeni Henare, Willie Jackson, Nanaia Mahuta, Kiritapu Allen, Meka Whaitiri, tēnei tōku mihi ki a koutou. He mahi nui hoki kei mua i a tātou.

Nā reira, ngā āpiha o tēnei Whare, tēnā rā koutou mō ngā mahi ka mahingia koutou i ngā tau e toru kei mua i a tātou. E mihi kau ana kia koutou mō ērā mahi ka mahingia koutou.

Nā reira, ka nui ōku mihi. Huri rauna i tō tātou Whare—e te Māngai o te Whare, tēnei ahau mihi kau ana ki a tātou katoa i runga i te tūmanako ka mahi tika tātou, ka mahi tātou

i runga i te tika me te pono mō tō tātou motu whānui o Aotearoa, nō reira huri rauna, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

[I summon guidance. I summon the great unknown. The house of Uenuku shakes with fury. A house of power, of fear, of strength, of the sacred. It is said that we can bring forth the enlightened wisdom from those above. The heart mourns the multitudes who have gone to the great beyond as we seek guidance and direction today.

Let it be for all time.

We are united.

Mr Speaker, I would, firstly, like to thank you for opening our session with a prayer, you have connected heaven to the earth, the earth to heaven. Thank you. I would also like to congratulate you on being confirmed to your current position by the Governor-General. Congratulations to you on the appointment.

It is appropriate that I acknowledge the multitudes who reside in the hidden realm, those who shouldered many in this House. Go in peace. My friend Rudy Taylor was one. Last week, we returned him to the womb of the land and so I acknowledge Rudy and those who are lying on the many marae throughout the country. To those who we have lost, rest in peace.

I will leave the dead to themselves and bring my speech back to us, the living, and the many important tasks we have in front of us.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, and the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon Grant Robertson. The country has spoken. The people have decided that you two will lead the country and our Government. Congratulations to you both.

I cross the floor to acknowledge the leader of the National Party, the Hon Judith Collins, and your caucus that stands behind you.

To my relation Shane, I would like to congratulate you on your election as deputy leader of the National Party. You have brought great honour to your tribes and your sub-tribes of Te Kapotai and Ngāti Wai. Congratulations on your appointment.

I turn to my relations in the Māori Party. Rawiri, Debbie, congratulations to you both. The Māori world has also spoken—you have been elected to work and advocate for Māori issues of the country. We too endeavour in the pursuit of that goal. Congratulations again.

To the leader of the ACT Party, David Seymour, congratulations on the fruition of your party. I remember a while back we spoke and you told me about your strong desire to grow your party and you have made that desire a reality. Well done.

To my friends the Hon James Shaw and the Hon Marama Davidson, congratulations to you both, the co-leaders of the Green Party, as you have also grown your party. Well done.

I would also like to acknowledge the previous Ministers the Hon Eugenie Sage and the Hon Julie Anne Genter. Thank you for your hard work in the previous Parliament.

To all of the new members, congratulations.

To my own party, to the Labour Party, congratulations to the new members. I would like to thank you for expanding the size of this Government, I would like to thank the members of the Māori caucus of the Labour Party—there is much work to be done to fulfil the hopes, the dreams and the needs of Māori. I would also like to congratulate the Ministers of Cabinet. To my Māori Minister colleagues, Peeni Henare, Willie Jackson, Nanaia Mahuta, Kiritapu Allan, Meka Whaitiri, I congratulate you all. There is much work to be done.

Finally, to the officials of this House, I would like to thank you for the hard work that you will be doing over the next three years.

I will leave my thanks there. To everyone in this House, to the Speaker, I congratulate you all and hope that we can conduct ourselves with respect and integrity for the

betterment of everyone in our country. To each and every one of you, thank you, thank you, thank you.]

Waiata

Mr Speaker, if I could just break into English for a second. You might have noticed that I stepped to the side here to sing that waiata. When I had the privilege of giving the first mihi in the last Parliament, my mother rang me afterwards and said she had heard me. I said, “How did it go, Mum?”, and she said, “Oh, that was good, son. But next time step away from the microphone, because the whole country heard how flat you sound.”

Nā reira, huri rauna, tēnā tātou katoa.

SPEAKER: On that basis, I will now—no, I’m unmuting my own mike, in order to keep the quality of the sound of the Parliament.

Members, the House will now wait for the summons to attend on Her Excellency the Governor-General.

STATE OPENING

A message from Her Excellency the Governor-General desiring the immediate attendance of honourable members in the Legislative Council Chamber was delivered by the Acting Usher of the Black Rod.

Accordingly, the Speaker and honourable members, preceded by the Serjeant-at-Arms, proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber, and, after a short absence, returned.

GOVERNOR-GENERAL’S SPEECH

SPEAKER: After Her Excellency the Governor-General made a speech to the House in the Legislative Council Chamber today, she handed me a copy of the text of the speech and I now lay this on the Table of the House.

E aku hoa i te ara o te whai,

Kia kotahi tā tātou takahi i te kō, ko tōku whiwhi kei tō koutou tautoko mai.

Ko tāku ki a koutou, hei whakapiki manawa mōku.

He horomata rangatira te mahi, e rite ai te whiwhinga a te ringatuku, me te ringakape ake, i ōna painga.

Hei ruruhau, hei kaitoko i te ora, hei kaiurungi, hei kaiwhakaawe taumata hou.

He mea pai, i oti tahi

Nāu, nāku, nā tātou.

Honourable Members of the House of Representatives.

It is my privilege to exercise the prerogative of Her Majesty the Queen and open the 53rd Parliament.

In the October election, New Zealanders elected a majority Government for the first time under our Mixed Member Proportional electoral system.

The Government not only enjoys the confidence of a clear majority of members in the House of Representatives, it is also privileged to have the confidence of a majority of New Zealanders who voted in the general election.

The Labour Government took Office when I swore in the Prime Minister the Right Honourable Jacinda Ardern.

New Zealanders voted for stability and certainty at the election. They have placed huge trust and responsibility in the Labour Government by providing it with a majority mandate to implement the policies it set out during the campaign, while responding to the issues that will inevitably arise, and bringing to bear the same values and strong leadership established in its first term.

To add further stability to the New Zealand Government, the Labour Party has agreed to work together with the Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand through a Cooperation Agreement. This agreement commits the Government to working in the best interests of New Zealand and New Zealanders, working to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and working together on specific policy areas where the Green Party can continue to add expertise and where both parties can achieve mutual gains that advance the goals of the Government.

The Labour Government takes office at a time of unparalleled international crisis. It faces the greatest public health emergency since the global flu pandemic a century ago. The ensuing economic shock represents the largest global downturn since the Great Depression.

The health risk posed by the pandemic is greater now than it was when we first closed our borders. The global economic outlook continues to worsen.

New Zealand will not be immune to these deteriorating conditions.

In this year of crisis, protecting New Zealand and the lives and livelihoods of New Zealanders has been the urgent and abiding consideration. It remains so.

But that does not mark the full extent of what a government can do, and it does not mark the full extent of what this government means to do.

Crises do not form an orderly line waiting to be addressed. Three of the country's longest-standing and hardest issues demand continued and determined action: affordable housing and homelessness, child poverty, and the global climate crisis.

On each of these areas there is a need to do more and go further. Problems that are decades in the making are not easily or quickly solved. But this Government is committed to relentlessly pursuing progress.

The government means to build on the foundations laid in the first term. New Zealand must continue to tackle these issues, at gathering scale, at gathering speed, and with gathering effect.

The Labour Government will have three overarching objectives:

- To keep New Zealanders safe from COVID-19
- To accelerate our economic recovery
- To lay the foundations for a better future

The scale and pace of the recovery offers an opportunity to reshape the way things are done in New Zealand, to innovate and improve our position and our economy.

New Zealand's success in fighting the virus means we are better positioned for recovery than many other countries. Already we have seen employment, export and growth numbers that are better than expected.

The programme outlined today seeks to make the most of our head start.

Keeping New Zealanders Safe from COVID-19

The first objective of the Government will be to keep New Zealanders safe from COVID. In keeping New Zealanders safe, we protect jobs, livelihoods, and strengthen our economy. A strong health response has given the New Zealand economy the best chance at coming back stronger.

The Government remains committed to a strategy of elimination, but will always remain open to evolving ways of achieving it.

No system is perfect. That is why we look to continually improve. As we learn more about the virus and other countries' experiences, and as new technologies are developed, there will be opportunities to improve our response. Our response has never been static and we will continue to innovate and learn.

The Government will retain and enhance the multiple lines of defence to keep COVID at bay and stamp it out with minimal disruption to the economy and to our everyday lives.

The first layer of defence is our border. With COVID cases increasing around the world, in a growing number of countries, the risk of travellers arriving at the border with COVID increases. The Government will continue to strengthen border protections. Testing, infection control procedures, and professional and quality staffing will remain cornerstones of the response.

For those countries where the virus is successfully managed, the Government will look for opportunities for freer travel. Planning for quarantine free travel zones is currently underway with the Cook Islands, Niue and Australia. We will look to continue to advance these opportunities, but with safety as our priority.

We will continue to welcome New Zealanders home.

We will also create opportunities for businesses to access the skills they need. The Government will ensure that up to 10 percent of places in our managed isolation facilities are used by people granted exceptions to enter New Zealand to contribute to accelerating our recovery.

The Government will continue to enhance the next layer of defence, our contact tracing and testing systems, to ensure in the event of cases entering the community it can quickly circle the virus and stamp it out. This will involve investment in ongoing technical enhancements to the COVID Tracer App and looking for ways to increase the use of technology.

We have expanded the surveillance testing programme to provide extra protection against pathways for infection. This term we will look for opportunities to take advantage of developments in technology to expand the reach of our early warning system.

Finally, the Government is working to deliver effective and free vaccines to New Zealanders as soon as they are available and safe to administer.

Recent news of the progress in vaccine development is welcome and a bright spot on the horizon. This will be a central focus for the Government next year.

The Government is working hard to secure supply for New Zealand and to design an immunisation programme to support distribution in New Zealand. New Zealand also has an important role in supporting Pacific countries with access to a COVID-19 vaccine and their rollout of their immunisation programmes. New Zealand's obligations to the Pacific are a core part of the Vaccine Strategy.

We are hopeful that 2021 will be the year of the COVID vaccine.

Accelerating the Recovery

The Government's COVID recovery plan is already underway. It will now be accelerated as the plans for recovery set out in Labour's election manifesto are implemented.

The New Zealand economy has held up better than expected. Aggressive action to eliminate the virus; strong and early efforts to save jobs and support businesses; and innovative and nimble responses from our businesses have positioned the economy well. But the global picture is bleak.

The ongoing impact of COVID on the global economy is the most significant risk to our future growth. The virus' spread abroad will have a downstream impact on our exporters and impact economic activity domestically.

New Zealand will be cushioned from that slump by the Government's five point economic plan to foster jobs and growth:

- \$42 billion of infrastructure investment to future proof the economy
- Training and job creation opportunities to support workers and businesses
- Support for small business to grow and thrive
- Programmes to bolster our exports
- And policies that prepare New Zealand for the future by making the most of our competitive advantage in renewable energy and waste reduction.

Investing in infrastructure is at the core of the Government's economic plan. As we begin this term, we already have a record \$42.2 billion on the books for infrastructure investment over the next four years in roads and rail, schools and hospitals, houses and energy generation.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency will receive \$9.6 billion to invest in new roads and public transport projects that reduce congestion and travel times, support businesses, open up new areas for housing, and increase choice, including safer options for walking and cycling.

\$3.8 billion is being spent on education facilities, including building new schools and classrooms for 100,000 students and starting the planned upgrade of around 180 schools right across the country over the next 10 years.

\$3.6 billion has been committed to health, including new hospital facilities in Dunedin, Christchurch, New Plymouth, Auckland and Counties Manukau.

Kainga Ora will invest \$9.8 billion across the next four years and the Government is on track to deliver a total of 18,000 public and transitional homes.

The Three Waters programme will see a \$710 million investment to initiate an overhaul of the nation's drinking, waste and stormwater infrastructure.

These investments in housing, transport, schools and hospitals will help future proof our economy as well as create jobs. It also provides a pipeline of work that will provide businesses with confidence and certainty to invest in capacity to undertake these projects.

In addition, over 150 smaller community infrastructure projects will roll out over the coming months and across the term. The Government will invest in community projects like pools and stadiums, local fire stations and surf clubs, and libraries, art galleries, marae and museums—facilities across the country that bring people together to provide support and strengthen communities.

Improving our planning system is also a priority. It will create jobs by making it easier to deliver construction projects while protecting our environment and building the right thing in the right place. The current system is too costly, takes too long, and has not adequately protected the environment. The Government will ensure that New Zealand's resource management system is fit for the future by repealing and replacing the Resource Management Act. The Randerson review provides a sound platform for the Government to advance this work. In the first six months of 2021 the Government intends to release an exposure draft of key elements of the first bill.

Also vital to the recovery is our investment in trades training and apprenticeships. Education is the greatest enabler in our society and one of the biggest levers we can use to improve the productivity of the economy.

In the early stages of our COVID response the Government focused heavily on growing training and apprenticeships. It launched a comprehensive support package for apprentices and their employers, assuring job security for existing apprentices and creating openings for new ones.

Already thousands of New Zealanders have embraced the opportunity to take up a trade and train for free. These New Zealanders are acquiring new skills and exciting prospects, and at the same time addressing the need to build the workforce that will be required to carry the vast workload of the coming infrastructure projects.

The Government will also complete the reform of the vocational education system. As the country rebuilds and more people are looking to retrain, it's now more important than ever that we have a vocational education system that's responsive to the needs of industry and learners.

The Government recognises the need to welcome skilled people from overseas to support New Zealand's economy, and will work alongside industry to help provide for that but it will, as a priority and a starting point, seek to develop New Zealand workforces to meet those skills needed here at home. With many New Zealanders looking for work, we need to do all we can to fill existing job opportunities.

While unemployment is lower than expected, the economic fallout has had an impact. The Government will remain focused on creating opportunities for people to get back into work.

History shows that significant economic events have a disproportionate impact on women, Māori and Pacific communities, and our focus will ensure our recovery responds to that.

The Government will reinstate the Training Incentive Allowance to assist sole-parents, disabled people and their carers with the costs of getting a degree level tertiary qualification.

It will continue the successful Mana in Mahi and He Poutama Rangatahi programmes which are providing skills and qualifications to unemployed young people. It will also continue to rollout Tupu Aotearoa's expansion across the regions and provide wraparound support for Pacific communities to secure sustainable employment and educational pathways for Pacific peoples of all ages.

The government will lift abatement thresholds to ensure that people are not punished by transitioning from a benefit to paid work. It will also support those at risk of long-term unemployment through funding up to an additional 40,000 New Zealanders into work through the Flexi-wage programme.

As well as creating jobs, the Government will remain focused on growing the incomes and wages of New Zealanders, especially those earning the least.

It will increase the minimum wage to \$20 per hour next year, extend Living Wage guarantees to cleaning, catering and security guards who the public service pays through contractors, implement Fair Pay Agreements to set minimum standards for pay and conditions, and extend sick leave provisions.

The Government will leverage our successful COVID response to position New Zealand globally as a safe and secure place to trade with, to invest in, and eventually, to visit again.

The Government will pursue high quality and comprehensive trade agreements that diversify our trade relationships. It will continue to open new opportunities, including through trade deals with the EU and the UK, and the Agreement on Climate Change, Trade, and Sustainability; and by expanding the CPTPP and the Digital Economic Partnership Agreement.

The Government will continue to progress our trade relationship with the United States, including into new areas such as digital and green technology.

An important milestone has been accomplished with the conclusion of the China FTA Upgrade, which will provide access into new services markets in China, including e-commerce. The New Zealand Government will continue to support New Zealand exporters doing business with China.

The Pacific regional trade and development agreement PACER Plus will enter into force in December this year. The agreement positions Pacific countries to better engage in international trade. It will make trade easier, will grow jobs, boost sustainable economic growth and contribute to a safer and more prosperous Pacific.

In the Indo-Pacific region, the Government will work to implement the signing of RCEP; and through chairing APEC in 2021, New Zealand will lead on the world stage to drive initiatives for strong regional economic recovery.

The Government will work with industry through Industry Transformation Plans to support the transition and grow high-value export firms. It will continue its investment in innovation, including through the research and development tax credit programme.

It will work to implement the primary sector roadmap Fit For a Better World to accelerate the productivity, sustainability and inclusiveness of the primary sector. It will work to support our tourism sector in its transition to a sustainable, low carbon, high skill and high wage industry.

It will expand the Innovative Partnerships programme and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise's dedicated international investment attraction team to attract companies to invest and establish in New Zealand.

Small businesses are at the heart of New Zealand's economy and the recovery. The Government will continue to support small businesses with practical support. That will include tackling barriers to innovation and growth as identified by the Small Business Council's Small Business Strategy.

The Government has already extended the Small Business Cashflow Scheme for a further three years and extended the interest-free period for another year, and will investigate permanent financing for smaller businesses.

The Government will regulate Merchant Service Fees to reduce costs on retailers, and will support small businesses to digitise through digital training or short-courses as part of a new Digital Training programme.

The new Minister for the Digital Economy and Communications will work with the technology sector, including through the Digital Technologies Industry Transformation Plan, to help speed growth in jobs and incomes in that important sector.

New Zealand's COVID-19 recovery provides an opportunity to reshape our economy and prepare for the future through investment in energy and waste projects.

The Government is committed to the shift away from fossil fuels in order to build a new low-carbon future. It is a shift that will create jobs, improve the environment, and enhance New Zealand's global brand which our exporters trade on.

This term the Government will lay the foundation for the electrification of New Zealand's economy by bringing forward our 100% renewable electricity target to 2030, prohibit the building of new thermal baseload electricity, investigate dry year storage options such as pumped hydro, and invest in emerging technologies like green hydrogen.

It will remove barriers to renewable energy generation through a National Policy Statement and also investigate regulatory or market barriers to the uptake of solar micro-generation on residential and commercial buildings.

The Government will invest in electrifying and decarbonising industrial and process heat, including by preventing the installation of new low and medium temperature coal-fired boilers, and supporting businesses to replace fossil fuels in industrial heat processes by connecting to the grid.

The Government will implement the recommendations of the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor by phasing out hard to recycle single-use plastic items and supporting the development of alternatives through a Plastics Innovation Fund. It will also invest in waste infrastructure and projects to enable more efficient recycling, and work with industries to establish regulated product stewardship schemes for priority products.

This economic plan is underpinned by continued responsible management of the Government books. As a consequence of the wider economic outlook and fiscal constraints, it is more important than ever to ensure a balanced approach. This requires investing in our priorities while ensuring that all Government spending decisions are made with particular consideration for the sustainability of the Crown's long-term fiscal position.

The Government will continue to ensure vital public services are supported, while keeping a lid on debt. Investments to accelerate the recovery will be prioritised. Ensuring our health and education systems continue to be supported will also be a priority.

This will include implementing the Government response to the Health and Disability System review. The efforts of many hardworking and committed health professionals and the health of New Zealanders are hampered by a system that needs fundamental reform. Initial decisions on policy will be taken in 2021.

Laying the foundations for a better future

The Government has marked out the need and importance of taking a broader view of success. Wellbeing will continue to be a priority for Government this term with a focus on reducing child poverty, tackling climate change, and addressing housing.

New Zealand's response to COVID would be insufficient if it were to simply return us to the way we were before the virus.

Recovering and rebuilding entails determined and connected action by government. That action can, and will, be used to reshape the economy to be more productive, more sustainable, and more equitable.

Over the next term it will place a particular focus on sustainability, and pursuing carbon neutrality.

The Government will respond to the first set of Climate Budgets recommended by the Climate Commission, which will set the total emissions permitted for the next fifteen years.

The Government will take steps to decarbonise the transport fleet. It will introduce vehicle emissions standards for imported vehicles and incentivise and accelerate the uptake of electric and other low emission vehicles, including by increasing the Low Emissions Vehicles Contestable Fund.

In line with the direction set out in the latest Government Policy Statement, it will prioritise investment in public transport, walking and cycling so users have a more accessible, affordable and reliable service, and implement region-specific plans to increase the number of people using public transport and walking and cycling. Supporting the use of public transport is a key element to reducing New Zealand's transport emissions.

Given the importance of public transport to New Zealand's future transport system, it will require only zero emissions buses to be purchased by 2025, and aim to decarbonise the public transport bus fleet by 2035.

New Zealand's farmers and growers are creative, innovative and constantly looking to improve their practices. They are taking steps to improve freshwater quality, protect biodiversity and reduce emissions. This will create real value for our exports and is a core part of our New Zealand brand.

The Government will bolster these efforts through increased investment in world leading research that helps us reduce emissions and will support farmers to use integrated farm plans to simplify processes, reduce compliance costs and meet reporting requirements in a coherent way.

The economic impact of COVID will have a disproportionate effect on those least equipped to deal with it. That will require a continued focus and determination in reducing inequality and addressing child poverty.

Progress has been made, but there remains much to do. The Government will continue the work from last term that has already seen improvements to the weekly income of around 85,000 sole parents by an average of \$100 a week.

The Government will continue the overhaul of the welfare system, building on the changes already made, including the indexing of benefits to increases in the average wage.

It will extend the Free and Healthy Lunch programme to cover 200,000 students and will add 20 more mobile dental clinics to improve access for children and young people to free oral health care.

It will roll out mental health support to all primary and intermediate school age students, and continue to roll out nurses in secondary schools.

It will continue to tackle the prevalence of rheumatic fever by expanding the Healthy Homes Initiative to every DHB around the country to ensure more homes are warm, dry and safe.

A focus on housing will be a priority for this Government. Earlier in the year house prices were predicted to fall. Instead they have increased. Globally, low interest rates are having a similar effect. And the situation has rapidly evolved.

While it is pleasing to see that efforts to stimulate the economy and support jobs and growth in the wider economy have been effective, the perverse impact on housing affordability will require the Government to continue its focus on this issue.

The Government has set out the parameters of what it is prepared to consider during the election campaign. This will not change. But there is room to do more to support both the supply and demand side of housing to see outcomes that are more productive and fair.

The Government will review its housing settings with a view to implementing policies that improve access to the housing market for first home buyers.

The Government will continue to focus on homelessness and implementing the Homelessness Action Plan.

The Government will review and enhance the Tenancy Tribunal, Tenancy Services' Compliance and Investigations team, regulate property managers, and increase funding to proactively monitor compliance with the Healthy Homes Standards.

In each of these areas, climate, child poverty, and housing, the Government will be guided by its values, and by its commitment to the wellbeing of people, looking beyond GDP to find our measure of success.

As part of this focus on wellbeing and creating a fairer New Zealand we will continue to strengthen social inclusion in New Zealand. This is about supporting our diversity and creating a New Zealand where all people feel safe, have equal access to opportunities and do not experience discrimination. This is important as we prepare to receive and respond to the report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Terrorist Attack on Christchurch Mosques on 15 March 2019.

Wellbeing might not be as readily reckoned as GDP, but that does not mean it cannot be measured and tracked. Imbalances and deprivation can be recognised and remedied and this Government is determined to do so.

Significant levels of government investment in a time of crisis can be a powerful tool for change and it's a tool that is being used. The way we choose to govern is also a tool for change.

Māori-Crown relations

The Government will strengthen the Māori-Crown relationship to ensure that the Crown can grow to be a better Treaty Partner and work in true partnership with Māori. It will continue to work to settle historic Treaty of Waitangi claims. It recognises the importance of te reo Māori as a taonga and the responsibility it has to protect it.

Te Ao Māori plays a large part not just in defining who we are as a nation, but in setting us apart from the rest of the world. As such the Government will make Matariki a public holiday, creating a holiday that distinctly recognises and celebrates Te Ao Māori.

The Government will ensure Oranga Tamariki partners with iwi, hapū, and Māori organisations to find appropriate solutions for children in need, and will strengthen Māori housing outcomes through collaborative partnerships, home-ownership models, and papakāinga provision.

It will support Whānau Māori enterprise and opportunities through a progressive procurement policy.

It will continue to invest in Whānau Ora and support other agencies to implement the Whānau Ora model to get better outcomes for Māori, continue whānau-centred pathways to break the cycle of Māori reoffending, work with other Māori organisations like Te Kōhanga Reo, and look at ways we can expand the Whānau Ora model into communities.

A Government for all New Zealanders

New Zealand has entrusted the government with the responsibility of bringing the country through a crisis.

Nothing in the programme set out today will come easily. But our opportunities and potential greatly outweigh our problems.

In this pandemic we have shown our willingness and capacity to do what must be done.

We have more freedoms, are a more open economy and have saved more lives than nearly every other country we normally compare ourselves to. We can rightfully be proud of our success to date as a nation, as a team. But we cannot afford to be complacent, nor stand still. We must keep going.

It is the Government's aim to achieve change alongside consensus. That is why it has committed to being a Government that will govern for all New Zealanders.

That does not mean that it can or will represent the views of every New Zealander all of the time. But it does mean it will have a focus on the things that matter most. It means it will be listening to New Zealanders, being pragmatic, doing the things it said it would do and focusing on lasting change.

We can recover and we will recover.

But that is not enough. We can be better than we were.

This government's mission is to make it so.

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

BUSINESS STATEMENT

Hon CHRIS HIPKINS (Leader of the House): Next week will be the first full sitting week of the 53rd Parliament. The first oral questions of the Parliament will be answered by Ministers on Tuesday. The Address in Reply debate will continue and will feature 14 further maiden statements. After oral questions on Tuesday, the House will debate a motion on the climate emergency. That evening, the House will go into urgency to pass bills on tax changes and other matters. Other legislation to be considered next week will include the first readings of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand Bill and the Social Security (Financial Assistance for Caregivers) Amendment Bill.

CHRIS BISHOP (National): Thank you to the Leader of the House for that. I just ask the Leader of the House whether or not it's the Government's intention to progress the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary Bill before Christmas.

Hon CHRIS HIPKINS (Leader of the House): Of course the Government has an incredibly busy programme. It's a little premature because, of course, that business hasn't been reinstated as yet.

David Seymour: Point of order.

SPEAKER: No, no, the member will resume his seat. The practice here is for the major Opposition spokesperson—the shadow Leader of the House—to ask questions. It's not an opportunity for all other members.

PETITIONS, PAPERS, SELECT COMMITTEE REPORTS, AND INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

SPEAKER: Petitions have been delivered to the Clerk for presentation.

CLERK:

- Petition of Lawrence Yule requesting that the House inquire into the Government's decision to decline funding for the new Cranford Hospice
- petition of Karli Thomas on behalf of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition requesting that the House pass legislation to ban bottom trawl fishing on seamounts and stop the issuing of permits for bottom trawling in international waters
- petition of Shannon Parker for the New Zealand Police Conduct Association requesting that the House urge the Government to provide support and legal advice for complainants and victims of police misconduct, and
- petition of Tami Harris for Friends of Mt Hobson Middle School requesting the House urge the Minister of Education to reconsider the application from Mt Hobson Middle School to establish a State-designated character school serving children with diverse learning needs.

SPEAKER: Those petitions stand referred to a select committee allocated by the Clerk. Ministers have delivered quite a few papers.

CLERK:

- Reports in relation to selected non-departmental appropriations for the year ended 30 June 2020:
 - Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage
 - Minister for Economic and Regional Development, Vote Business, Science and Innovation
 - Minister of Energy and Resources, Vote Business, Science and Innovation, and
 - Minister for Social Development and Employment, Vote Labour Market
- annual reports for 2019-20:
 - Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
 - New Zealand Green Investment Finance Ltd
 - Ministry for Primary Industries
 - Animal Control Products Ltd
 - Electricity Authority
 - New Zealand On Air
 - New Zealand Police
 - Ministry for Culture and Heritage
 - Remuneration Authority
 - Lotto New Zealand
 - Diversity Works New Zealand
 - Gambling Commission
 - Earthquake Commission
 - New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
 - Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
 - Broadcasting Standards Authority
 - Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
 - Land Information New Zealand, and
 - Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority
- statements of performance expectations 2020-21:
 - New Zealand Green Investment Finance Ltd
 - New Zealand On Air
 - Lotto New Zealand
 - New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
 - Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
 - Broadcasting Standards Authority, and
 - Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
- statements of intent 2020-24:
 - New Zealand Green Investment Finance Ltd
 - New Zealand On Air
 - Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga
 - Broadcasting Standards Authority, and
 - Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa
- statement of strategic intentions 2020-24 of the Serious Fraud Office
- Financial Statements of the Government of New Zealand for the year ended 30 June 2020, and
- The Treasury Pre-election Economic and Fiscal Update.

SPEAKER: I present the 2019-20 annual report of the Controller and Auditor-General, and the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2020, and the 2020-24 strategic intentions. Those papers are published under the authority of the House. No select committee reports have been presented, and no bills have been introduced.

APPOINTMENTS

Deputy Speaker

Hon CHRIS HIPKINS (Leader of the House): I move, *That Adrian Paki Rurawhe be appointed Deputy Speaker.*

The member Adrian Rurawhe has been the member for Te Tai Hauāuru since 2014. He has, of course, a distinguished political pedigree, though. His grandparents Matiu and Iriaka Ratana were both MPs for Western Māori and he's the great-grandson of the Ratana founder, T W Ratana, and his mentor was Koro Wētere. He's a highly respected figure amongst Māoridom, and he has served this House well as Assistant Speaker during the last term of Parliament. He has proven to be a calm and fair but decisive and firm Assistant Speaker. Members have responded well to his approach to presiding over the House, and I'm sure that he will be an appointment that will be supported across the Chamber.

CHRIS BISHOP (National): Thank you, Mr Speaker. The National Opposition is pleased to support the nomination of Mr Rurawhe to be the Deputy Speaker. As the Leader of the House has noted, he is someone who brings huge mana and wisdom to the position. He's already served as a presiding officer in the last Parliament and discharged that important role with dignity and with decorum, and we welcomed his rulings as a presiding officer in the last Parliament. On a personal note, it's great to see a member of the class of 2014, the time I entered Parliament, assume the position of a presiding officer's role, and we look forward to his continued discharge of his duties.

Motion agreed to.

Assistant Speakers

Hon CHRIS HIPKINS (Leader of the House): I move, *That Jennifer Salesa be appointed Assistant Speaker.*

Jenny Salesa is the member of Parliament for the new seat of Panmure-Ōtāhuhu, having previously been member for Manukau East since 2014. She's served as a Minister in the last Government as Minister for Building and Construction, Minister for Ethnic Communities, and Minister of Customs, as well as being an Associate Minister of Education, Associate Minister of Health, and Associate Minister for Housing and Urban Development. She brings many perspectives to this role. I'm sure her cheerful manner and her commitment to the people of her electorate will make her a popular choice amongst members of the House. She will, I'm sure, be diligent, liked, and respected in the role of presiding officer.

CHRIS BISHOP (National): Thank you, Mr Speaker. National is pleased to support the nomination of Jenny Salesa to this august position. As well as what the Leader of the House has noted, as someone who has been a former Minister but also a member of a variety of select committees in her time in Parliament since 2014, Jenny Salesa will bring a range of different experiences to the role from her time as a member of select committees, as a Minister, and, of course, as an electorate MP, and as the new electorate MP for Panmure-Ōtāhuhu. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

Hon CHRIS HIPKINS (Leader of the House): I move, *That Jacqueline Isobel Dean be appointed Assistant Speaker.*

Jacqui Dean is one of the most experienced members of the House, having been an MP since 2005, first for the Otago electorate and, since 2008, for the renamed Waitaki electorate—one of the biggest electorates in the country. She was previously a councillor and has been Minister of Commerce and Consumer Affairs and Minister for Small Business in the Government of the Rt Hon Bill English. A diligent member of select committees, she's demonstrated a willingness to work on issues on a cross-party basis. Some may argue that her experience in broadcasting would set her up very well for the role that she is about to undertake, and I commend and warmly support her choice by the National Party for the role of presiding officer. I believe it completes a very strong team.

CHRIS BISHOP (National): Thank you, Mr Speaker. National is equally very keen to support Jacqui Dean as another Assistant Speaker to complete the quartet that the Leader of the House has outlined along with you, sir, Mr Speaker. As the Leader of the House has noted, Ms Dean is a very experienced parliamentarian. In fact, reading back through her biography, it's quite an astonishing list of select committees that she has had the privilege of serving on, everything from the Economic Development, Science and Innovation Committee; the Education and Science Committee; Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade; Government Administration; Health; Justice and Electoral; Law and Order; Local Government; Environment—in fact, I think there'd be very few select committees in the Parliament that Jacqui Dean has not served on. And, along with being a very diligent member, as the Leader of the House notes, on select committee—something that I can attest to from having served on a committee with her—she's also been a Minister of a variety of portfolios in the last Government. She brings to the Chair, brings to the presiding officer role, dignity and grace and mana, and we're pleased to support her.

Motion agreed to.

REINSTATEMENT OF BUSINESS

Hon CHRIS HIPKINS (Leader of the House): I move, *Government notice of motion No. 4 in my name relating to the reinstatement of business.*

This is a routine motion that's moved at the start of each Parliament so that the business of Parliament can be resumed where it was left off before the election. The only exceptions are the items of business that are defunct or that need to be replaced. By convention all members' bills are being reinstated, select committees can resume consideration of bills referred to them by the House by the last Parliament. They decide what pieces of committee-initiated legislation business they may wish to continue with.

CHRIS BISHOP (National): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, and the National Party will be supporting the reinstatement motion moved by the Leader of the House. Can I first take this opportunity, sir, to congratulate you on your election to the role of Speaker. I'm sure you'll continue on in the tradition that you established in the last Parliament of fairness to both sides of the House and recognising that we are in a slightly unusual situation of a—for the first time under MMP—majority Government elected in its own right without any extra support needed to get over the line on confidence and supply. And that, of course, has implications for select committees and has implications for the way in which the House operates. But I'm sure you will, as someone who is a lover of Parliament and someone who realises the important job—constitutional job—that the Parliament provides in holding the executive to account, take that into consideration. I know that that is something that you take very seriously.

National will be supporting the reinstatement motion. It's a slightly different situation to the last Parliament. In the last Parliament, we obviously had a change of Government, and the incoming Government wished to not reinstate some items of business on to the parliamentary Order Paper. And so there was quite an extended debate at that time.

Members who were here will recall some extended debate on that. National will be supporting this motion but we do wish to make a few points about some of the business that is being reinstated.

The first is that we would like to know from the Government why the Autonomous Sanctions Bill is not being reinstated on to the parliamentary Order Paper—something that sat on the parliamentary Order Paper for three years in the last Parliament with no progress being made. And we look forward to hearing from the Government as to exactly why that is.

We also welcome the chance for potential progress on the Electoral (Integrity Repeal) Amendment Bill, which was a member's bill drawn at the tail end of the last Parliament in the outgoing Rt Hon David Carter's name. And we look forward to the chance for the Parliament to consider that. With the departure of a longstanding member—members will know who I'm talking about—the opportunity presents itself for the new Parliament to wipe from the statute book that repugnancy to our constitution and to this Parliament. There are parties in this Parliament who have been very keen to repeal that legislation, and now they will have the opportunity; that's being reinstated as a member's item of business.

We look forward to the Parliament considering things like the Land Transport (Drug Driving) Amendment Bill, for example, which the National Party pushed hard in Opposition and was unable to make any progress on. This Parliament has the opportunity to take up that issue with alacrity and with urgency.

We look forward to the Parliament discharging the petitions on the Order Paper better. If you read through the Order Paper and the reinstatement motion, there's an enormous number of petitions—a point that I know you, sir, Mr Speaker, have noted—and the new Petitions Committee of the new Parliament, thanks to the new Standing Orders, will have the opportunity to deal with those petitions in a more timely manner. It is, frankly, unacceptable that select committees sit on petitions for two to three years. People who petition Parliament with members of the public have a right to expect that Parliament answers those petitions in a timely manner. Two years or three years is unacceptable. The new Parliament will have an opportunity to consider that.

On a final note, the Privileges Committee will consider the New Zealand Bill of Rights (Declarations of Inconsistency) Amendment Bill. This is not, one would say, a particularly sexy piece of legislation. It's not something that the public out there listening probably are too concerned about. But—and I know the Attorney-General agrees with me on this—it is of fundamental importance to the future of our constitution and our Parliament, the issue of whether or not the courts are able to issue declarations that a law passed by this Parliament, a democratically elected Parliament, is inconsistent with the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act.

Hon David Parker: They already can.

CHRIS BISHOP: That's right, and the question for the Parliament is: what does Parliament do about that in response? We'll be considering that at the Privileges Committee and it does raise issues to do with privilege and to do with our constitution, and we will be considering that. That is not a bill that I would urge the Government to proceed with haste on. That is a bill that requires due consideration.

So we'll be supporting the reinstatement motion and members on this side may wish to make a few other remarks. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Dr SHANE RETI (Deputy Leader—National): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to speak to the motion, and particularly with a view to the Health (Fluoridation of Drinking Water) Amendment Bill, a bill that was introduced by the Hon Jonathan Coleman in 2016 and supported by his Associate Minister the Hon Peter Dunne. I ask the question: why did this not progress in the last Parliament? What hurdles were there there that are not

here now? How quickly might we expect this to progress? We know on the campaign trail it seemed to receive significant support widely across the House, and so we might reasonably expect that this will progress rapidly.

SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Dr SHANE RETI: Again, we would anticipate that any hurdles they might have envisaged have now been removed. Thank you.

Hon SCOTT SIMPSON (National—Coromandel): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I'm rising to support the motion, but in doing so, I want to particularly make comment about the lack of progress on the Kermadec Ocean Sanctuary Bill, which has been reinstated under this motion. Now, that was a piece of legislation that was first mooted way back in the 51st Parliament: talked about in 2015, introduced to this House in 2016, unanimously supported at first reading across the House, and sent to a fulsome select committee—the Local Government and Environment Committee—chaired by none other than myself. It received a very fulsome and appropriate, detailed analysis at select committee, came back for second reading, and there it has languished.

SPEAKER: Order! Order!

Hon SCOTT SIMPSON: It's languished there, Mr Speaker.

I listened carefully to the Speech from the Throne today. I listened carefully to see whether there would be mention in the Speech from the Throne of any progress or imminent speed and haste about the Kermadec ocean sanctuary, and there was—

SPEAKER: Order! Order! I'm now going to give the member his second and final warning. This is a very narrow question, and it's whether or not it should be reinstated. The speed in the past and the speed in the future is not part of that, and I'm pretty sure that member knows it.

Hon SCOTT SIMPSON: Thank you, sir. The question really is: if no progress was made in the previous Parliament, what hope and prospect is there for progress in this Parliament? I'm heartened, to a degree, that the new Government has created a Minister for Oceans and Fisheries. I hope that that Minister can give this House some degree of certainty about progress on what is an important piece of legislation that the public of New Zealand and the environmental movements and the NGOs are very keen to see progressed. It wasn't progressed previously, and I'm hoping that we will see a degree of urgency, a degree of focus, that was not present previously.

DAVID SEYMOUR (Leader—ACT): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on behalf of ACT in support of this motion and I think it's a very good thing that the Government is, without dispute, taking all business from the previous Parliament into the 53rd Parliament. I note a couple of issues on the Order Paper. There is one petition that stands out from all the rest because practically every petition is, I guess, précised by the number 2017, meaning that's it from the Parliament that began in that year; there is one petition in the name of Lucy McSweeney, which has 2014 before it. Lucy is an Epsom electorate constituent who has been doggedly, determinately, and quite deftly campaigning for better attention to mental health in schools for over four years since her petition was first lodged. It's now been reviewed by a select committee and is on the Order Paper awaiting a Government response. So I certainly hope on behalf of my constituent Lucy McSweeney that she's going to get a fulsome and proper response from this Government, after petitioning Parliament for four years.

I would also note something about the amount of business, particularly the amount of Government bills that are being continued into this Parliament. I wonder how many of them will be progressed, because this year, for circumstances largely beyond our control in this House and around the world, the House has not sat for very many days. And yet, despite the election being behind us and the country returning to level 1, we're scheduled really to only sit for four full days for the rest of this year, post-election. One has to

wonder what the value of some of this business that the Government is bringing forward into the 53rd Parliament is if they didn't have the alacrity to at least sit another week while most New Zealanders will still be working—

Hon Chris Hipkins: He wanted us to sit less! He wanted us to sit less!

DAVID SEYMOUR: —in the second-to-last week before Christmas. And I hear the barracking from Chris Hipkins; the problem is it's his Government that is lacking the bills here and they're going to have to come up with some new ideas.

SPEAKER: Order! I'm giving the member his final warning to get back to the subject. And I will warn the Leader of the House not to encourage irrelevancy.

DAVID SEYMOUR: I have to say that—thank you for that, Mr Speaker, and certainly, I was very focused before Chris Hipkins interrupted. I certainly hope—

SPEAKER: That's misleading.

DAVID SEYMOUR: —that the Government—ha! Well, Mr Speaker, it's a matter of opinion and debate, and I happen to disagree with you on that one. But I certainly hope that the Government will soon augment this business brought forward into the 53rd Parliament with business that it has a greater value in and a higher priority for than it's shown to the business that it is bringing forward for which it's only prepared to sit four full days this year. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

NICOLA WILLIS (National): Speaking to the reinstatement motion, I wish to draw members' attention to a member's bill that is to be reinstated, and that is the Unit Titles (Strengthening Body Corporate Governance and Other Matters) Amendment Bill. This side of the House wishes to welcome the reinstatement of that bill and note the importance of it. That bill was introduced to this Parliament by departed member Nikki Kaye and was the result of significant consultation with apartment dwellers, body corporate managers, and others who have been affected by legislation which is no longer fit for modern purpose. I know that there are members opposite who will also welcome the reintroduction of this bill. The Hon Grant Robertson, on the campaign trail, spoke fulsomely of the need for reform in this area, and I would encourage the Government to take a constructive and pragmatic approach in progressing this member's bill at the first opportunity, at its first reading, rather than taking an alternative, more political course of introducing their own bill.

The reason I make that argument is that this is an area that is overdue for reform. If we are to address housing—

SPEAKER: Order! Order! The member is now getting into the substance of the bill, which is outside the remit of this—

NICOLA WILLIS: Sure.

SPEAKER: When I stand, the member sits, and she is now on her final warning.

NICOLA WILLIS: So I would encourage the Government to support this member's bill, and I would just note my hope that we don't needlessly frustrate its progress by requiring a Government bill to be introduced instead. I would note our support for progressing this constructively at select committee.

KIERAN McANULTY (Chief Whip—Labour): I move, *That the question be now put.*

Hon Gerry Brownlee: Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER: Well, we have a very experienced member who I'm sure will be able to make a relevant contribution—more than has been the case recently.

Hon GERRY BROWNLEE (National): Well, I thank you for that compliment, Mr Speaker, but I wouldn't be at all surprised if you do give me some kind of warning along the way.

While the National Opposition supports the reinstatement of this business, we do express concern about the Autonomous Sanctions Bill not making the list, and the reason

we do that is because New Zealand has had a strong independent foreign policy for a very long time. Certainly since 1984, it has been something that New Zealanders have been very proud of. What this bill would enable is for New Zealand to, on its own, issue sanctions where international organisations—the United Nations, particularly—have not been able to move to do so. We know that happens. Under section 41, it's not always easy to get everyone to agree on everything, and there is, of course, the sanction on the UN Security Council as well.

So it's a concern to us that in a week where we have seen the Government—

SPEAKER: Order! Order! I am going to interrupt the member, and I think he'll know the reason for it. We're debating a matter which is before the House at the moment, not a matter which is not before the House. The fact that a bill is not part of the motion is something that could have been remedied, but members have chosen not to.

Hon GERRY BROWNLEE: Well, at this point.

SPEAKER: Sorry?

Hon GERRY BROWNLEE: At this point.

SPEAKER: Well, if the member actually has an amendment that he's speaking to, he should have moved it and tabled it.

Hon GERRY BROWNLEE: Well, my apologies, and thank you for the instruction. I move, *That the Autonomous Sanctions Bill be added to the reinstatement motion.*

SPEAKER: That the reinstatement motion be amended by the addition of—

Hon GERRY BROWNLEE: Thank you. Your words will do mine. Thank you. The reasons for it are because it enables the Government to make decisions independent of other countries. I'll say again: in a week where we've seen New Zealand join with others—the Five Eyes particularly—to augment a statement that New Zealand had already made, it seems to me that without the bill on the statute book, we are abandoning our independent foreign policy status. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment be agreed to. I'm being relatively slack here in that it hadn't been tabled. Is there any debate on that? There is none. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

A party vote was called for on the question, *That the amendment be agreed to.*

Ayes 43

New Zealand National 33; ACT New Zealand 10.

Noes 76

New Zealand Labour 64; Green Party of Aotearoa New Zealand 10; Te Paati Māori 2.

Amendment not agreed to.

SPEAKER: The question now is that the motion is agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

STANDING ORDERS

Sessional

SPEAKER: According to a determination of the Business Committee, I call on the Leader of the House to move a motion regarding entities deemed to be public organisations.

Hon CHRIS HIPKINS (Leader of the House): I move, *That Air New Zealand Ltd, Genesis Energy Ltd, Meridian Energy Ltd, Mercury New Zealand Ltd, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand, the Judicial Conduct Commissioner, Kiwi Group Holdings Ltd, Māori*

Television Service, and Te Pūkenga—New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology be public organisations for the purposes of the Standing Orders.

This is the last of the routine motions that I intend to move this morning at the start of this Parliament. It has the effect of opening up the organisations that I've just listed to parliamentary scrutiny through the annual review process where they would otherwise not be. There are two changes from the last time I had to move this motion in the House. The Abortion Supervisory Committee has been omitted on the basis that it no longer exists and the newly formed Te Pūkenga—New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology has been added on the basis that it now exists. Other than that, this motion follows the same formula as the last time Parliament considered this matter, and it simply means that these organisations which otherwise wouldn't be subject to parliamentary scrutiny will be.

Motion agreed to.

SPEAKER: The House is suspended until 2 p.m. today for the Address in Reply.

Sitting suspended from 12.01 p.m. to 2 p.m.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

ARENA WILLIAMS (Labour—Manurewa): I move, *That a respectful Address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor-General in reply to Her Excellency's speech.*

Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your election to the Speaker and acknowledge this House.

E te Whare e tū nei, tēnā koe. He mihi atu ki a koutou e pupuri ana ki te mana o te whenua nei, tēnā koutou, e Te Āti Awa me Taranaki Whānui hoki. E ngā huihui o te motu, e rau rangatira mā, tēnā koutou katoa.

[To the House that stands proudly, greetings. I would like to acknowledge the holders of the mana of this land, Te Āti Awa and Taranaki Whānui, thank you. To the people and the leaders from around the country who have gathered here today, greetings.]

Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Leader of the Opposition, members of the 53rd Parliament, and our guests in the gallery, we gather here today to celebrate another chapter in our democracy, our democracy as young as Te Tiriti o Waitangi and as old as the talanoa of my voyaging ancestors, our democracy, of which we are all custodians for the duration of our service.

The oath we swore yesterday was of allegiance to our country and a pledge to faithfully protect the democratic institutions which are a taonga for all New Zealanders. These institutions are woven strands in the whāriki of our democracy, and while checks and balance on their power are essential to human rights protections, we should tread lightly upon them, lest we risk undermining democracy itself.

I thank the people of Manurewa for electing me to the New Zealand House of Representatives. The humbling weight of their expectations is on my shoulders, but their support lifts me up.

E taku reo rangatira, he whakatauākī e pā ana ki te ingoa o taku mātamua, ko Te Mākahi. “Iti te mākahi, paoa atu noa, pota pota noa.”

[I now turn to my chiefly language and say this; there is a proverb about the name that was bestowed on my eldest, Te Mākahi. “Though the wedge is small, deftly struck, it shatters large objects.”]

The meaning of that whakatauākī is this and it refers to my son's name that carries the story of Tuterakiwhanoa, who with his mākahi cleaved the valleys and the lakes of the South Island. It means that “Deftly wielded with determination, the mākahi, though it is small, will fell any obstacle”, and that is what progressive politics is to me.

I believe in a politics that empowers ordinary people to come together, to organise and build power in their communities, and, together, to shape our country and build a better life for themselves and their families. Labour has always been the political party that stands for that kind of progressive change, and I've seen the power of this change in four generations of my own family.

My father, Haare Williams, is here today. He's in his late 80s, or early 90s maybe—we don't know. He's never had a birth certificate. Dad wasn't a poor kid, because that would suggest that he didn't have enough money to get by. In fact, he had no money, never had a reason to see it, and never handled it. He was raised by his Māori-speaking grandparents on the shores of the Ōhiwa Harbour, in a raupō whare with a dirt floor, in a place that was sacred to the Hāhi Ringatū and to Te Kooti. These were people whose first touch-point with the State, after years of not being extended the rights of every other citizen, was the extension of the old-age pension to Māori by Michael Joseph Savage and the first Labour Government. That meant Dad didn't have to spend his childhood gathering kaimoana and caring for his kui. That meant that he started primary school as a big nine-year-old and learnt to read English from the only book that his grandparents had: the Bible.

Peter Fraser's Labour Government put rural school buses on the road and Dad went to high school because of it. After repeating sixth form, he made it to teachers college, and in the 1980s he became a broadcaster with Māori radio, where his voice is still heard today.

Dad taught me that there is dignity in humility and that dignity is the most fundamental of all rights. He taught me that a change of opinion isn't a sign of intellectual weakness, and how to make peace from conflict. It's his skill of practical peacemaking that I want to bring to my politics: a practical peacefulness for which my tupuna, Te Kooti Arikirangi Te Tūruki, came to learn in his age. Te Kooti's story is documented in a book, *Encircled Lands* by Judith Binney, which I read at law school. Te Kooti was falsely imprisoned twice and kept from his land. But despite all that, he saw the law as the most powerful tool for change and something which could be a shelter for those oppressed: “Ka kuhu au ki te ture hei matua mō te pani.” [“*I seek refuge in the law as a parent for the orphaned.*”]

My mum, she's Ngāi Tahu. She was a campaigner for sexual and reproductive health and gender equality. As a GP, she's looked after some South Auckland families for five generations. She served as a royal commissioner on genetic modification and in countless community organisations, and is my model of a woman who gets things done. She also taught me to give without expectations and to love generously.

I had many great teachers and mentors at school, work, and in politics, but I'd like to speak about just two of them, who serve in Parliament today. The Hon Nanaia Mahuta: papaki kau ngā tai o mihi ki a koe [*may the tides of gratitude continue to lap gently towards you*]. Since I was a teenager, I have been inspired by Nanaia's work in her community and in Parliament. My dad's grandmother was born around 1870. Women couldn't stand for Parliament until 1919, and it wasn't until 1933 that the first woman entered Parliament. It took until 1949 for the first Māori woman to be elected, and in the year 2020, we're much closer to the equal participation of women in the exercise of power in this place. I'm grateful to trailblazers like Nanaia who have paved the way for progress for all women in New Zealand.

Likewise, I've learnt valuable lessons from the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern. When she was a list MP in Auckland Central, I saw firsthand how hard she worked to advance progressive policy while I was the president of the Auckland University Students Association. She stood out back then as a leader capable of connecting so well with young people. I love that she explicitly talks about kindness. In New Zealand politics we've never been brave enough to talk about the need for kindness in policy making. She's

shifted the goalposts and now we expect our politicians not just to be kind in their interactions but to put the welfare of people at the heart of political decisions. Most recently, her response to COVID-19 has been a masterclass in the management of a global health and economic crisis.

My whānau are here: my wonderful husband, Max Hardy, and our two little children, Te Mākahi and Waioeka. They're giving up a lot so I can serve in this House. I fell in love with Max at uni. He challenges me to do good wherever there is need and he is as much a part of the Labour movement as I am. This job is the next step for us in our commitment to the change we want to see for New Zealand. And I grieve a little, as many working parents before me have and many after me will, for this time I give up with Waioeka and Te Mākahi, who's turning three tomorrow—happy birthday, baby. They will no longer have a mum who is at every playdate and rocks them to sleep. I hope when they're older that they'll understand that there were other kids in Manurewa who needed me too: kids with rotten teeth in one of the wealthiest countries in the world, kids without warm, dry homes, kids I met in schools whose eyes light up when they meet a politician who looks and talks like them. Doing my best for the future of my kids means fighting for all families in Aotearoa.

Mr Speaker, it's my privilege and pleasure to introduce you to some of the people in the gallery above us who believe in the power of local democracy: volunteers for my campaign—among them, doctors, students, retirees, unionists, a COVID returnee, an African freedom fighter, a solo mum of three, a bus driver, and a temple leader. Some I have been organising with since I was a teenager, and some I met in the final months of the campaign. I see in them a practical manifestation of the community organising politics that I believe in.

So thank you Cameron Jacob-Sauer, Melissa Cosgrove, Helena Fairhurst, David Hopkins, Faisal Halabi, Ray Boxter, Andrew MacDonald, Raj Singh, Kurt Sharpe, Paul Protheroe, Dawn Trenberth, Len Richards, Jill Ovens, Christine Hawea, Kharag Singh, Sam and Erica Bookman, Ilango Krishnamoorthy, Brooke Loader, Viiga Alapati, and Naresh Perinpanayagam. Thank you Mel, Britt, Sonny, Harley, Sioli, Chandan, Lynn, Ben, Poppy, Seamus, Raewyn, Sam, Flor, McKenzie, Shankar, Antonia, Sione, Ofa, Matt, Josh, Shane, Shari, Kim, Tutamure, Kororia, Annabel, Maria, Gadiel, Sago, Reece, Bhupinder, Ranbir, Teisa, Arthur. Thanks Amar, Ash, Alice, Aloka, Ella, Eric, Caleb, Judith, Linda, Jessie, Harman, Sukhwinder, Kamaljit, Kuldeep, Taran, Joy, Bill, Zara, Kathy, Craig, Laura, and Patrick. Thank you for your part in building our movement.

My thanks also to Louisa Wall for her work in Parliament and for Manurewa. I look forward to serving in this House with her.

I want to highlight three issues that I care dearly about. They're not the only issues I'll work on in my time here, but they're important to me and to Manurewa. Housing: every family in New Zealand deserves a warm, dry home. This Government also believes in building more houses, and we need to strengthen basic protections for renters. In Manurewa, 56 percent of homes are rented.

Health: I served as a member of the Waitemātā District Health Board. I'm committed to a prevention strategy at the top of the cliff. Better maternal and mental healthcare, dental care, and diabetes prevention will save lives and money. We need to address invisible and physical barriers to local healthcare access.

Justice: during law school, I was a community probation officer at Panmure, and in my early 20s I was seeing men my age—mostly Māori—being caught up in a failing system. I was working there as the new bail laws were coming into effect, and I saw firsthand how small policy tweaks can unintentionally change someone's entire experiences of the justice system and, ultimately, lead to longer and more punitive sentences.

Over the last decade, I've given deep thought to systematic justice reform. The impact of domestic violence and violent head trauma on women's offending is poorly understood. Bail and sentencing laws can be unjust and counterproductive, and offending against people in custody is inhumane. It's not just; nor is it restorative. As the Hon Grant Robertson said in this House, we send people to prison as a punishment, not for punishment. There are four prisons in the Manurewa electorate, and their men, women, and young people are my constituents too.

I'm one of the youngest members here. I first ran for Parliament aged 24, and now I join this House aged 31. My generation—people in their 20s and 30s—and our kids' generation will bear the brunt of the decisions we make this term. This is especially true for inequality and for protecting our natural environment. Now is the time to address racial inequality across all sectors, address insecure work and household debt, and take bold steps to level the playing field between generations, to clean up waterways, mobilise the world to fight climate change, and prepare communities for global warming's worst effects. As we build back from COVID, we have a strong mandate from New Zealand, and especially from the youngest people in this country, to do the hard mahi for generational change.

I am proud to be a member of this progressive Labour Government. I am proud to be a member of the most diverse Government in New Zealand's history, which looks more like the country it has been given the job of managing. We still need other voices here—people with disabilities, our growing Asian communities. I will do my part to ensure their fuller participation in our democracy.

At the beginning of my speech I spoke of the oath I made yesterday to my country, but this is my oath to my whānau and my friends who are here to support me today: I promise to be kind, to keep people at the heart of my decision making, to lead by empowering organisers and communities, to lift up the voices of ordinary people, and to work hard on their behalf.

Kei ngā mana, kei ngā reo, kei te Whare, e te Māngai me ōku hoa o te Whare Pāremata, tēnā tātou.

[To the leaders, to the voices of authority, to the House, to the Speaker, and to my parliamentary colleagues, thank you.]

[Applause]

Waiata

IBRAHIM OMER (Labour): Mr Speaker, I second the motion that a respectful address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor-General in the reply to Her Excellency's speech. E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā iwi, e ngā rau rangatira mā, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

Mr Speaker, I want to acknowledge and congratulate you on your re-election to your role. I also want to acknowledge other presiding officers who have been elected today. I look forward to your guidance and your wisdom.

Kia ora and salaam alaikum. My name is Ibrahim Omer. I'm an Eritrean. I'm a son, brother, a friend. I'm a Muslim. I'm a former refugee. I'm a trade unionist and living wage activist. But most importantly, I stand here today in front of you bursting with pride as a Kiwi who loves Aotearoa New Zealand.

My journey to this place has been a long one. The story of my journey is the story of every refugee displaced and forced from their home country and their loved ones. My vision is for my journey to give hope to the many other people with stories like mine.

My journey began 15,000 kilometres away, in a beautiful, small East African country called Eritrea. My forebears were chiefs, warriors, who led their people to defend their land from invaders, who handed down their values of social justice and defending human rights to me and to my family. My grandfathers were leaders in their village and their

clans. Our family slowly moved to the city and my father went to school and learnt many languages. My mother was a loving mum to me and to my four brothers and my sister.

Mine was a happy and typical Eritrean upbringing. I grew up in a tolerant society where people from different cultures and religious backgrounds embraced each other. My extended family were Muslims but our neighbours were Christians, and we shared our lives together. We celebrated Christian holidays with them and they celebrated the Muslim holidays with us.

I attended public schools, including an Islamic primary school, and then my local junior and high school. It was a loving and tolerant environment, culturally conservative, but there was a strong sense of social justice and standing up for people who didn't have enough.

As a child I was full of hopes and ambitions and dreams. Among the very long list of things I wanted to be and do, two things stood out for me: to be a football player like Ronaldo from Brazil or a politician. But those dreams were cut short by a brutal dictatorship that killed the dreams of thousands of young Eritrean men and women.

In my home country, I saw how politics and politicians ruined people's lives, and, hence, I gave up my dream to be a politician. My homeland has a long history of invasion and colonisation by, first, the Italians, the British, and the Ethiopians. The impacts of colonisation are still being experienced as I speak here today. Right now, tens of thousands of innocent Ethiopians are being displaced by this unnecessary and senseless war in Ethiopia. In the last two weeks alone, 40,000 Ethiopians have become refugees, fleeing to Sudan for safety. In addition to this, about 100,000 Eritrean refugees who have been living in the areas of conflict are now in danger.

Nearly all my life in Eritrea there was a war. For 30 years my country was locked in a war for independence. I remember the terror when the war raged in our city. I was young, but I vividly remember the fighting. There was no power. We had very little food. The city was surrounded by the fighters for months and months. Then independence was declared in Eritrea. I saw music and people dancing in the streets all the time, day and night, for months. We believed that Eritrea could be the shining star for Africa, where everywhere else there were coups and civil wars. But our country was betrayed by the same people who fought to free Eritrea from colonisers. They took away our dreams. And now, Eritrea is one of the biggest refugee-producing countries per capita in the world.

I was drafted to the national service at a very young age, as a high school student. I was subjected to extreme hardships. The national service in Eritrea is meant to be for 18 months, but in reality, it's indefinite. Once you are in, there is no way out of it. Eritrea was and still is a place where citizens disappear for no reason. Gross human rights abuses, arbitrary arrests, and imprisonment are normal. I knew I had no choice but to leave before my time came. So I left behind everything I loved: my country, my family, my friends, and my dreams, including the long list of things I wanted to be and do.

The chance of making it to Sudan was probably about 50:50. Lots of people don't make it. At the time, there was a shoot-to-kill policy for deserters. I took the risk. I said to myself that I would rather die trying to escape than to die a slow death in Eritrea. Weeks later, I made it. I made it across the border and handed myself in to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) camp and the Sudanese authorities, and I was granted refugee status to stay in Sudan.

Five years later, I came to New Zealand as a refugee. I had never heard of this place, to be honest, but an immigration officer told me it was one of the most peaceful countries in the world. That was good enough for me, because I was sick and tired of looking over my shoulder. I arrived at Aotearoa on 15 May 2008. From the moment I landed at Auckland Airport, I felt the manaakitanga and aroha that this country is known for. After six weeks in Māngere, I moved to Wellington to start a new life.

My early life in New Zealand wasn't easy. I got a job as a security guard, but I left it after I was attacked and beaten in the middle of the night. I did farm work, fruit picking, and started cleaning. My low wages meant I couldn't save to study, and in order to support my family back home, I picked up more and more hours until I was doing 80 hours a week.

Ten years ago, I was cleaning at Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington. I worked with some of the hardest-working people I know. Some of them are here today: Rebecca, Awak, and Emma. All I did was clean, clean, clean, day and night. I didn't have a life. I didn't meet people. I wasn't active in the community. I didn't have the time to think or even dream.

Then one day in 2013, my union organiser asked me to speak at the forum at Victoria University to challenge the mayoral candidates to make a commitment to pay a living wage. It was the first time I had ever spoken in public and I was speaking on behalf of about 100 cleaners. I was scared and I wanted to turn away when I saw that The Hub was packed. But the response to my speech changed something inside me. Before I spoke, I threw away the speech that I had prepared before and I spoke from my heart. I said to the students, "I see you each night studying and working away at your degrees and Master's and PhDs." I told them that my dream was not to end up as a cleaner, working 80-plus hours a week. My dream was to study, but I am stuck in the trap that is poverty. I got active in the union, in the living wage movement, in my refugee background community, and the Labour Party. I got a pay rise and I decided to go to university.

A few months later, one Sunday night, I was cleaning a lecture theatre. The next day, I had my first lecture—Politics 111—in the same lecture theatre. It was a very emotional moment that I will never forget.

My life has been transformed so quickly. In 12 years after moving to New Zealand, and in the five years after being a cleaner, four years after graduating, I became a member of this Parliament. This is the result of the overwhelming support that I have received. It is because of the people that I have met along the way.

I'm very proud of my refugee background community and the ChangeMakers Resettlement Forum and other advocacy groups across the country. I have always wanted to help my community and that's why I got involved in ChangeMakers, first as a member and then as the chair of the organisation.

On March 15, our country suffered a tragic terrorist attack. It was like a bad dream. You never think that this could happen in New Zealand. How could this happen to us? I was worried that it would be the end of the safe and peaceful New Zealand that the immigration officer told me about. Then I saw the leadership of our Prime Minister and the massive support of New Zealanders. The mosques were not just a garden with flowers and loving messages, but the whole country came out and wrapped themselves around us, figuratively and literally. I couldn't control my emotions. That terrorist did not just want to attack the mosque and take away a few lives; he wanted to turn us against each other, but things did not go the way that he wanted. Thanks to our Prime Minister's leadership and the 5 million Kiwis who reacted with aroha and embraced the Muslim community, our bonds grew together. To me, it's reinforced my identity and the love that I have for New Zealand. I will use my platform in Parliament to support and rebuild our community, champion the voice of refugee-background New Zealanders, and to stamp out racism in Aotearoa.

One thing that I really admire about New Zealand politics, and which restored my hope to be a politician, was when my friend told me that although politicians may debate in this Chamber, they will then go afterwards and share a coffee and meal together. I will treat everyone, all my colleagues here in this House, with respect and dignity.

I am proud of my union living-wage whānau. I've been an E tū member, a delegate, and an organiser. I've been a leader in the living-wage movement. I was so proud, a few

months ago, when E tū members who were MSD security guards won the living wage. When I recruited them, I talked to them to join the union and told them that we will win the living wage if we all stand up together. After we won, I rang up all of them and told them that this is what it means to be in the union. This is what it means to be active in the living wage movement. This did not come from nothing; it's our victory.

And now I'm here to be a voice for workers like those security guards and like my co-workers from uni. While my life has dramatically transformed, people like Rebecca, Awak, and Emma are still on the lowest paid wages. They work hard, they work very long hours, and, yet, they still struggle to provide three meals for their kids. In 10 years of working hard, they're still poor; it should not be like that.

My vision is for all workers to lead decent lives and participate in society with dignity and respect. My voice will be for every New Zealander who is struggling on low wages, whether they were born here or they have recently arrived. I will still stand up for every New Zealander who needs an opportunity, every New Zealander who needs decent pay and conditions, every New Zealander who needs equality and the chance to live in a fair country where everyone can thrive and live with dignity. Throughout my experience as a low-paid worker, I realise that a strong labour movement is essential to protecting the rights of vulnerable people. A strong labour movement is what's needed to create a just and fair society.

I am proud to be part of the Labour Party because it's the party that shares my values of fairness, community, and equal opportunities. I stand here because of the support the Labour Party whānau have given me, and an opportunity to be a voice for those who often struggle to have their voices heard.

Thank you to our Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern, and the Hon Grant Robertson for your leadership and also for your personal support to me. I'm here today because of the inspiration and support of many, many people, too many to name. Everyone I have met along the way has made an impact in my life and enriched it—thank you. This includes the people from my early life in Eritrea, to my family who passed on to me the values of social justice from a very young age—I send my love from afar. To everyone who helped me to get through, early in my days in Sudan, my cellmates in Kober Prison, the UNHCR, the people I nervously shared the plane to New Zealand with, and the friends I made in Māngere. Ngā mihi nui ki a koutou.

To my “New Zealand Mum”, Lyndy McIntyre, thank you for everything. To my E tū and living wage whānau, especially Annie Newman, thank you for believing in me. Thank you to the workers who have risked a lot by standing up and trusting me to be your organiser. Paul Tolich, who chased me around Wellington with the Labour Party nomination on the day it was due, I can't thank you enough—thank you. And thank you to Fleur Fitzsimons, who planted the possibility of me becoming an MP in my mind just about a year ago—thank you.

To Rory, Isabella, Gordon, and Winnie, because of your love and support, I never feel like I'm away from my family—thank you. To my friends, who also became my campaign team, Rory, Isabella, Nick Davies, Sam Gribben, Steph Gregor, and the many, many others—thank you for making me a better person.

To my caucus, I'm proud to be with a group that looks much like New Zealand, and I'm excited about the next three years—kia ora.

I end with the final acknowledgment to all millions of people displaced around the world. Your courage in the face of unimaginable adversity will always inspire me. The reality is that many millions of people will not have the luck that I have had. Until the world changes, innocent lives will continue to be lost and displaced in the hands of evil

and war. That is what we must change—that is what we must change. In my mother tongue, which is called Saho, I just wanted to say to these people:

Sen abliuk ane, which is “I see you”;

Sen abliuk ane, which is “I feel you”;

Sen arar ye abeuk ane, which is “I will be on your side and fight alongside you.”

Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

[*Applause*]

Waiata

SPEAKER: The question is that a respectful address be presented to Her Excellency the Governor-General in reply to her speech.

Hon JUDITH COLLINS (Leader of the Opposition): I move—

Rawiri Waititi: Point of order, Mr Speaker.

SPEAKER: I’m not certain that there can be a point of order at this stage. The member has a very few seconds to convince me that there could be one. The call is very clearly that of the Hon Judith Collins.

Rawiri Waititi: Kei te mōtini Te Paati Māori kia riro i a mātou tekau mā rima mēneti ki ngā kaiarahi o Te Paati Māori i roto i tēnei wāhanga whakautu kōrero.

[*Te Paati Māori would like to make a motion that, as co-leaders of Te Paati Māori, we be allocated 15 minutes to speak in the Address in Reply.*]

SPEAKER: Order! Order! The Hon Judith Collins.

Hon JUDITH COLLINS: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I move that the following words be added to the address, *That in the context of a Government that is borrowing more than any other in our history and the burden this leaves future generations, the Government will be held to account for the poor quality of its spending. The Government will be asked to focus on the core issues that matter to New Zealanders, to urgently reform planning rules and make it easier to build houses, to rein in escalating house prices, to build more roads and unclog our cities, to stop work on the light rail distraction, to grow our productivity, to address falling outcomes in education, to improve outcomes in law and order, and to balance the books.*

Congratulations to the Prime Minister and the Labour Party. The Prime Minister has achieved a remarkable election result. She has a clear mandate to implement her agenda, and no excuses this time. I’d like to also congratulate you, Mr Speaker, and the other presiding officers. I’d like to also acknowledge the Deputy Prime Minister, Grant Robertson. Good to see Grant Robertson getting the job that he’s really been doing for the last three years. I acknowledge the leader of the ACT Party, David Seymour, and the new ACT MPs. I acknowledge the Hon James Shaw and Marama Davidson on returning the Greens and the new Green members. Can I acknowledge the Māori Party co-leaders, Rawiri Waititi and Debbie Ngarewa-Packer on returning the Māori Party to Parliament; all of the new MPs, particularly the two who have just spoken, Ibrahim Omer and Arena Williams. Arena Williams is my neighbouring MP with Manurewa right beside Papakura. And I’d also like to acknowledge Louisa Wall for her grace today. Thank you, Louisa Wall.

Can I acknowledge all those MPs who are new to Parliament and to say to you this is a privilege to be here, and particularly to our new National MPs: Nicola Grigg, Christopher Luxon, Joseph Mooney, Penny Simmonds, and Simon Watts. There are only five of you but, as I’ve told you, I came in with a group of five in 2002 and three of us ended up leaders of the National Party and the other two have gone so they won’t be there. So it’s great to have you here. Tēnā koutou katoa.

Miss Ardern is governing New Zealand during one of the most important times in our nation's history and I wish her well because the decisions that we make here in this Chamber over the next three years will shape the country we live in for decades to come. Our infrastructure, our prosperity, our productivity, our ability to pay back debts, the education our children receive, and the strength of our communities—in basic terms: how long Kiwis spend sitting in traffic, how much of their hard-earned money is spent on rent or the mortgage, their ability to find a good job and earn a decent income, the quality of their local school, and how safe they feel in their community. These are the things that matter to people on a day-to-day basis. These are the things that New Zealanders expect their Government to be focused on: high-quality spending, transport, housing, education, law and order. These are the things that Labour has failed to deliver. At a pivotal time in our country's history the role of the Opposition is more important than ever. It is critical that the Government be held to account on its decision making and spending and National will do just that.

This is a Labour Government entering its second term in office and it's worth remembering that because we heard very few new ideas in today's Speech from the Throne. In fact, this Government failed to deliver on so many of its promises from three years ago, it was as if someone had picked up a copy of the 2017 Speech from the Throne, blew the dust off it, added a COVID section, deleted the KiwiBuild section, and that's what we heard today. The hardest thing for me today was to keep a straight face while I listened to it. The Labour Government promised in 2017 to address New Zealand's housing, child poverty, and transport issues. And what's happened? Well, they all got worse and that was even before the COVID-19 pandemic. House prices rose 25 percent nationally under the Labour Government before COVID hit, and now it's up to 37 percent. Under Labour, the State house waiting list doubled. It's now trebled. More New Zealanders are becoming victims of crime. The number of children leaving school with basic numeracy and literacy skills is in sad decline. The Prime Minister cannot point fingers in other directions to explain her failures; she must own them.

In National's last four years of Government, 56,000 children were lifted out of poverty. Under Labour, 12,000 more children are now living in material hardship, and that's before COVID hit—that's before COVID hit. That's an extra 12,000 children living in households that cannot afford essentials like fresh fruit and vegetables. That's an extra 12,000 children living in households that delay going to the doctor when they're sick. That's an extra 12,000 children living in households that now have to borrow to meet everyday needs. We have the ability to do much better for our people. We have the resources, we have the work ethic, and we have the entrepreneurs. And if we are to, we need to back them to succeed, we need to grow our economy, and we need to lift these children out of poverty.

COVID-19 will continue to cast a shadow over this country and the rest of the world for some time to come. On top of the eye-watering debt that this Government has already piled up to hold our economy together, there's a looming challenge of how to fund and distribute a vaccine and reopen our borders to the world. The next three years will require shrewd investment as well as prudent fiscal and economic management. And New Zealanders want to see a plan to grow the economy and return us to surplus to pay down our debt. Unfortunately, while we've heard plenty of slogans today like "futureproofing the economy" and "accelerating the recovery", we haven't actually heard one real plan about how to grow the economy, and that's because the Government doesn't have one.

Debt is fast becoming one of the most significant and growing issues facing our country. The pre-election Budget had no single year where a surplus was forecast; just deficits for the next 14 years. That's 14 years of debt being piled on top of debt. That's a mountain of debt. At the start of this year, New Zealand had \$65 billion of debt; now it's

\$94 billion of debt, and by 2024 the forecast is that there will be \$200 billion of debt. It all adds up to a future where, as a percentage of our total economy, Government debt is higher than any time since the 1930s, higher than the levels we experienced even in the 1980s when New Zealand narrowly avoided financial crisis. This is the future that Labour will leave for the next generation. There is no money left when the next crisis hits, whether it's 10, 15, or 20 years from now. Lax spending today will burden future generations with higher taxes and lower incomes, and people across New Zealand all have to be careful with their money, and their Government should be as well.

The Government says it will overhaul our welfare system this term. Well, where's the money going to come from? No detail, just they want to overhaul it. More than a third of Government spending is already for welfare payments at a time when debt is piling upon debt. We will be very interested to see how the Government expects to overhaul our welfare system. We will hold the Government to account on its spending.

The Government will talk about how our economy is holding up better than other developed countries. They won't mention how they have spent more as a percentage of GDP than any other OECD country. It is not an achievement to increase debt by \$140 billion in just four years. The Government has a responsibility to ensure that every dollar of borrowed money they spend results in future growth and expanded opportunity for Kiwis. National will hold the Government to account for the quality of its spending, for delivering infrastructure that actually unlocks economic activity, for making investments that actually help lift our productivity, for prioritising investments that support the private sector to create high-quality, high-paying jobs, and we'll hold the Government to account for throwing millions at ideological pet projects like green schools that add nothing—nothing—to New Zealanders but just debt. That's all it adds. Spending taxpayer money on any old construction project is wasteful, and we will hold the Government to account for wasteful spending. If it's a simple stimulus that is needed, New Zealand taxpayers can spend their own money better than any Government.

Another key problem facing Kiwis right now is their ability to provide a home for their families. There should be no doubt that the cause of high house prices is New Zealand's arcane planning rules. There's a reality check for the Government. The time and cost of cutting through Government red tape is what's keeping Kiwis from being able to own their own home. It was never foreign buyers, nor was it Chinese-sounding names. It was a disgrace that such people were targeted by the Labour Party. Labour's plan for the Resource Management Act (RMA) looks like it will just make the problem worse. They're all set on working with the Green Party, and what a disaster that'll be, no matter how fondly I view the Green Party members. Labour has already wasted three years being distracted by a capital gains tax and KiwiBuild, and meanwhile house prices have jumped more than a third. Since Jacinda Ardern became Prime Minister, the average house has earned more than the average worker. Let's say that one again, shall we? Since Jacinda Ardern became Prime Minister, the average house has earned more than the average worker. That's the legacy of the Labour Government. In the three years since Labour was elected, the median house price has gone up by more than \$200,000, and in that same period, a worker on the median income had earned about \$160,000—that's a disgrace. It's a sad state of affairs, and it needs fixing right now.

The Government will point out that they plan to build 18,000 more State houses, and we will point out that the State house waiting list is growing at a rate of a thousand people per month. The Government wants to spend \$10 billion to build 18,000 houses over four years at a time when more than 20,000 families are already waiting. Some of us will remember when they planned to build 16,000 houses in three years, too, and they got, I think, 600. By the time these State houses are built, the waiting list will simply have outgrown them, and people's hopes will be dashed again. It's a colossal amount of money,

and it won't fix the real problem, that New Zealand's planning regime is utterly broken. We now have more than 360,000 New Zealanders receiving the accommodation supplement. That's more than half of the entire rental market that is having at least some of their rent paid for by the taxpayer; 18,000 more State houses won't solve that. We can't go on this way. The RMA needs to be scrapped. My offer to the Government to work on bipartisan reform that will stand the test of time still stands. We need to do this urgently to release more land for housing, to remove barriers to development, to fast track new subdivisions, and to unleash a house building boom. Every day, we will hold the Government to account for its failure to deliver on housing, and, every day, we will hold the Government to account for its failure to deliver on its promises.

Let me come to transport. When Labour came into office, they cancelled 15 roading projects up and down the country—15. They gutted the construction pipeline in favour of a light rail project—remember the light rail project?

Hon David Bennett: How's that going?

Hon JUDITH COLLINS: Well, the Government still can't decide. [*Interruption*] These are good questions. What's happened to it? Well, the Government can't decide if it's going to be a tunnel, a road, or, apparently, up on stilts. It was supposed to be built by 2021. We've only got six weeks to go—they'd better get on with it. We haven't even seen a detailed design or construction plan, and in the meantime, Aucklanders, all 1.7 million of them, are paying 10c a litre more for petrol to fund the ghost train that never arrives. New Zealand should be in a construction boom right now. Instead, we're waiting for projects like the Tauranga Northern Link and Mill Road to even be started. We will hold the Government to account for its failure to deliver on transport.

The Government outlined this morning that one of its key priorities will be climate change, so we're wondering how come emissions have gone up under them for the last three years. National will continue to support robust, sensible policies that will help us reduce emissions. We worked with the Government, cross-party, to establish an independent Climate Change Commission. We note that the initiatives highlighted by the Government today are not recommended by the independent Climate Change Commission. We will hold the Government to account on its ability to reduce emissions, not on how many things it can ban.

National will focus, this Parliament, on core education outcomes. For two decades, New Zealand has been falling down the international tables on literacy and numeracy, and the status quo simply is not delivering for many of our children. National will speak up for them. We will hold the Government to account on its inability to improve education outcomes.

Under this Government, front-line police feel disempowered and disrespected. Just ask them—disempowered and disrespected. More police are being shot at. Gang numbers are up by a third since Labour took office, and with all the “soft on drugs” rhetoric, methamphetamine-related charges are up by almost as much. Under this Government, violent crime reported by police is up but convictions are down. Labour is more interested in getting prisoner numbers down than it is in keeping communities safe.

Andrew Bayly: Soft on crims.

Hon JUDITH COLLINS: Soft on crime is right. They are putting criminals ahead of victims.

Coming back to corrections, assaults on corrections officers working in our prisons have risen by 37 percent in the past 12 months alone. Kelvin Davis has been asleep at the wheel, and the Prime Minister too. Staff at Auckland Prison have been the victims of more than a hundred assaults in the past year. As an employer, the Minister's not looking after his staff, and he needs to do better.

Prison populations may be coming down, but at what cost? The Government isn't keeping communities safe. It just wants to give all those criminals a big hug and they'll make them be good boys and girls—it simply doesn't work like that in the real world. New Zealanders are the victims of a Government's poor law and order policy. Crime fell dramatically under the previous National-led Government and, sadly, it's back as a major issue in our communities. National will hold the Government to account on law and order.

Let me reflect on what Labour hasn't talked about. Well, they haven't talked about KiwiBuild, but we'll all know why, don't we? [*Interruption*] There's 16,000—100,000 houses in 10 years. It's not going well.

For the past three decades—[*Interruption*] Let's talk about something we want to talk about. For the past three decades, now, the global technology sector has been the fastest-growing sector in the world. In New Zealand too, the tech sector's grown to be one of our biggest export earners—about the same size as our meat exports. COVID-19 might just supercharge this. Tens of thousands of New Zealanders have returned home from places like San Francisco, London, and Hong Kong, and New Zealand has a base of a thriving tech sector here already. News for the Labour Party: it's not just a data bank. It's a lot bigger than that. It's a sector where being at the bottom of the world isn't necessarily an impediment, and we can double or even triple our exports from technology over the next 10 years. National will work with the Government to put our tech sector in the spotlight to highlight this as an area to grow our economy and our prosperity.

Three years ago, the Prime Minister said in this very debate that if National is to defend its record, we must defend record homelessness and child poverty. Well, three years on, the Prime Minister has not delivered; it's got worse. Homelessness and poverty are worse now. In October 2017, the Prime Minister said, "If you have hundreds of thousands of children living in homes without enough to survive, that's a blatant failure. What else could you describe it as?" Well, the numbers of households needing food grants more than doubled in the first two years of her Government, and it's just got worse since COVID—more than doubled before COVID.

We all know that the Prime Minister has good intentions, but good intentions are not enough. Three years ago, in this very same debate, the Prime Minister pledged her Government's intention to build 100,000 KiwiBuild houses to reduce child poverty and to reduce homelessness. On each of these measures—her own measures—she has failed. The impact of this failure is felt by hundreds of thousands of New Zealanders and their families, and in this term of Parliament National will hold the Government to account for its delivery.

We will stand up for everyday New Zealanders who were promised so much by Labour—promised so much. We will stand up for those hard-working, hard-saving people who were promised a pathway to owning their own home, and every year—every month, indeed—it gets worse.

We will stand up for the small-business people, who are working day in and day out, who have put their homes on the line, who have taken a risk to employ a new employee, and who are struggling to pay the bills. Today, I heard from the Speech from the Throne that the only help for small business was they could borrow more money, get more debt, and pay another holiday—that sounded like it. There was no vision. I think the Labour Party's idea, or the Government's idea, of how to help a small business is to take a medium one, put Labour in charge, and look at it going down to small.

For the people dependent on Government benefits, though, they want a job. If they just want a job, we will stand up for them. For the innovators and the entrepreneurs, who want to try something new but don't want to get tied down by red tape, we'll stand up for them too. For the farmers, who get up early to earn New Zealand's way in the world and expect the Government to think practically and with principle about what those regulations mean

for them, we'll stand up for them too. For the parents and the families, who expect a world-class education for their kids and they don't feel like they're getting it, we'll stand up for them too. For the workers doing it hard, who want the Government to be as careful with their money as they are, we'll stand up for them too. And for every New Zealander who aspires for more, who wants a pathway forward and who wants their hard work to be rewarded, the people who want their children to have more opportunities than they had—yes, we'll stand up for them too.

National will speak for these people. We will speak up for New Zealanders in this House because they deserve better than they have had. They deserve more from a Government of good intentions and many excuses. They deserve a Government that delivers, not just a Government of good intentions.

Thank you, Mr Speaker. I'm very proud to be able to speak in this debate because this is a debate where good intentions from the Government will be put to the test by this party.

SPEAKER: The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

Rt Hon JACINDA ARDERN (Prime Minister): I do want to begin by acknowledging all the new members who have entered into this House and the extraordinary privilege that I know you are feeling as the opportunity to represent New Zealand dawns on you and you enjoy that new experience. I extend that to every new member. To those parties that have grown—I acknowledge the ACT leadership, I acknowledge my colleagues in the Green Party where we have a cooperation agreement, and I acknowledge the new members of the National Party who have joined this House this day. I also acknowledge the Māori Party as well.

The Leader of the Opposition, of course, stood up and acknowledged it's not the size of the intake, reflecting on her own history and the fact that in her intake there were three National party leaders within that cohort—perhaps foreshadowing the leadership prospects that sit within that new cohort that are coming today! I'm not sure if that was the intent, but I wish you well none the less.

I wish to reflect on, first of all, if I may, the speeches in which we began our debate in this House today, and I cannot imagine better speeches to set the tone of this new term of Parliament, and I want to particularly express the pride that I have in Ibrahim and Arena. They, as you will have seen for yourselves, are extraordinary individuals, but I would say that of each of our new MPs. I'm extraordinarily proud to be the leader of the Labour Party.

This is, in this 53rd Parliament, the most diverse Parliament we have ever had, and that's because voters—that's because, ultimately, New Zealanders—have chosen to reflect who we are as a nation in this House of Representatives. I can speak, of course, for the Labour Party, when I say we have teachers, we have social workers, we have a midwife—quite lucky, in our case, to have that in our midst—

Hon David Bennett: Any farmers, any business people?

Rt Hon JACINDA ARDERN: —we have doctors, we have journalists, we have unionists, we have one ex-diplomat, we have lawyers, we have environmentalists—obviously, on that side there are old hands. We have tax specialists, equal pay advocates, we have people who have farmed, grown, run their own business.

Hon Member: No, you haven't—

Rt Hon JACINDA ARDERN: We have different languages, we have ethnicities—

Hon Member: Point them out.

Rt Hon JACINDA ARDERN: We obviously have more respect. We have the largest Māori team we have ever had in this party. We have New Zealand in this place.

Now, as I said, while parties play a role in that, it is ultimately the public that decides who is elected. So I want to begin my acknowledgment in this House, my speech in this

debate, by thanking New Zealand for the honour and the privilege of being back here and forming a Labour Government. The support we received was diverse. It came from rural communities, it came from urban, towns, cities, and with that rightly comes a responsibility that I know every member on this side of the House and up into that side of the House—that all of us—feel strongly. I have said before, and I recommit again, we will be a Government for all New Zealanders, not least because that is what is needed in these times.

I have stopped saying that these are extraordinary times. COVID has meant that we've had to find a dramatic new normal. At the beginning of 2020, which feels for all of us like an absolute lifetime ago, we saw the pandemic emerge on the other side of the world. By the end of February, New Zealand had its first known case, and what quickly followed was unprecedented moment after unprecedented moment: the closing of our borders, first, selectively in small part, then there was the asking of everyone who came here to quarantine for 14 days. And I recall, as we made that decision, I felt at that time that I was, essentially, closing off our borders and shutting down the hospitality that we pride ourselves in providing. And then we closed it completely. Of course, we've had limits on gatherings. We've had a complete lockdown. We've had the introduction of quarantine. We have had first after first, but all of it has been necessary.

In amongst all of this, it's never been the decisions themselves that have necessarily stood out the most to me; it has been New Zealand's response to those decisions. New Zealand has taken everything in its stride. That is not to say that it hasn't caused pain. Now, when we made that decision to close the borders, we knew what impact it would have on some of our regions. We knew the impact it would have on places like Rotorua and on Queenstown, and we felt that acutely, but we knew what was required. The collective action of New Zealand in support of those actions has been probably one of the most humbling experiences of my lifetime.

Now, this Government does not take that sacrifice for granted, and that is why we owe New Zealand not just our gratitude. We owe them our ongoing action to make sure we preserve the gains that every single New Zealander contributed to, that every business that openly closed its doors when we asked, that cancelled a wedding or a celebration, that didn't have a tangi or gather in a time of grief—we owe every single one of them to fight every day to preserve the gains that they fought so hard for too.

That is why there are three priorities for this Government. You will have heard them from the Speech from the Throne, but I do want to take this opportunity to say them again. Each of them centres on the same wellbeing approach that you saw us take in that first term, that was grounded in the work of the Wellbeing Budget, of saying that there is more to governance and to progress than GDP. And those three priorities for this Government are the following: to keep New Zealanders safe from COVID-19, to accelerate our economic recovery, and to lay the foundations, as we said in that speech, for a better future.

There is no doubt that as long as COVID is in the world, we must maintain our absolute focus on our health response; there is no question. We have always maintained that the best response for us was one that put our people first. And I remember some of the discussions we had as we watched other countries around the world deliberate on the options in front of them. We heard the debates about plunging into the idea of herd immunity. We heard the discussion about some countries that said that they would rather keep their borders open and learn to coexist with COVID and make it their new normal.

Well, that wasn't right for us, and the reason it wasn't right for us was because we knew that we had health inequalities in our country. We knew the capacity of our health system, which is excellent, but no health system in the world is built to deal with a global pandemic of this scale, and we knew what flattening the curve meant. Flattening the curve

meant that we would not have the capacity to cope with everyone who needed hospital care. So we deliberately decided on a strategy of elimination. Not everyone has supported that move, but as long as I live, I will stand by the decisions that we collectively made to do that.

The strategy of elimination means that any time COVID emerges, we stamp it out. It's a strategy that we have evolved and we have refined, because there are very few countries who have adopted that approach. The premise is the same, though. We will not coexist with COVID amongst us, because that means coexisting with restrictions all of the time. It means coexisting with economic hardship consistently. And it means accepting an inevitability around loss of life, and we do not. But that vigilance around our health response means we all have a role to play, and everyone in this House has a role to play.

For us as Government, it means making sure we continue to manage our borders. That is our first line of defence. It means making testing widely available and accessible. It means supporting people to isolate if they are unwell. And at the heart of that, of course, are our moves to extend sick pay in this country to make sure we have the legal basis that supports our response to the pandemic. It means having an excellent contact tracing system and making sure we're using technology in that as well.

But for all of us, for every single New Zealander, it means staying home when you're sick, it means getting tested, it means keeping a record of where you have been at all times, and it means things like mask use on public transport. Now, that list may sound easy, but we all need to make sure that we create the environment where the public feel like they can undertake that response too. If we create an environment of blame, of judgment, where we publicly crucify those who may contract COVID-19, we fundamentally disrupt our ability to respond to this virus. We will only be as successful as a New Zealand public who are willing to get themselves tested, are willing to say if they're unwell that they will stay home, and that means we cannot stigmatise; we must support. So that is my message—as Dr Bloomfield said, “People are not the problem,” and it is up to us to make it so. Ultimately, this is a formula that can save lives and support our economy, and it's a formula that has been endorsed. I note, even this week, Bloomberg has listed us as number one in terms of our resilience to COVID-19, and in that measure they've looked at our health response, they've looked at our ability to make sure that we've reopened our economy. It is an endorsement of the team of 5 million's work and I acknowledge that.

On the Opposition side, I absolutely understand and expect that they will play their role in holding us to account in our health response to COVID-19. The one thing I will ask them to remember is the alternative—there is no such thing as a cost-free response to COVID. No country in the world has experienced a response that is not coming at a cost in some form. Our view is that we have chosen the path that allows us to avoid the greatest of costs, and that is the human cost. The natural question, though, that everyone will be asking is: “How long for? How long will we be living in these unprecedented times, with these extraordinary moves? How long will we have to be in this form of new normal?” Next year, there is a clear path for the globe around the response in the form of vaccination, but we must be realistic with everybody—not just in New Zealand but globally—that there are hundreds of vaccine candidates. Not all of them necessarily will meet the needs of our population base. We will need to sequence, as these vaccines roll out, the immunisation of our population. It will not happen en masse, it will not happen quickly, and we'll need to sequence that vaccine protection with changes in our border settings with top of mind the safety of our public and our community. Next year does present opportunity, but it also presents risk. We, as a Government, undertake to communicate clearly with New Zealand what that path around vaccination will be and what it will mean. We will keep focused on looking after our people.

In the meantime, recovery has already begun. We've always said the response and the recovery must happen at the same time, and we already see the signs of that recovery. There were predictions early on, even at the Budget, that we would be facing unemployment levels up around the 10 percent mark. We, in the last quarter, saw unemployment at 5.3 percent. Now, we don't celebrate any level of unemployment—we are the Labour Party—however, what we are seeing with more than 230,000 more in employment in September than predicted is that the response we have chosen is cushioning us from the harshest edges of this pandemic. But this has not just been through good luck; it has been through planning, it has been through policy, it has been through a concerted effort to focus on protecting livelihoods, and we must continue with that.

At the election, we presented a plan that New Zealanders endorsed. It includes investing in our people to stay in work or to get work, supporting small businesses to thrive, job creation initiatives, programmes to bolster our exports, and preparing for a sustainable future. When COVID-19 struck—and I will always remember this very well—the Minister of Finance very, very quickly identified the need for us to keep people linked to their work and the dignity of their work; 1.7 million people were supported through the wage subsidy. Now, key for us in the delivery of that programme was speed, and to any worker from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD)—and I acknowledge you, Minister Sepuloni—who is listening to this, I thank you for the role that you played. Only a week ago, I met someone from a small business who said, “I remember filing for my application for the wage subsidy on a Friday, and going into the weekend and wondering if I would be able to keep my staff, my family—and that payment came through that weekend.” And that was because an MSD worker was working through every hour that we had to make sure we delivered for every business that needed that support, and I acknowledge them.

But some have been displaced. We know that disproportionate impact that we see on women, on Māori, on Pasifika, on young people. Now, while in some of the statistics we are starting to see job growth back in those areas, where traditionally we do see women, for instance, it is not enough for us simply to sit and wait for that return. We want to invest in our people and provide new pathways and new opportunities. That has meant, for us, looking on the lessons of the past.

When we last experienced the global financial crisis, we know the area that took a hit particularly was vocational training and apprenticeships. It is completely understandable that when an employer is thinking about how they will survive an economic downturn, they will, inevitably, look to release those team members who are their newest, their most inexperienced, and who they may still be training. They are our apprentices, and they are the very people that we need for our rebuild. We moved quickly on a wage subsidy scheme to support employers to keep their apprentices on, and they are. But, more than that, we also looked to encourage more people into apprenticeships, so we made them free. That simple act of sending a message that there is no barrier to training has meant that this year we have doubled the number of apprentices on last year. We have 14,000, and amongst that 5,000 women, but more needs to be done. I want to just acknowledge that we have also made vocational training in targeted areas free, that includes in parts of our health system. This is about trying to bring more diversity into vocational training and education, and that is something that we will keep working very hard on.

We also know that we need to do more to support our sole parents, more to support those who are carers and those who are on support payments in our system. That is why we've committed to reinstating the Training Incentive Allowance so that single parents, those with disabilities, or who are carers can aspire to degree-level training. It is something that should never have been removed—people in this House have benefited from that. It means lifting the abatement rate as we intend to do, and extending the Flexi-

wage scheme to support those who will be, and have been, disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

But all of this requires, of course, our trainees, those who are supporting themselves into new opportunities, to actually have jobs to move into. Now, in some areas, we have work; we just don't have the workforce. Our seasonal workforce is one of those areas. Now, whilst we are working very hard with the industry, and I acknowledge in some of those industries they have worked to make sure that they have wages that are decent and conditions that are good—but to everyone, I implore you: this is a chance for us to make the changes we've been talking about for years, to recruit New Zealanders into this work through decent wages, decent conditions, and decent opportunities. I thank those in the industry who are doing just this, and I implore the rest to come along with us.

The same goes for the areas we invest in to create opportunities. We want meaningful work that leaves a lasting legacy for New Zealand. In February—again, approximately a lifetime ago—we announced the New Zealand Upgrade. At that time we thought it represented the biggest upgrade spend that we would see in New Zealand. It included decarbonisation of parts of our public sector, investment in projects for every single State school in the country, massive transport upgrades that include public transport, walking, and cycling, and that it is the difference between us and the last National Government—we want people to have choice in their transport options, and our transport projects are not press releases; they are projects that we fund.

But then, of course, we saw COVID hit; we knew we needed to invest more. It was an opportunity to stimulate the investment in our communities that isn't about those large-scale projects but is as meaningful in its impact. Community ventures like libraries, like surf lifesaving clubs, community pools, and creative spaces—we have invested in them all. I will always remember one of the projects I had the chance to announce. I was in Tai Rāwhiti—

Hon Kiritapu Allan: Yeah.

Rt Hon JACINDA ARDERN: —for a very—I always know that there will be a positive response when I mention the East Coast in this House. I now expect, likewise, for many other parts of the country.

Kieran McAnulty: Give it a go.

Rt Hon JACINDA ARDERN: I was in Tai Rāwhiti, some distance from the Wairarapa, and they had been working for years to upgrade that community pool. They in that area have a well-utilised and well-loved olympic pool complex, but simple things like the fact that the changing rooms are not directly connected to the pool, so in the wintertime you have to make a mad, near-naked dash from the changing room to the pool—simple things that mean that that well-loved facility didn't look as well-loved as it could be. Now, that is a huge ask for a council with a rating base that was not growing. So that was an area where we knew we could create jobs but we could also invest in community by partnering to deliver that project. Now, when we announced both Midway Surf Lifesaving Club's upgrade and the olympic pool complex, people cried. We should never underestimate the impact of these projects and the legacy that, in a way, COVID will leave our communities because these are investments for jobs and for infrastructure and for legacy.

We have the opportunity to do the same with public housing now. I will for ever find it galling to be lectured by the Leader of the Opposition who left us a housing crisis, denied it was a housing crisis, and, I have to say, whose major response to that housing crisis—their major response to the housing crisis—was to sell State houses, to cut the public housing waiting list, and on the one thing that apparently would make all the difference, planning, they did absolutely nothing—nothing. So I do find it galling, and a big difference between this side of the House and that side of the House is we do not

believe that escalating house prices are a suitable part of an economic plan for growth. It is not—it is not. That is why we are not content with the experience that New Zealand is having right now. We will keep working, as we did in the last term.

We closed tax loopholes, we stopped foreign buyers, we started our plan, and we are on track to deliver more than 6,000 State houses. We have more consents that are being issued in Auckland since the 1970s and more houses than any Government has built since the 1970s. The sad fact is that if that National Party, when they were in office, built public houses at the rate we are, we would not have a housing waiting list right now. So we will continue that work on public housing. We will continue the work that has led to first-home buyers making up 25 percent of the market. But we are not content with that, so we will keep going.

We also have an opportunity in areas like, for instance, waste management, which will contribute to our climate goals; investment in water treatment, because in New Zealand, it is a national shame that we don't have safe drinking water everywhere; and, of course, the ongoing rebuild of schools and hospitals.

Small business is squarely part of our plan as well. During the election campaign, I remember the Leader of the Opposition dismissing taking action on things like merchant service fees. That just tells me a conversation has not been had, by that leader, with a retailer. This is a significant bugbear. It is not the only thing we will do, but it's not something to be trivialised. We will progress prompt payment, we will keep rolling out Business Connect, and the technological advancement we saw by our small businesses that adapted so rapidly in lockdown—we'll continue with those digital technology vouchers in the next term.

The same for our exporters. Already, of course, we've invested more than \$200 million to support our exporters into markets while our borders are closed. Our borders may be closed, but we want our goods and services to continue moving. I must acknowledge the work that, as trade Minister at the time, Minister Parker did to make sure that those trade flows continued. We are seeing growth in our export markets. Dairy, beef, fruit—kiwifruit is booming. All of that makes a huge difference right now when we are in the throes of recovery. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, of course, will be an important step. The Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations Plus will be ratified. The European Union free-trade agreement is clearly in our sights, as is an agreement with the UK. And our agreement on climate change, trade, and sustainability and our chair of APEC all present opportunities.

The last point I wanted to reflect on is that idea of using this opportunity to prepare for our future. We don't trade on our products alone; we trade on our brand. We trade on notions of trust, on quality, and on the environment. If we don't demonstrate that we understand the principles of kaitiakitanga, we suffer from that economically—not to mention the moral issue that we leave the next generation. Our response to COVID is an opportunity to hasten the pace on our environmental challenges. We already had an agenda for the restoration of our waterways, we're rolling out our Essential Freshwater programme, but our Jobs for Nature package helps us to hasten that and support our primary producers and communities as we go, with riparian planting, working on sedimentation, and even supporting with pest control.

At the same time, this is our chance also to expedite our work on climate change. We have said, of course, that the progress we made in the last term laid the foundation, but the job is not done. We stand proudly on a record of the zero carbon legislation, the Climate Commission and the carbon budgets they will produce, the ban on offshore oil and gas permits into the future, the establishment of a hydrogen road map, record investment in public transport, and He Waka Eke Noa, our historic agreement with the primary producers on our pathway to properly price emissions in the future. That was a

foundation, and I acknowledge the huge role that the Green Party played in the last Government in laying that foundation. Next, more progress on transport: vehicle emission standards, zero emission buses, bringing forward our goal of 100 percent renewable. We are not done. Our next generation cannot allow us to sit still when the climate crisis continues to move at pace—but more on that next week.

I want to finish on the issue of child poverty. I have to say, in the last term the most frequently used statistic to attack us in this House by the Opposition was actually the poverty statistics for the National Government's time in office. We still have not had the household income surveys that show the full impact of the Families Package, but undeniably—undeniably—that increase in the family tax credit, undeniably the introduction of the winter energy payment, the first return of a universal child payment, a general increase in benefits—not just one for families with parents and children, which is what the last Government did, but a general benefit increase—undeniably have made progress. But it is not enough; we've always said that. We have to keep going. Our children require it of us. So you will not hear satisfaction on this side of the House until you see us reach our goals around child poverty, which we are so committed to we legislated for them. But you will also hear us stand proudly on that record of progress. We will have an unrelenting focus not just on material hardship but on incomes, which the National Government refused to focus on.

These are some of the harshest times for this country, but as was said in the Speech from the Throne, this is also a time for unrelenting focus on consensus and change, bringing New Zealand with us as we face the challenges of tomorrow. I am confident that we can leave this place having made it better than we found it, and that is what we intend to do.

Hon MARAMA DAVIDSON (Co-Leader—Green): Tēnā koe e te Māngai o te Whare. Tēnā tātou katoa, ngā mema Pāremata katoa i roto i tēnei Whare. Ki ngā whānau, ngā hoa, ngā kaitirotiro kua haramai nei ki roto i tēnei Whare Pāremata, tēnā tātou, tēnā tātou, tēnā tātou katoa.

[Greetings, Mr Speaker. Greetings to all Members of Parliament in this House. To the families, the friends, and the observers who have arrived to Parliament today, greetings one and all.]

Mr Speaker, I want to add our congratulations on behalf of the Green Party also directly to you. Me, personally, I have enjoyed your firm, your mostly fair, your very entertaining style, and your deeply knowledgeable approach to maintaining the absolute chaos in this House. I did recall back to a time where, as I first entered this House as a fresh new MP—I think I had been in here for a whole entire five minutes, and I was reading my speech for a piece of legislation, a bill going through the House. It may have been day two for me. I recall fondly a little note from you telling me you will not tolerate me reading my speeches from my notes. I look forward to you having that same harshness to all these new MPs who have come into this House today, Mr Speaker. I still have that note up on my board, something I will always treasure that reminds me that you are wanting unique and genuine political debate and not to be so confined by the words we might have in front of us on paper.

So as I now look at my paper—I am proud to stand and speak on behalf of the Green Party of Aotearoa today. I felt it was worth starting by highlighting the founding charter of the Green Party of Aotearoa, where we start off by absolutely affirming Te Tiriti o Waitangi as our founding document. What that means for us also is that we are all accountable to the self-determination of hapū and iwi, that it is not simply just a founding document, that it involves actions and accountability and a relationship that all of us, certainly, here in this House are bound to.

Alongside our acknowledgment as a party to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it overhangs the principles that come underneath and as part of that work. It includes having wisdom and care for Papatūānuku and operating within an approach that she is able to sustain. It includes making sure that community decisions made hold the power at the level that is appropriate, that we are making sure that communities are leading on the issues that impact on them. It includes making sure that everyone has enough to live decent lives, and not just the few. It ensures making sure that all of those values are interdependent and connected to a society of non-violence, to a life where we achieve peace through justice. Right now it seems absolutely appropriate that we recall those values, those key founding kaupapa of the Green Party, as I stand in this House today.

I wanted to touch on the historic success of the Green Party on election night, because I cannot dismiss and cannot forget to mention the incredible volunteer support, the love from family members all across the country, the love from new supporters who were rising up to a positive vision of progressive change, not just for now but for generations ahead. It has never been done under MMP, where a smaller party not only maintains their 5 percent threshold after being in their first term of Government, but, in fact, we came back bigger and stronger. I am proud of the values that we put on the ground during our campaign.

I am proud also that for the first time in 20 years and for only the second time in history, the Greens now have another electorate in Auckland Central—woohoo! What Chlöe Swarbrick's campaign was able to prove is that when you have a grassroots campaign driven with inspiring and motivating values that people from across demographics and backgrounds can cling to, then, actually, people can come on board with that vision, and come on board they did. We absolutely congratulate Chlöe Swarbrick in her work.

We are fortunate to have expanded our caucus from the eight members we had last term to add three new members to a total of 10 members this term. I am delighted that my colleague Teanau Tuiono will bring his unique Pasifika voice, experience, and connections into this House and Parliament—absolutely. He will give leadership to a range of issues, including the impacts of climate change in the Pacific as well as closer to home.

Dr Elizabeth Kerekere also brings with her decades of lived experience, of strategic planning insights, of academic research and grit to represent the interests of many, many groups, including young people and rainbow communities.

Ricardo Menéndez March will bring his strength and experience as a grassroots campaigner and a connector of people. His passion for economic justice and equality for all couldn't be more critical right now, as we collectively face one of the harshest impacts and economic recessions that we have experienced in this lifetime.

So, historically, when the Green Party's political support has risen, it has come at the expense of our colleagues in the Labour Party, but not this time—not this time. I would like to take this moment to welcome the many, many, many, many, many, many, many new Labour MPs who are joining us this term. We look forward to working alongside you all.

Ki a rātou Te Paati Māori. Ahakoa kāore tēnei wā e noho ana, ka tika kua hoki mai rātou o Te Paati Māori ki tēnei Whare o te Whare Pāremata. Ko taku pirangi ki te mahi tahi ki a koutou o Te Paati Māori ki te whakamana i ngā take Tiriti. Nō reira, tēnā koutou.

[To those of Te Paati Māori. Even though this is not a sitting session, it is great that Te Paati Māori has returned to Parliament. I would like to work with Te Paati Māori on Treaty issues. Thank you.]

I acknowledge our literal new House neighbours in the ACT Party, and I am sure that David Seymour is happy to finally have some friends with him.

To the new streamlined version of the National Party, I fondly welcome you back.

Our campaign slogan at the election was simple: think ahead. Over the last term of Government, we knew that for every action we take, future generations will be holding us to account. Our focus has always been on ensuring that we are good ancestors, that our descendants will inherit more equal communities, an economy that is greener, and a natural world that thrives.

I want to now acknowledge the work of former Minister Eugenie Sage, who oversaw one of the largest expansions in conservation in recent decades and started us down the path of reducing our waste on this beautiful whenua of Aotearoa.

I want to acknowledge Julie Anne Genter, who helped secure billions in new investment for sustainable transport and ushered through historic changes to give women access to equal pay.

I want to acknowledge Jan Logie, under-secretary, who courageously initiated changes to how the Government addresses family violence and sexual violence. She lay the foundation that I am privileged to, and hope to, build off as a Minister for the first time.

Golriz Ghahraman—for her work in public and behind the scenes to lift the refugee quota, to improve access to democracy, and to strengthen the protection of human rights in terrorism law.

The Greens campaigned on becoming a constructive partner to a Labour-led Government, as well as pushing further and faster on our core issues. Our new cooperation agreement with Labour allows us to do just that. In the past three years, with just eight MPs, the Greens demonstrated it is possible to make significant policy gains outside of Cabinet. Much of the commentary in this building would have us believe that politics is a highly transactional business, that politics is just a world of constant horse trading and outmanoeuvring, that politics is a game played exclusively by cunning political operatives. It may not, however, come as a surprise that this is not how the Green Party tends to operate. Many of our biggest wins in the last term came from building relationships, building trust, and eventually building consensus on the best way forward. It's potentially not as exciting, obviously, but it works. It's how, outside of our confidence and supply agreement, the Greens were able to put an end to offshore oil and gas exploration, to secure two-thirds of a billion dollars to address family violence and sexual violence, put climate change back in the Resource Management Act, secure thousands of jobs for nature, and many more things. It is why, even with Labour holding a historic majority, it makes sense for the Greens to be a partner.

This Government will likely spend 15 years' worth of Budget allowances as we rebuild from the impacts of COVID-19, and the decisions we make this term will shape the future of our economy, our communities, and our planet for decades to come. It is also a time when we face other fundamental challenges to the wellbeing of our people and of future generations: housing affordability, inequality, climate change. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, we have just 10 years to halve climate-damaging emissions and protect this planet for future generations. Ten years is a very short time for any Government, at any point in time. This term, the big levers need to be pulled. It is this term that the downward trajectory of carbon emissions must begin. Governments cannot do what they did before and sit on our hands. It is time for action.

I'm proud that in the last three years the Government took more action on climate change than in the last 30 years combined. We passed the zero carbon Act, created the independent Climate Change Commission, and fixed the emissions trading scheme. Because of what we did last term, we now have the foundations in place for long-term, meaningful climate action. Now is the time to build on that and get every part of Government working to bring our emissions down. So we are excited to have James Shaw back to the role of climate change Minister to lead this work for what will be a critical three years for our planet.

It is a huge honour for me to take on the role of a Minister for the very first time. The prevention of family violence and sexual violence is personal for me, as it is for far too many New Zealanders. As the chief panellist on a nationwide inquiry into domestic violence and child abuse, it was clear to me how broad and deep the harm is, even when just one person is hurt. It shatters people's lives and whole communities. It is why this work is so important. It is work that has been at the heart of the Green Party for a long time. Last term, the amazing Jan Logie secured two-thirds of a billion dollars to rebuild a system that would both support survivors and prevent violence in the first place. We have so much more work to do now to ensure that our communities most affected by family violence and sexual violence are properly supported. We have work to do to help those on the front lines, like doctors and teachers, spot the tell-tale signs of family violence and intervene early, and we still have work to do to ensure our justice system ends the retraumatisation of survivors of sexual assault, which puts too many women off seeking justice in the very first place. This is not something one person, or I alone, can do. I know there are many Ministers and members of Parliament in this House and many people working in the community who have helped lead this important mahi for a very long time. I look forward to working with all of you.

Our cooperation agreement is unique in MMP history in that it allows us to play a constructive role to get good things done in Government while retaining an independent voice on key issues. Labour and the Greens agree on much. We have many shared values and goals. Where we may differ is our belief in the degree of change that is possible and the degree of change that is needed to meet the scale of the challenge. The election result delivered a clear message that people trust the Prime Minister and this Government to manage the risk of, and recovery from, COVID-19. That trust is deserved. This country's response to COVID-19 is a model for what is possible to achieve when we call on each other to come together for a common purpose. It is a model for what is possible when we meet unprecedented challenges with bold, courageous policies and big investments that can meet the moment, and it is a reminder that people are willing to accept change when the realities of inaction are clearly laid out and we are asked to act in our collective interest. Our world-leading response to COVID-19 should give everyone in this House hope for our collective ability to meet the current challenges of our time. It should be a model for how we confront the major challenges of this decade: housing affordability, the growing imbalance of wealth, and an unstable climate and loss of biodiversity.

Let's take housing. If we choose, we can be a country where homes are for living in, not just for wealthy people to make even more wealth. It is fair to say that today the unaffordability of housing is unprecedented. No economists, even, were predicting even a few months ago that we would still be watching house prices and rents soar in the midst of a recession off the back of a global pandemic. House prices have risen 20 percent in the last year, and they're expected to rise another 15 percent in the next. At the same time, people without assets have watched the median wage drop for the first time in history, and unemployment is up. We are now at a point in time where failing to meet the scale of this challenge risks opening up a wicked divide that will become impossible for future generations to close and to cross, a divide between the property-owning haves and have-nots. We should not accept a country where only the children of parents with property can afford to buy a home, or where rent in a cold, unhealthy home rises well faster than the average wage. COVID showed us that people are willing to make sacrifices big and small to take care of everyone. It is time for us to meet this unprecedented challenge with policies and investment that match the scale of the problem. Now feels like the time to be ruling in solutions that have not before been on the table.

I turn now to our social safety net, which was formed after another unprecedented moment in history, the Great Depression. It was a recognition that at any point in time,

the fickle current nature of our economy could find a person up against hard times. This concept has gone from abstract to real for many more people in the last year. COVID-19 has resulted in more than 70,000 people receiving income support in the last eight months. It's an experience of hardship that many thousands of other New Zealanders already understood. Our collective wellbeing as a country depends on each of us having enough to live with dignity. Yet today our social safety net is still set so low to the ground that it is hard for many people to ever get back up again. It is the position of our party that the minimum household income needs to be lifted so individuals and families can think about their future and not simply survive the day.

To climate change: when much of life is carrying on as normal in Aotearoa, it can be hard to keep in our mind's eye the risk that the COVID-19 virus poses. When this crisis began, however, we were fortunate that we did not need to see our hospitals overrun before believing that decisive action was needed. This is in large part thanks to the clear communication from the Government, health officials, and media, who clearly laid out the stark, real consequence of inaction. And we are fortunate that the images from elsewhere in the world, almost everywhere in the world, made visible the consequences of not going hard and going early.

If we are going to address other challenges we face, like the climate crisis, then we need to take a similar approach. On a still, clear day it can be hard to imagine the extreme changes that will unfold if we don't go hard and early to stop the pollution of our shared planet. Yet we also have images available to us of the consequences of inaction on climate change: unprecedented wildfires in Australia and the US, dying coral reefs in the Pacific, and extreme flooding here at home recently in Hawke's Bay, for example. We don't have to imagine the solutions either. They already exist. They are the compact, walkable towns and cities of Europe, the solar revolution in Germany, and the regenerative agricultural movement taking place on farms across Aotearoa. And did someone say, "Land back to indigenous peoples."? It might have been me.

If, as leaders, we are willing to bring the same urgency and clarity to our communications for climate change that we did for COVID, then we make the bold change we need possible. While this is the beginning of a new Parliament, it is mercifully nearly the end of 2020. It has been a difficult year and I recognise that for many those hard times are not over. But it is during the toughest time that we realise what we are capable of.

This year alone has shown us that we can meet unprecedented challenges by being bold, courageous, and uniting behind a common goal. Together, we have kept each other safe and taken steps we could not have imagined taking before. It is my hope that this year redefines what we think is possible in the next and in this coming term. It has been my privilege to present for the Green Party our first speech for this parliamentary term. Nō reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

DAVID SEYMOUR (Leader—ACT): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise on behalf of ACT in reply to Her Majesty's speech. I want to acknowledge my fellow MPs, both new and old; and fellow party leaders; and Marama Davidson, for saying I'd be pleased to have some friends in the House. I want to tell Marama Davidson I've always had friends in this House, but now I've got nine I actually agree with. I also want to acknowledge those people who sent us here. To my neighbours in the Epsom electorate who sent me here for a third time, it's a great honour to represent you, and my first job has always been to serve as your local constituency MP. To the 219,031 New Zealanders who gave their party vote to ACT, my fellow ACT MPs—welcome, folks—will be your voice in this Parliament standing for those who want to make a difference in their own lives and the lives of those they care about, not be fodder for politicians and the grand Government schemes of which we've heard so much today already.

We're proud ACT MPs to stand and speak freely in this House. We're proud New Zealanders to be part of a country that just elected its 53rd Parliament freely and peacefully in 166 years. Pitifully few countries can come close to—let alone match—that record. And, unfortunately, while we cherish our democracy at home, it is in retreat abroad. I was born in 1983. Mr Speaker, hello. It won't be lost on you that you were nearly sitting in this House by that time. The first thing I recall seeing on television, besides *Play School*, was people attacking a wall covered in graffiti. Sometimes you just know something's important, even if you're not sure what it is. And those images are seared on my mind. And we celebrated for two decades the fall of that wall in Berlin. Fukuyama said it was the end of history. Helen Clark said that we lived in a benign strategic environment. That was then; fast forward today and we watch the walls go back up around Hong Kong.

These are just anecdotes, but there's many to count. And Freedom House, who have been counting these things for decades, tell us that since the great financial crisis, democracy has been in decline around the world. Fewer countries practise it now than they did 12 years ago and those that do are taking it less seriously than they used to. Too many people around the world decide that democracy is not working for them and they elect populists and strongmen. Sometimes it's quite amusing. The Italians at one point decided to elect a comedian; or my personal favourite, the Ukrainians, who took up an actor who played a fictional president in a television drama and made them their actual president. It's less funny when we remember the iron law of international relations: that the strong do as they can while the weak suffer as they must. We as a small island democracy cannot afford to ignore this trend that is unfolding around the world. And the question we must ask is why? Why, after a resurgence of democracy after the Cold War, do people turn away from it? Well, there's lots of theories. The internet circulates fake information, probably. Globalisation creates winners and losers, sure. The Russians are interfering in our elections. The media are dying. And so it goes on.

But I've got a better answer, which is that democratic Governments just are not solving hard problems for their people. The big promise of Western Governments for the last 80 years has been: give us a third to half your income. Let us regulate all the property we haven't taxed off you and we'll solve your problems. People look around the world and they see that it just ain't happening. They see productivity growth is in the tank. We just aren't working smarter year on year. Some people around the world find their wages go backwards. We spend more time each year trying to follow the Government's rules and regulations and less time providing for ourselves and our families.

Demographics are horrible. We're set up for a Millennial-Boomer civil war. It's hard for younger people to share the boomers' optimism when they can't afford a home and their taxes are paying for their retirement. And the welfare State that we're in simply does not work when you have an underclass failed by State education and trapped by State welfare. People look at these results and they no longer see shining cities on the hill, but seek other much more dangerous models. And this matters not only for our security as a small island nation but because we have the same problems.

I start my Address in Reply speech with this observation because New Zealand needs to ask what it can do to change this world that is perilous for us. There are not enough of us to change the world by force, but we have always been an exceptional nation: children of pioneers, people who have travelled further for a better tomorrow than any humans have ever migrated in history, a people who can set, by the power of example, great change off around the world. That's what the ACT Party seeks to do in this Parliament. The problem that we have is that right now our Government does not offer positive, practical solutions to our problems. We are not seeking to be a beacon of light that can actually save freedom and democracy from our place at the bottom of the Earth. Instead, we have our own brand of South Pacific populism powered by smiles and slogans.

The COVID period shows a laundry list of Government failing to act efficiently. No country entered the COVID period with better advantages than us. There's a few countries that are more remote. There's some with a younger, more spread-out population. There's some that are more sophisticated, have more wealth and institutions and better healthcare. But no country had the combination of advantages with which New Zealand entered the COVID period. We were told that we went hard and went early when we were the 63rd country to get a case. We were told the policy was test, test, test, when in truth the Government could test only 1,500 a day. We were told that there was no shortage of personal protective equipment when health professionals, including those I represent in Epsom, were on TV every night saying they had none in their hospital. We were told to be kind while absurd rules separated fathers from seeing their firstborn, and even wives from being supported as they miscarried with their supporters outside pacing in the car park. We were told it was illegal to go out when no legal instrument requiring that existed. We were told butchers and greengrocers were dangerous places, but you couldn't catch COVID at a dairy. I have constituents who were told they cannot return to say goodbye to dying loved ones because it's for the public good and yet the Minister of Health said testing the people who work at the border for COVID was a "big lever to pull".

We're told the Government's contact tracing app will help isolate any outbreaks and yet so few people use it as to render it completely ineffectual. And so it goes on. At every turn, the Government's COVID response has looked like *Dad's Army*, saved only by our isolation and the spirit of our people. And this matters because we're about to enter what might be called COVID 2, the vaccine edition. This month, the giants of the pharmaceutical industry have put their reputations on the line, saying they're going to deliver 90 percent - plus effective vaccines by the million within months. How will New Zealand navigate COVID 2? Will it be the same hapless approach that we took last time? Will we say our approach to risk is that we won't take any under any circumstances? Will the Government decision-making remain murky and unpredictable with businesses forced to just guess what might happen next?

That can't be the best we can do. Imagine if the Government took an open, transparent, and proactive approach to managing the COVID world where there is a vaccine. Imagine if it published scenarios to answer questions such as when do they expect the vaccine? How will it be distributed and applied, and under what circumstances will we start opening borders and to which countries first, based on the risk that they pose? The world is about to drastically change and the Government hasn't even tried to communicate how we will change with it. Yet again, there's no briefing paper, there's no scenarios set out. We're flying blind, and not only is it an injury to business but it's an insult, because you get the feeling they think they're popular enough that they don't need to say.

Then there's the economic management. The IMF forecasts that our incomes will be lower in 2025 than in 2019 per capita. That's extraordinary. The Government will spend nearly half of all money earned in New Zealand this year. Then there's the debt problem. Make no mistake, we squandered our natural advantages in the COVID period and mortgaged our future to boot. This can't be as good as it gets. Imagine if we were truly world leading instead of just a bit lucky.

The ACT Party says that it's not too late to follow those who have done well. We should follow Taiwan in having an epidemic response unit, a specialist multidisciplinary public and private sector collaboration, to make sure that we are actually responding intelligently. We should have Government's role as being a referee, setting the rules and making sure they're followed, rather than trying to do everything itself—and badly.

We should take a proactive approach to managing risk. Right now we isolate people from COVID-ridden countries, with the same criteria, right beside people coming from countries that have no COVID whatsoever. We could use better technology, but

unfortunately we are virtually technophobic at a Government level and have that hopeless tracing app that is beyond ineffective.

Finally, we should compare ourselves with the best. We should stop living in a state of State-induced fear. We should instead be saying to people, “How can we be the best in the world?”, not “Aren’t you lucky you’re not the worst?”

Will we transform our approach from getting lucky to getting smart in COVID too? Well, that is up to the Government, but our role in this Parliament as an Opposition party is to make helpful suggestions where possible and make constructive criticisms when necessary.

But COVID is something that, thankfully, if nothing else, will pass. The longer-term problems that the entire West faces are things like productivity. The real miracle is not that we have anaemic productivity growth in New Zealand but that anything gets produced at all in light of Government policy. I know there’s some people who think productivity growth doesn’t matter. Well, it matters to so many people. Let me pick one: Bella Powell, the brave 15-year-old with cystic fibrosis, who needs drugs that are funded overseas but not here. Ultimately, it’s a productivity issue. I hope the Prime Minister and this Government will keep their campaign trail promise to do a proper review of the rules of Pharmac in Government—very pleased to see them take it up. But, ultimately, if we don’t have the funds, then no funding model will fund the drugs that the Bellas of the world need.

You know, employers I’ve always regarded as good people. They assemble investment, ideas and products, and customers together to create, for people, jobs. You might think that’s something that a Government would encourage; yet this Government treats employers like a cash cow for carrying out the social policies they fantasised about as student politicians. Minimum wage increases beyond productivity growth are only going to destroy jobs. Five more days of sick leave for no obvious policy reason other than to reward people who might vote for the Government at the expense of people I suspect they cynically think won’t. A new public holiday for purely political reasons. *[Interruption]* As a young man who runs a very successful ice cream shop in Christchurch—Duncan Webb will be interested to know—recently said to me, “The cost of those policies will be \$150,000 to \$200,000 for our business.” That man said to the Prime Minister herself, would she like to have him employ fewer people or raise prices, sell less, and employ fewer people? That’s the reality for these businesses.

Now the Government wants to bring back 1970s-style national awards. They want unions to negotiate with a national employer group to set wages for a whole industry, for the whole country, regardless of who it is or what work exactly or whatever. The first problem they’ve got is there’s no national employer group to negotiate with. The second is that this is not actually the 1970s. The economy is vastly more complex and jobs more variable than they were then. But the third problem is that the national awards scheme didn’t work then either. That’s why we got rid of it—because we were struggling under the weight of the bureaucracy and the inefficiency of that archaic scheme.

Then they tell us they want to raise income tax, and the most interesting thing about the Government’s messaging around the income tax raise is they say it will only affect a small percentage of people. Well, hang on. Since when was it OK to pick on people if there aren’t very many of them? Well, the funny thing is this Government is happy to pick on people so long as they are doing something, so long as they are successful. The values it sends—no wonder we’ve got a productivity problem. We tell our kids to study hard and listen to their teacher, do their homework, get good grades, and turn that into jobs that turn into careers that make them prosper in the long term, and what this Government says, if you do all that and you save some money and you invest it carefully—if you do all of that, then we won’t just tax you more; we’ll have an extra tax

rate to tax you even harder. It's tall poppy syndrome in the tax code. That is the values that this Government promotes, and that's one of the reasons we have a productivity problem.

Then they go after the sectors. You know, farmers in rural New Zealand are the only people who have a job that is to be a conservationist. Their revenue and their income next year depends on how well they look after their land and their animals this year. They have local rules and community cooperation to deal with local problems and manage outliers, and it works. But, oh no, this Government comes along and from on high imposes rules that are unworkable, that have never passed cost-benefit analysis, and that will put cost on to the rural sector for almost no environmental benefit whatsoever.

Then there's energy and resources. This Government seems to be determined to stop New Zealanders extracting natural resources—unless they do it in Australia. The announcement that the oil and gas exploration will be banned will not reduce carbon emissions, but it sends a signal. No papers, no consultation, not even a Cabinet process—just “We're at the podium”-ocracy and “We're going to do it from the podium”. That sends a signal to the world about what sort of place New Zealand is to invest. So much of our valuable minerals lie tied up in the Department of Conservation estate—areas of no conservation value, that could be extracted—while DOC itself is short of revenue to conserve the parts of its estate that it should be conserving. It's nuts. As for getting permission from the Environmental Protection Authority for relatively straightforward projects, forget it. Go try your luck in Australia.

Then there's our global links. What about the next generation, who want jobs that are interesting, globally connected, and well paying? Well, there's foreign investors who want to send money and know-how to our country to help raise our productivity. It beggars belief, but oh no, we've got a special Government department to stop them doing it called the Overseas Investment Office. What's worse, this Government, in the middle of COVID, when it says it wants a recovery, has actually erected more barriers to foreign investment under the fog of COVID-19.

Then there's new technology. I have students come to me saying we can do amazing things with genetics. We can actually make cows that emit less methane, a useful thing for New Zealand. But oh no, our medieval and superstitious laws mean as soon as they want to take it out of the lab, they'd be better to take themselves off to California. And you can tell the same story about financial technology. We are so hostile to technologies that would raise our productivity, it's no wonder we are anaemic and lacking in them. This can't be as good as it gets.

But imagine if we made productivity growth one of our main goals—not saying, “Oh, we've got other measures, wellbeing, etc.”—if we said we actually want to raise productivity in this country. What if we had a regulatory responsibility bill that forced politicians to ask the questions: what problem are we trying to solve, what are the costs and benefits of this law, who pays the cost and receives the benefits? Imagine, if we started doing that, how much better the regulatory environment would be for investment, jobs, and growth in this country.

And we should go further. We should say that investments originating in friendly democratic OECD countries needn't pass through the Overseas Investment Office; they need only be screened to check for their security status. Imagine if we set out the friendliest environment in the world for investment, jobs, and growth.

But then there's housing. This Government was elected to solve the housing problem. I actually thought the Government might change in 2017, when I knocked on so many doors and people said “I love the way the housing market's going, except I've got these kids and I don't know how it's going to go for them.” I recently saw a tweet that summed up how that's worked out three years later. It said “The working class, they asked, ‘Can

you make housing affordable?’ National Party: no. Labour Party: no, heart emoji, rainbow emoji, aroha.” That pretty much sums up the response that people have got. The Government’s flagship policy of KiwiBuild was so embarrassing I almost feel that it’s kind of not cricket to bring it up in this new Parliament, but the disaster was completely predictable because the problem was a shortage of serviced land, and even builders working for the Government cannot build affordable homes on \$700,000 sections.

Then they went after the foreign buyers, Chinese-sounding names. Remember that? Then they wanted to subsidise some buyers. Now they want to extend the so-called brightline test for a second time. You know, trying to end a shortage of houses with a brightline test is like trying to end a famine by taxing food. The reason that we have unaffordable housing is that the price of a section in Auckland went up 900 percent in 25 years. Unless we solve that problem, we’re not going anywhere. And the common element in all of the Government’s policy solutions is that they’re not designed to solve the underlying problem; they are designed to make sure that people who might vote for them are more likely to be in line to buy a limited supply of houses than people who won’t. This can’t be as good as it can get.

Imagine if we had honest conversations about the real problems with our housing market and we actually took the Productivity Commission’s *Better urban planning* report, not the Randerson report, a report designed to repeal and replace the Resource Management Act with something designed to get homes built. And then we took Infrastructure New Zealand’s city and regional partnerships and had 30-year partnerships between central government, that has the cash, and local government, that does the planning, to get infrastructure built. And then we removed councils from the building consent game, because there’s no good reason to think that a council would know whether a building was being built properly or not. If we took the steps, we could solve one of the big problems that all Western countries are facing.

And that takes us to demographics, because nobody wants to spend their life fighting their parents or indeed their children. The property market is only half the problem that we have. We have a problem with housing, but we also have a problem that every time Treasury publishes a long-term fiscal outlook, it becomes obvious to us that we can’t afford to continue with the healthcare and superannuation policy settings to which we’re currently committed. There’s two ways out of this. We either fight and tax each other the way that some parties would like to or we grow our productivity and we build homes and we actually go forward as generations together. It’s that simple. We either grow together or we tax each other and we fight each other. Imagine if instead of the current obsession with redistribution, we had an obsession with growth for all generations.

Then there’s our welfare State. I’d go as far as to say it’s a total failure. And the reason I say that is that it doesn’t work—well, there’s people who don’t really need it and they would be fine anyway. I dare say, if the welfare State disappeared from the Epsom electorate tomorrow, we’d fundraise for our schools, we would look after our neighbours, and we would actually be fine. To us, it’s mostly a cost, but we wouldn’t mind if we knew it was giving people up and down this country an equal shot at life.

The truth is, we had 300,000 people on a benefit before COVID struck. The truth is, we have one of the highest recidivism rates coming out of our prisons of any country in the world. We send unskilled and often illiterate former prisoners down the road with 300 bucks and say, “By the way, don’t get in touch with your former associates.” Then we have one of the greatest inequities in educational attainment in the developed world, and we have opportunities to do things about that.

In fact, we did in the form of charter schools. You know what this Government did? It closed them down one day and reopened them the next with only two changes. One, they no longer had to report on their performance and, two, they did have to use union

contracts. Isn't that disgraceful? The Government that puts children at the centre of everything put labour relations at the centre of the most important investment in the future of our country. This can't be as good as it gets. Imagine if instead we chose to put every family in charge of their share of the education budget and let them purchase a tailored education to get the best potential out of every single child.

Imagine if we retooled our welfare State and used electronic income management to make sure the benefits actually go to the kids that it's supposed to be all about. And imagine if we made our prisons learning centres where early release was contingent on upskilling and preparing for life outside. That would be the policy of a country that wished to lead the world.

I should make a couple of comments about things that weren't in the Speech from the Throne, and I hope that omission was deliberate. The proposed naked power grab where a party that wins a seat would not get its full representation, where Debbie Ngarewa-Packer would not resume a seat in this House because her party didn't make the 5 percent threshold. That is naked, partisan, and disgraceful. The only time electoral laws should change is if there is a genuine public problem to be solved. To take away full representation for parties that win a seat just because of a threshold is undemocratic and an affront to those who voted for a particular party.

Then there's the question of free speech. All of the problems that I've talked about today are a footnote to a bigger problem that we face across the Western World, and that is the ability to talk through our problems without being cancelled, de-platformed, and shouted down by the mob. Now, there is something cultural going on in New Zealand and actually around the Western World at the moment, where people find it harder to express themselves and disagree civilly. I think that is a real shame.

There's lots of theories about why it is. Maybe it's the internet, it's parenting, it's smaller family sizes—people don't have as much biff with their siblings—who knows? But one thing that would make it much, much worse is if this Parliament decided to start legislating what can and can't be said based on the subjective criteria of offence, because once you can be punished on subjective criteria for your political views, we no longer have freedom of speech and conscience. We no longer enjoy the humanity that each of us has the right to think our thoughts and express them so long as we don't incite or threaten violence. We have mob rule. Minorities should care about this, because people who are popular and in the middle don't need free speech. It's those who are different who need to call on its defence and have done throughout our history.

It is critical that this House upholds free speech, and if this Government decides to legislate it away with so-called hate speech laws, I can tell you the ACT Party will rally this country and bring a citizens-initiated referendum to overturn those laws, because they are too important to our culture and our ability to be human and solve our problems.

The free and democratic world needs to wake from the slumber in which it's been since the Cold War. We are losing out there and that is a real threat to New Zealand, and we're losing because we fail to solve hard problems. This Parliament cannot afford to settle for its own form of, kind of, South Pacific populism powered by smiles and slogans. We need to look into our future and confront hard challenges that face our country. That means we need to go all out to solve the problem of anaemic productivity growth. We need to make it easier to develop property and build homes, and we need to retool our welfare State so it actually works for those who really need its help. We ain't going to do it simply by taxing more, regulating more, and using other people as fodder for the schemes of politicians. We must restore the independence, dignity and self-responsibility of every single New Zealander and be a beacon to the world of what democratic countries can achieve. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Debate interrupted.

SPEAKER'S RULINGS

Address in Reply Debate—Maiden Speeches

SPEAKER: It was my intention at this stage to call the Māori Party, but I think it is worth outlining to the House my response and some of the things which have led up to the situation we faced. The actual technical Standing Order issue that occurred earlier when I interrupted the speech from the co-leader of the Māori Party when he was attempting to move a motion is very simple: when there's a motion on the floor, you cannot get up and start moving another one. There are processes to go through, and that's very clear.

There has been through this week an ongoing discussion around whether or not the co-leaders of the Māori Party could have two speeches each in the Address in Reply debate. It's been made clear that the current rules don't allow for that. It was a matter that was discussed at the Business Committee, and the offer was made to the Māori Party for each of the co-leaders to have 15-minute speeches, starting now, recognising both their maiden status and the fact that they are leaders of non-specified parties. That was the approach that was taken, I think, with David Seymour in 2014, so there's precedent and prior precedent for that. It's become clear that that was not acceptable, and, therefore, I presume that is the reason that the members walked out.

I think it would be of value, because there is not long but some important correspondence around this matter, for me to seek leave to table the correspondence between the Clerk's Office, myself, and the co-leaders of the Māori Party on this issue. Is there any objection to that? There appears to be none.

Documents, by leave, laid on the Table of the House.

Behaviour in the Chamber—Dress Code

SPEAKER: There's one further matter that I want to refer to, and it was referred to, or alluded to, by the Hon James Shaw yesterday in his comments of congratulations to me. It goes to dress codes in the Parliament, which are set out on page 151 of *McGee* and also referred to in Speaker's ruling 17/7. The essence of the rules for dress in this Parliament is that they should be business attire, and while they've been expressed in different ways over the years—and, in fact, when I was first a member, the rules applied to male members of Parliament and not to women, because the earlier rules didn't anticipate the possibility of women being members of Parliament, even at the stage when I was first a member of Parliament. But they have been changed to this—to “business attire”.

In the 1980s, when I was first a member and before we had air conditioning in this Chamber, it was the practice for gentlemen to be allowed to remove their jackets when it was warm. That was later rescinded because it never quite—well, while the political temperature might have got hot, the physical temperature didn't reach the heights that it used to before the air conditioning.

But, in my opinion, what has changed since 1984 is the interpretation in most businesses in New Zealand as to what business attire is, and for those reasons, I think it is appropriate to review the interpretation that Speakers have been taking. I intend to do that over the summer break, and I want to invite members to write to me individually with their views on that. I'm not going to take a poll on it, but I'd like to hear reasons and reasoning.

People will also be aware that, with permission, traditional dress—most often from Pasifika communities, but sometimes from others—has been worn during maiden speeches and at other times, and we've managed to adjust our rules for that. I am prepared, on an individual basis, to extend that a little bit for the maiden speakers, but I do want to

make absolutely clear that until we have a substantial interpretation, I'm not going to allow change by attrition. So there's an invitation to respond to me, but until then the rules should be obeyed. Thank you.

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Debate resumed.

Hon KELVIN DAVIS (Deputy Leader—Labour): Tēnā koe, Mr Speaker. This morning, when I gave the opening mihi I acknowledged you as the Speaker of the House. I'd just like to take this opportunity to also acknowledge Adrian Rurawhe as the Deputy Speaker, the Hon Jenny Salesa as an Assistant Speaker, and also the Hon Jacqui Dean in her role as an Assistant Speaker as well.

Also in that speech I did say that we do have our differences as politicians, but I think we all have the best interests at heart and that we should all be working for the benefit of all New Zealanders. I also just want to take the opportunity to acknowledge the two members of Parliament who gave their maiden speeches this afternoon, and just a couple of points. Arena Williams, I'd like to acknowledge her as an inspiration for young Māori women and young Māori mothers. The line in her speech that really stuck for me is when she said that students in schools she'd visited liked the fact that they saw a person that looked and spoke and sounded like her.

I'd just like to also acknowledge Ibrahim Omer. Now, I don't know if in this House I have ever heard a more inspirational or emotional maiden speech. To know that somebody can come from such hardship from another country and overcome all the hurdles and barriers that he has to become a member of Parliament in New Zealand—I think it shows the tenacity and the character of the man in the first instance, but also what a country of opportunity New Zealand is. I really do want to acknowledge Ibrahim. I found his speech incredibly emotional and I just really want to acknowledge him.

I also acknowledge Dr Shane Reti. Now, if you happen to be in the Bay of Islands and drive from Kawakawa around what is known as the Old Russell Road towards Russell, about 30 minutes away—you have to go through farmland and an unsealed gorge—you come to the little valley of Waikare. The people of that valley are Te Kapotai and there's also Ngāti Pare. I acknowledge the honour that Dr Shane Reti has brought on the hapū of Te Kapotai, as well as his iwi of Ngāti Wai, being the deputy leader of the National Party. I'd just like to restate that, and it also occurred to me later on that I, too, have—my great-great-grandmother came from that very same valley, and so it's probably unique that the deputy leader of the National Party and the deputy leader of the Labour Party both hail from the same marae. As well, Willow-Jean Prime comes from that marae, as does Peeni Henare. So I'd just like to acknowledge our whanaunga from Te Kapotai and the valley of Waikare.

On election night, the country spoke and what they said is they wanted strong and stable Government. There was also an endorsement of the kind and compassionate leadership of the Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, and acknowledgment of the way she has led us through the COVID-19 epidemic. They also said that they appreciated that there was a Government there that had cushioned New Zealanders from the worst edges and effects of COVID. But also Māori spoke, and we're very proud to have retained six of the seven Māori electorates. But across all of those Māori electorates we received over 60 percent endorsement from our Māori people. It was a very proud night for our Māori caucus, and an acknowledgment of the work that we had achieved over the last three years.

Our Māori caucus increased from 13 up to 15, and 13 was the largest ever Māori caucus in any party. Well, we've just increased that. But we didn't just increase it through the

Māori vote, and I'd really like to acknowledge those Māori MPs who actually won general seats: the Hon Kiritapu Allan, who won the East Coast, and has become a Minister, and I'd like to acknowledge Arena Williams, who won the seat of Manurewa; Shanan Halbert, who won the seat of Northcote; Willow-Jean Prime, who won the seat of Northland; and also Jo Luxton, who won the seat of Rangitata.

But I'm not just here to say, "Wow, look at us." Winning those seats means that we have an obligation to our people. Winning those seats means that we need to make sure that we do continue to improve outcomes not just for our Māori people in the Māori seats but also for Māori in the general seats and for all New Zealanders in those general seats. It also goes to show that, yes, as Māori we can do anything. There was also, once upon a time, when I was the only Labour MP north of the Harbour Bridge, and I'd just like to acknowledge the fact that I don't know what to do with myself now that north of the Harbour Bridge we have Vanushi Walters in Upper Harbour, we have Shanan Halbert in Northcote, we have Willow-Jean Prime in Northland, we have Marja Lubeck based in Rodney, and, of course, myself in Te Tai Tokerau.

Dr Deborah Russell: Emily in Whangārei.

Hon KELVIN DAVIS: Emily in Whangārei—that was a fantastic win for the Labour Party. I just want to actually acknowledge a little bit more about Emily. We went to a tangi last week of one of our dear Labour Party people, and I just want to talk quickly about that man very shortly. But Emily came along and said, "OK, so what do I need to do?" I said, "Well, the best thing you can do is go into the kitchen and say, 'How can I help?'" So she did just that. I've got to admire her courage for going into this situation that she's not familiar with, and she put aside the fact that she's Dr Emily Henderson, a lawyer, and said to the people of the marae there, "How can I help?" She spent probably over two days, maybe 30-odd hours, in there, just peeling spuds, washing dishes. It's a real lesson to everybody in the House that if we just humble ourselves and go in and be servants to the people, we'll get the recognition, because the people spoke so highly of her. To all members of the House, I'd say just go in and adopt your local marae and become part of the community. But don't sit there in the powhiri, making out, "Yeah, I'm the big MP from your local area." Go out the back and help the people. It will make a big difference.

Rudy Taylor was the man that passed away. He was a friend of mine, he was a mentor, and he was a supporter. We talked, we joked, and we argued. In my office, I had a photo of Rudy at Waitangi. It was a photo just of his hands holding his tukutuku. I hung it above my meeting table. It was a constant reminder to me of where I come from, who I represent, and, most of all, who I don't want to disappoint. And that is, again, a message for all of us as members of Parliament: we are there to represent the people who elected us, and we cannot disappoint them. Rudy was a kind man, and the stories that we shared at his tangi were of his kindness, his strength, his loyalty, and his love for Te Tai Tokerau. It will be the memory of my good friend that will continue to keep me grounded. It will be the life of this Ngāpuhi leader that will keep me inspired. He's one of the people that encouraged me to do things for our people.

If I look at some of the achievements that we've made in the last three years, and I can start rattling them off in Māori education—for example, Te Ahu o te Reo Māori is a programme that's going to see us train 40,000 educators by 2025 to integrate te reo Māori into their curriculum. Te Kawa Matakura is a leadership course for young Māori that will see them achieve degree level and help them to go on to be leaders in their communities. Te Hurihanganui—in Porirua yesterday we launched that—this is to address racism in our schools, even though it's based around the Māori kaupapa, the messages go broader to racism around all cultures. There's work that we've done with the kōhanga reo. The issues around kōhanga reo—they were allowed to wallow for nine years—we're starting

to address them, and we've got them over \$200 million in the last three years. But more so than the money, what's more important is the relationships that we have formed with them.

So we're all in here to make a difference, and we must not forget that. We must not forget that there are people out there who voted for us, they put their faith in us, and they believe in us, and we must live up to that mandate that we're all given as members of Parliament. Nā reira, tātou mā huri rauna i tō tātou Whare, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, kia ora mai anō tātou.

[Finally, to each and every one of you in our House, thank you one and all.]

Dr SHANE RETI (Deputy Leader—National): Thank you, Mr Speaker, and, firstly, tēnā koe to you and congratulations. To all my colleagues in this House: Kia ora mai tātou. Tēnā koe tōku whanaunga, Kelvin. Tēnā koe mō ngā kupu ora. Tēnā koe.

[Thank you all. To my relation, Kelvin, thank you. Thank you for your kind words. Thank you.]

In 1832, US Senator William L Marcy, effectively, said: “To the victor lies the spoils.” And so it is with this Government, and I congratulate them both for the privilege they have and the direct responsibility they now carry. I am of a view that the spoils of the victory are not Cabinet positions or ministerial warrants, but rather the spoils are actually the hopes and aspirations of New Zealanders. It is this that we as an Opposition will hold the Government to account for. In this reply, I will highlight points of accountability across the children and health portfolios, I will present the Government's 10-day scorecard on transparency, and, finally, I will show how we have hit the ground running and sharpened an accountability tool in a way that I don't think this Government has fully appreciated.

I will start with health and warn this Government up front, here is the headline coming towards them in three words: save our DHBs. One of the sentinel actions that this Government has committed to is a blinded commitment to consolidate our DHBs. When DHBs are merged, the local voice is diminished. This has been done before, and while reinventing the wheel can sometimes bring back the best, it usually reinvents the bad. Those of us who have worked under Regional Health Authorities will remember how consolidation tramples the voice of the regions, which are simply lost in the challenges of big cities.

The DHBs we are concerned for include Northland, Lakes, Tairāwhiti, Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Whanganui, Wairarapa, Nelson Marlborough, West Coast, and South Canterbury. We challenge the Government, then, to answer the following six questions. Will Northland lose its DHB and be merged with Waitematā? Will Lakes lose its DHB and be merged with Waikato? Will Tairāwhiti lose its DHB and be merged with Bay of Plenty and Hawke's Bay? Will Taranaki, Whanganui, and MidCentral all lose their localness and be merged as one entity? Will Wairarapa lose its DHB and be merged with the Hutt? Finally, will Nelson Marlborough, West Coast, and South Canterbury all lose their DHBs in a merger with Canterbury? Which DHBs will go?

Here is the challenge to Labour MPs in these regions: good luck explaining to your constituents why a Labour Government is taking their DHBs. We heard backbench Labour MPs stand on the campaign trail and offer bold promises around how they will fight for their DHB. Well, watch the arrogant machinery of a second-term Labour Government trample your feigned and naive backbench resistance as you are whipped to a new-found evangelism for centralisation and control. Mark my words, the spin will be “better access to specialist services” and “a sustainable health system”, which is all code for less and less. Why would we have faith in the ability of this Government to undertake such change when, over three years managing health, they have indeed spent more but delivered less?

My final word on DHBs is to reflect not only the DHBs that will go, but the mega-DHBs that will be created, and ask how nimble and flexible can a mega-DHB be? How many jobs will be lost? How much money will be spent on new layers of bureaucracy? Well, we can actually model the answer with a similar experiment in the tertiary sector from this Government that has removed industry training organisations, moved apprentices back to polytechnics, and formed one mega-polytechnic. Can we expect the same with mega-DHBs? Will there be at least 11 new chief executives, \$267 million in new cost in a single management layer, and official advice ignored when it states reform is unlikely to achieve the desired goals with extreme impact. Can we expect the new health Minister to bring the same experience from the Ngāpuhi Treaty settlement where he came in as the new broom, spent a lot of money, broke relationships, swept away years of work on *Maranga Mai*, and then left Ngāpuhi worse off and without a mandate? Is that what we can expect in health? Here, again, is the forewarning: save our DHBs.

I want to speak to a new portfolio responsibility: children and specifically child poverty. No bold child poverty claims in the Speech from the Throne this time. No targets, no numbers, just a weak slogan that, in the area of child poverty, “The Government will be guided by its values.” No one even knows what that means. And so different from the first three years when there were numbers and targets. On 5 September 2017, the incoming Labour Government said, “We will lift 100,000 children out of poverty.” But in February this year, their media release was 14,800—a long way from the 100,000—a broken promise to children. Three independent reports this year and three failures for a Labour Government with the tools of office and big promises. Their target is: 2021, 10.3 percent of houses in material deprivation. That’s the target that we’re watching: 10.3 percent.

I’ll turn now to the 10-day transparency scorecard I alluded to earlier. Note also: no big statements from the throne today about an open and transparent Government—nothing here today. I’ll sample transparency as an example of how focused we are to be an effective Opposition. The day after the election, we hit the ground running. There was work to do because, on Sunday the 18th at 1 p.m., surprisingly, there was another community coronavirus case. So we got to work. Using the tools we have, we swung into action and, from 17 October to 27 October, we generated more than 20 Official Information Act requests (OIAs). I will speak to 10 of those that I have some visibility on. All 10 OIAs generated in the first 10 days of this Government were to be answered by yesterday. Here, then, is the 10-day transparency scorecard for this Government’s response to OIA requests. As of yesterday, only one of the 10 requests had been successfully completed in time without extensions or transfers, 40 percent—nearly half—were overdue, 30 percent had been extended with very short notice. In the first 10 days of this Government, then, the performance for transparency using OIA requests as a proxy is a miserable 10 percent. Is this a 10 percent Government? Is that what their targets will be—10 percent of what they’re saying?

We’ve gone even further as an Opposition and improved some of the tools of transparency that we have. Failures in this Government’s approach to proactive releases were brought into focus for me almost exactly this time last year when the damning Tuia 250 data breach report was reported in a proactive media release 24 hours after Parliament had risen for Christmas recess. As a consequence of this, I met with the Chief Ombudsman earlier this year—concerns and suggestions, which were subsequently incorporated into the release of the document “Proactive release: Good practices and proactive release of official information”.

Let me enlighten the Government on how we will bind them. No longer will they be able to frustrate the OIA process like they did in Tuia 250 by hiding behind a future proactive release on an unknown date and with answers hidden in a massive data dump.

There are now three elements to a code of practice. The OIA request is to be given the date their OIA will be acknowledged in a proactive release. They are to be told the date that that release is made, and it is to be indicated where the information they are looking for is in that proactive release. We have hit the ground running. We have sharpened the tools.

In summary, this Government is unfettered and with clear lines of accountability. If they perform well, then all of the credit is theirs and theirs alone. But if they perform poorly, then they will own every single part of that failure. We as an Opposition are the safety net in the new thinking—a safety net to temper the excesses of ideology and the recklessness of spending, a source of new thinking that pushes policy past the inherent instinct of Government officials to manage risk. We will seek to reduce damage and harm, to talk policy to power, and to leave our fingerprints on those actions that lift our collective safety, security, and concept of a good life. In no small part, then, we remain in the service of New Zealanders. Thank you.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the Hon Carmel Sepuloni, although I'll just let the House know that I will be exercising the new Standing Order where the presiding officer has the discretion to extend past 5 p.m. The Hon Carmel Sepuloni.

Hon CARMEL SEPULONI (Minister for Social Development and Employment): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Talofa lava, mālō e lelei. It is a privilege to be able to speak early in this debate as part of this wonderful new Labour Government. Can I start like so many have already in the House and acknowledge those that have been appointed to the very important roles of Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and Assistant Speaker. I think that we have a very fair team of Speakers, a dignified team of Speakers, and we look forward to continuing to work with the Speakers in this House.

I acknowledge all of the new members of Parliament. Yesterday, when I was watching people get sworn in, I felt quite teary-eyed seeing the new MPs in particular get sworn in, because we never forget how special that is, particularly that first time. My first time was in 2008, and I remember reflecting on that day that, actually, back in 1991, when my social studies class was coming for a trip to Parliament all the way from New Plymouth, I was not able to make that trip because I did not have the \$30 to pay for that trip. So it's a reminder to us how much of a privilege it is to be in this space. I don't know why I'm crying—I feel like Anahila right now.

But the achievement is not getting here; it is what we do when we get here, and as has already been laid out by the Speech from the Throne, we are committed to getting some things done over the next three years. We have the mandate to get those things done, because for the first time we have a majority Government under this MMP system, and we take that mandate seriously. One of the first people who rang me the day after the election to congratulate me was my uncle, who's a farmer in Taranaki and in Taumarunui. He rang to congratulate me, and he wanted to make the point that we have the mandate and that we do need to govern for all New Zealand. We take that very seriously; I cannot say that enough.

I acknowledge the other side of the House. I acknowledge the National Party. We have been in that position. We know how much it hurts to lose an election. We know how hard it is to see colleagues go. In fact, I was one of those colleagues back in 2011, after three years in here, then exiting alongside Stuart Nash and Kelvin Davis and having what we called a three-year sabbatical, referring to ourselves now as the retreads of that time. But for those that are here, just know that we do understand that there is a cycle to politics and we do understand what it feels like to actually be in the Opposition and to see colleagues go, and we do understand what it feels like to be those colleagues who leave, and so I want to acknowledge that. But we must still celebrate being here. Whether we are in Government or we are in Opposition, we must not forget that it is a privilege to be

in this House. So no time for sad faces; I think at this point in the cycle we acknowledge the privilege that it is to be here.

I want to acknowledge the size of our Māori caucus: 15 Māori MPs. You know, decades ago, perhaps even just three decades ago, our Māori community—iwi, hapū across the country—would not have been able to believe that that is how many Māori MPs were in one political party's caucus, and so I want to acknowledge that. I did hear words from another Māori leader who I do have respect for but that I challenge and that I do not agree with, and those words were that our Māori MPs have been subjugated within the Labour Party. That is not true. Our Māori MPs have a strong voice within the Labour Party. Our Prime Minister has made it very clear that meeting and addressing the needs of Māori in New Zealand, making sure that Māori have the opportunity like everyone else in every aspect, and honouring the Treaty is a priority for the Labour Party. So I do not agree with what that person, who I do have respect for, said about Māori MPs within the Labour Party. In fact, I do have to say I am offended on behalf of my Māori colleagues.

I want to acknowledge, too, my Pacific colleagues. When I came into Parliament in 2008, there had been very few Pacific MPs in this House. There had been Taito Phillip Field, there had been Vui Mark Gosche, there had been Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, there had been Charles Chauvel, Aupito Su'a William Sio had just got in before me, and then I came along. Now we have more than all of those that I mentioned earlier. We have 10 within the Labour Party, and our Pacific representation spans Samoa, Tonga, Tokelau, the Cook Islands.

Dr Deborah Russell: You're married to a Fijian.

Hon CARMEL SEPULONI: I am married to a Fijian. I have a Niuean son. We are all connected, and we are proud of the representation that we have here now. We do not forget that there are expectations on our shoulders and that, as I said before, the achievement is not getting here; it is what we do when we are here, and our community expects us to serve and live up to those expectations. We will work together to make sure that that happens.

I acknowledge the representation from all of the other ethnic minorities that are in here. Can I say that I've seen some rhetoric, dialogue, in the media about representation needing to be about merit. I hate that argument because everyone has a differing view of what merit is and what merit looks like. But this House of Representatives needs to reflect New Zealand. There is only merit if this House reflects every New Zealander in this country and the communities that exist and live here, and so the merit is in the fact that we have the diversity to represent all of those communities across the country.

We have laid out on the table what our intentions are for the next three years. The Speech from the Throne was also an opportunity to reflect on what we have done. We never promised at the beginning of the last three years that we were going to be able to address all the wicked challenges that we face as a country, but we knew we needed to get the ball rolling, and we did. If I only look at one of the areas that I have the privilege of being Minister for, that area being social development, I will say that the criticism that comes our way is that we haven't done enough yet, and I've never said that we have either. We had three years to make some changes. What I'm proud of is that, actually, many if not all of those changes were actually mostly supported by the majority of New Zealanders. Who would've thought that, actually, the majority of New Zealanders would sit back and be fine with the fact that we'd do something like get rid of section 192, that discriminated against women that didn't name the father of their child? Who would've thought that, actually, there'd be more people pushing for benefit increases than opposing them? Who would've thought that we'd be able to roll out one of the biggest payments ever, if not the biggest payment, through our welfare system, which is the winter energy

payment, that we would be able to, within our first hundred days in the last Government, roll out a Families Package of \$5.5 billion, and then go on to do things like index benefits to wages so that it would go up just a little bit more every April when those adjustments are made.

So we hear our wonderful Prime Minister talk about consensus building, about taking New Zealanders with us, and that's what this is about. It is about enduring change. It is about not only making change but changing the narrative as we go so that, actually, we don't have the vast majority of the general public coming out and condemning some of the poorest New Zealanders in our country. Those are some of the changes that have occurred that have not been spoken about much. It's not just about the tangible policy changes; it's about the attitudinal shift within our own country.

Someone—I think it might've been David Seymour—was criticising the Prime Minister for what he calls “slogans”. Well, I don't call kindness a slogan, actually, and I think that we should be proud as a Government, as a political party, as a country, that, actually, that's part of people's everyday language now and that kindness is something that we value. I am looking forward to the next three years. Fa'afetai lava.

DEPUTY SPEAKER: Kāti rā, kua mutu a tātou mahi mō tēnei rā.

[Finally, that concludes business for today.]

The House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, 1 December 2020. Ka kite anō.

The House adjourned at 5.02 p.m.

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EXPLANATION OF ABBREVIATIONS

1R—First Reading
2R—Second Reading
3R—Third Reading
CWH—Committee of the whole House

BILLS

Legislation is listed under BILLS. The name of an originating bill that has been divided into separate bills is shown in italics after the names of the new bills.

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