

Ministers responsible for the Consideration of Constitutional Issues

Hon Bill English

MP for Clutha-Southland
Deputy Prime Minister



Hon Dr Pita R Sharples

MP for Tāmaki Makaurau
Minister of Māori Affairs

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Tēnā koutou and welcome

Kei te mihi ki a koutou

He wero kei te haere mō koutou, ngā kaihautu me ngā kaihoe o tēnei waka. He waka tēnei me eke i te moana pukepuke.

Kei a koutou te hanga me te hoe i te waka. Mā te tika o te tārai me ngā pūkenga o ngā kaihoe, ka pai te tere o te waka i ngā moana katoa.

Ahakoia he uaua te haere, e whakapono ana māua he mahi whaihua tēnei ki ngā tāngata katoa o Aotearoa.

Ko te tūmanako, he marino te wai.

Warm greetings to you all

Like the waves which must be navigated by a canoe, there will be many challenges that you as the advisory panel will face.

It is for you to decide the best form the canoe should take to be able to navigate these waters. By designing and shaping the keel of the waka to perfection, your canoe will overcome obstacles.

Although this will be a demanding journey, we believe that it will also be both fruitful and rewarding for all New Zealanders.

May the water that precedes your waka be smooth.

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this significant consideration of New Zealand's constitutional arrangements. We are pleased that you have accepted this opportunity to establish a platform for debate that will inform and stimulate New Zealanders' interest in our constitution.

The history and evolution of New Zealand's constitutional arrangements has been characterised as a "long conversation." Each of you brings valuable skills and experience that will assist New Zealanders to contribute to that conversation. We expect that your work will provide an enduring reference point for New Zealand's constitutional development.

We look forward to working with you.

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