

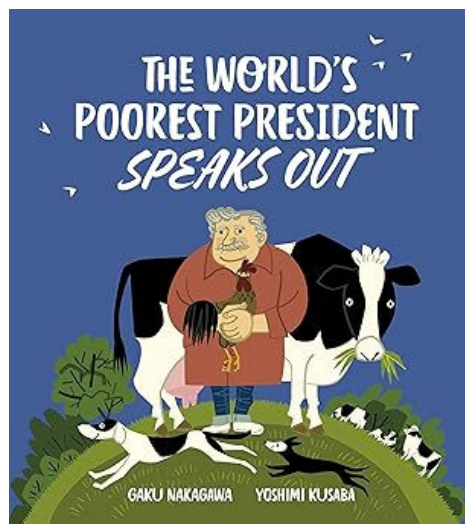
The World's Poorest President Speaks Out

What do Aotearoa NZ Quakers Really Want?

BY JOS ROSSELL AND PHILIPPA FLETCHER

The World's Poorest President Speaks Out is a beautiful picture book for children by Kusaba Yoshimi which presents the speech by the then President of Uruguay to the 2012 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Doha (COP). I was intrigued to find an inspiring summary of the book in English about how overconsumption at the cost of our neighbours, children and the Earth results in environmental and economic crisis.

At Yearly Meeting 2025, it suddenly occurred to me that this book should be in front of our politicians. I shared the idea with Philippa Fletcher, our Climate Correspondent, and she agreed and that we would also include *The Serviceberry - An Economy of Gifts and Abundance* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Both books were sourced from Quaker Book Sales. In December, Philippa and I got together, got busy, and undertook Project Dispatch.



We had an exhausting day working out the logistics of what to send to whom in each Party - and how. I had been involved in a similar project before when the Marlborough Worship Group sent a copy of *Viking Economics* by George Lakey to the leader and finance spokesperson of each Party after the 2017 election.

We checked with Parliamentary Services about what to do and they referred us to Parliamentary Secure Deliveries who told us to simply bring the items in.

We went through all the names. We made sure our versions were absolutely correct. We drafted a covering letter including thanks for their Parliamentary hard work and friendly, good wishes for a refreshing time over Christmas and New Year. We also hoped that our little books would inspire them and that they might share them with their families. Two of Marilyn Payne's bird cards for each Party were added to our gifts.

ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

The Serviceberry

An
Economy
of Gifts
and
Abundance



'A beautiful meditation on abundance, reciprocity and community, inviting us to reimagine what we value most' OBSERVER, BOOKS OF THE YEAR



This was a personal endeavour so we did not check out with Friends. Of course, the books all had a sticker in them from Quaker Book Sales, so the Quaker association was visible.

But does this provide the germ of a more wide-ranging good idea? Aotearoa NZ has elections this year. Should we do something similar after the election? Some Meetings like the idea, but we have no agreement about what we could send. Can we think of something that would engage or inspire politicians that also reflects the Quaker vision?

As Lindsey Fielder Cook from Quaker United Nations Office says, "people need a vision of what could be", or, more colloquially, "We know you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink but the horse can't drink if it doesn't know the water is there".

We can help our politicians do well. We could uplift them with a vision that is also what Aotearoa NZ Quakers really want.

Send your ideas to josphil@orcon.net.nz before 1 September and we will publish them in the next Newsletter.