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## Announcements

### **Rt Hon Sir Geoffrey Palmer QC: Collected Addresses Part V: MMP (II)**

The Palmer Addresses is a collection of speeches and lectures delivered by the Right Honourable Sir Geoffrey Palmer QC, former Prime Minister of New Zealand and Distinguished Fellow of the Victoria University of Wellington Law Faculty. The series is sponsored by an anonymous donor whom the Faculty gratefully acknowledges.

Sir Geoffrey Palmer QC established the Royal Commission on the Electoral System in 1985, while serving as the Minister of Justice. When the Royal Commission reported in 1986, it recommended that New Zealand adopt the mixed member proportional electoral system. MMP was adopted in 1993 by referendum, and the first MMP election held in 1996. The Government announced in October 2021 that it would be conducting a thorough review of New Zealand's electoral law, as part of which it will consider the Electoral Commission's recommendations for changes to MMP. The following addresses present Sir Geoffrey's views on MMP from various periods in its history.

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An address delivered after the 1993 New Zealand general election and MMP referendum. The address makes a number of predictions as to how political behaviour under MMP will differ from political behaviour under the first-past-the-post system. It suggests that not as much will change under MMP as many commentators have speculated, and that governing with a slender majority should not be difficult. It argues that New Zealand's constitutional arrangements are fluid and constantly changing, and that the trends which have emerged would have developed whether MMP was adopted or not.

### "The Parliament, MMP and the Public Service"

*Victoria University of Wellington Legal Research Paper No. 41/2021*

**SIR GEOFFREY PALMER QC**, Victoria University of Wellington - Faculty of Law  
Email: [geoffrey.palmer@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:geoffrey.palmer@vuw.ac.nz)

An address to the Institute of Policy Studies Forum, delivered on 10 July 1996. The address makes a number of predictions as to the likely effects of MMP on the structure of governments, select committee operation, ministerial responsibility, the public service and the role of the Governor-General.

### "MMP and the Legislative Process: No Longer the Fastest Law-Makers in the West"

*Victoria University of Wellington Legal Research Paper No. 42/2021*

**SIR GEOFFREY PALMER QC**, Victoria University of Wellington - Faculty of Law  
Email: [geoffrey.palmer@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:geoffrey.palmer@vuw.ac.nz)

A presentation to the BIIA's New Zealand Public Law Forum "Public Law 2001", delivered on 11 September 2001. The presentation traces the substantial and radical development of the mechanics of New Zealand's legislative process since the introduction of MMP. It argues that the "legislative dance" has become longer and more intricate, as well as a more consultative and deliberate process.

### "Why Vote to Retain MMP"

*Victoria University of Wellington Legal Research Paper No. 43/2021*

**SIR GEOFFREY PALMER QC**, Victoria University of Wellington - Faculty of Law  
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A journalistic item written in 2011, prior to New Zealand's second MMP referendum. Voters were asked whether New Zealand should keep the existing MMP voting system, or change to an alternative. The article makes the case for voting to retain MMP, arguing that its revitalisation of Parliament and promotion of negotiation between parties has been hugely positive. It dismisses the alternative voting systems (namely preferential voting, single transferable vote and supplementary member) as unsatisfactory.

### "How MMP Looked in 2016"

*Victoria University of Wellington Legal Research Paper No. 44/2021*

**SIR GEOFFREY PALMER QC**, Victoria University of Wellington - Faculty of Law  
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A journalistic item originally published in *The Spinoff* in 2016, and re-published on 12 October 2021, on the 25th anniversary of MMP's introduction. The article traces MMP's history and celebrates its promotion of true democracy, as well as a more diverse Parliament. It argues, however, that the executive government in New Zealand remains too powerful. Constitutional change that provides more transparency, more openness, more participation and greater accountability of the executive government is still urgently required.

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## About this eJournal

Victoria University of Wellington Legal Research Papers Series primarily contains scholarly papers by members of the **Faculty of Law at Victoria University of Wellington**. Some issues collect a number of papers on a similar theme to form a suite of papers on a single topic. Others issues are general or distribute mainly recent work.

The Student/Alumni Series is a subseries of the Victoria University of Wellington Legal Research Paper Series. The subseries started in 2015 and publishes papers by students and alumni of Victoria University

of Wellington, comprising primarily work for honours and postgraduate courses. Papers are collected into thematic or general issues.

The Victoria University of Wellington was founded in 1899 to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the reign of Queen Victoria of Great Britain and of the then British Empire. Law teaching started in 1900. The Law Faculty was formally constituted in 1907. The first dean was Richard Maclaurin (1870-1920), an eminent scholar of both law and mathematics. Maclaurin went on to lead the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as President in its formative years. Early professors included Sir John Salmond (1862-1924), still one of the Common Law's leading scholars. His texts on jurisprudence and torts have gone through many editions and remain in print.

Alumni include Sir Robin Cooke (1926-2006), one of the leading judges of the British Commonwealth. As Baron Cooke of Thorndon, he sat on over 100 appeals to the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords, one of very few Commonwealth judges ever appointed to do so.

Since 1996 the Law School has occupied the Old Government Building in central Wellington. Designed by William Clayton and opened in 1876 to house New Zealand's then civil service, the building is a particularly fine example of Italianate neo-Renaissance style. Unusually among large colonial official buildings of the time it is constructed of wood, apart from chimneys and vaults.

The School is close to New Zealand's Parliament, courts, and the headquarters of government departments. Throughout Victoria's history, our law teachers have contributed actively to policy formation and to law reform. As a result, in addition to many scholarly articles and books, the Victoria SSRN pages include a number of official reports.

Victoria graduates approximately 230 LLB and LLB(Hons) students each year, and about 60 LLM students. The faculty has an increasing number of doctoral students. Ordinarily there are ten to twelve students engaged in PhD research.

Victoria University observes the British system of academic ranks. In North American terms, lecturers and senior lecturers are tenured doctrinal scholars, not legal writing teachers. A senior lecturer corresponds approximately to a North American associate professor in rank.

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