



## Debating the Constitution

During April and May, the NZ Centre for Public Law (with generous support and funding from the NZ Law Foundation) will host a series of debates on issues raised by the Government's review of the New Zealand constitution. The debates will be broadcast on Radio NZ National. Join us on VUW Kelburn campus to be part of our live public audience.

**Moderator:** Steven Price, barrister

### **"What's the problem?" Monday 8 April, Hunter Council Chamber, 6:30pm**

**Speakers:** Professor Bruce Harris, Carwyn Jones, Dame Claudia Orange, Dr Matthew Palmer

**Broadcast times:** Radio NZ National, 4pm Sunday 14 April, repeated 9pm Tuesday 16 April

An examination of the origins of the constitutional review, and the process set up to support it. Should we be cynical about its political motives, embrace it as an opportunity for public engagement, neither or both? Do its terms of reference make sense? Is a process like this necessary or desirable? Has the process been set up in a way that could support real change?

### **"Reforming our democratic institutions" Monday 15 April, Hunter Council Chamber, 6:30pm**

**Speakers:** Dr Maria Bargh, Colin James, Professor Elizabeth McLeay, Sir Geoffrey Palmer QC

**Broadcast times:** Radio NZ National, 4pm Sunday 21 April, repeated 9pm Tuesday 23 April

The constitutional review's terms of reference include the term of Parliament (and whether it should be fixed), the size of Parliament, the size and number of electorates, and issues relating to Māori electoral representation. The debatees will cover these issues and others that they consider important to the quality and effectiveness of our democratic system.

### **"Māori aspirations for constitutional change" Monday 22 April, Te Herenga Waka Marae, 6:30pm**

**Speakers:** Tai Ahu, Dr Rawinia Higgins, Veronica Tawhai, Valmaine Toki

**Broadcast times:** Radio NZ National, 4pm Sunday 28 April, repeated 9pm Tuesday 30 April

Four newer voices from the Māori community discuss the nature of Māori aspirations for constitutional change, broadly conceived. The discussion will move well beyond the status of the Treaty of Waitangi, and include consideration of alternative models of Māori-Crown relationships, the development of a kaupapa Māori or tikanga-based constitution, and Māori constitutional aspirations in the context of indigenous peoples' rights at the international level.

### **"Human rights in the constitution" Monday 29 April, Hunter Council Chamber, 6:30pm**

**Speakers:** Professor Andrew Geddis, Jack Hodder QC, Stephen Whittington,  
Professor Margaret Wilson

**Broadcast times:** Radio NZ National, 4pm Sunday 5 May, repeated 9pm Tuesday 7 May

New Zealand has no formal written constitution and its bill of rights is an ordinary law that cannot be used to strike down other laws. Should our Bill of Rights be entrenched and supreme law, or not? Should we have one at all? If so, what other rights should it include? Or not include? In broader terms, what steps ought to be taken to protect the human rights of New Zealanders?

### **"Time to be a Republic?" Monday 6 May, Hunter Council Chamber, 6:30pm**

**Speakers:** Lewis Holden, Professor Janet McLean, Michael Mabbett

**Broadcast times:** Radio NZ National, 4pm Sunday 12 May, repeated 9pm Tuesday 14 May

Is it time to replace the Queen as our head of state and become a republic? If not, will it ever be? What would that involve, and what will be the major issues confronting us if and when we do so?