

PRESS STATEMENT

28 November 1989

Queen's Chain Safe

The Government has no intention of restricting the public's right of access to the Queen's Chain, Prime Minister Rt Hon Geoffrey Palmer said today.

"I want to assure everybody that the Queen's Chain is secure. The Government isn't going to take it away. It's an important part of New Zealand's history. We want it. We're going to have it. We're going to keep it."

"The drafting of the Conservation Law Reform Bill did not clearly reflect Government policy. When the Bill is reported back from the Select Committee I expect it to be rather different than when it went in.

"The Bill is meant to strengthen protection of the Queen's Chain, not the reverse."

The Bill did this by:

- making it more difficult for Government to not take a marginal strip;
- applying marginal strips to more categories of land than at present;
- including "conservation" and "recreation" in the purposes for which the strips must be managed.

At the moment the only requirement for Government to retain a marginal strip was access. The Bill widened this area considerably, said Mr Palmer.

"If the Bill is still ambiguous when it is reported back, then further amendments will be made to clarify the Government's intent to strengthen the protection of the Queen's Chain," he said.

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