

An Undemocratic Relationship

The relationship between the Crown and Maori brazenly contradicts **one of the basic rules of a democratic society - no group shall hold superior rights**. It bypasses universal democratic principles in favor of the latterly invented and undefined 'Principles of the Treaty'. It has brought a corruption of democracy, greedily eating away at the freedoms of all New Zealanders.

Its consequences are upon us now!

Co-governance arrangements

The relationship is illustrated in co-governance arrangements forcing undemocratic and unelected Maori boards on democratically elected councils. The votes of unelected members of the Auckland Independent Maori Statutory Board recently tipped a decision of the Auckland City Council on a whitewater rafting park in Manukau.

Appointees to the Board contribute no skills of particular value, and yet receive an annual fee of \$53,000. Without conditions of attendance! Unsurprisingly, attendance is nominal. A majority of gutless councilors voted the Board a budget of \$3.1 million last year.

3,600-and-counting purple dots over the Auckland landscape

Under the Auckland Unitary Plan, these dots represent sites alleged by local iwi to be of cultural significance. They cannot be reviewed or challenged. Development on these sites is subject to a Maori assessment at the owner's expense.

Local Maoris recently required former All Black Marc Ellis to pay for an archaeological dig to prove that a slight depression on his section on Waiheke was, indeed, a slight depression. Another owner was required to visit seven marae for approvals to renew an air discharge consent. Some owners have even been asked to send assessment fees to private bank accounts!

Procedures and fees for assessments are unspecified, and vary between tribes and individuals – an open invitation to corruption.

In 20 years we will look back on the legacy of John Key and the unelected list MP and Minister for TOW Negotiations Christopher Finlayson - a nominal democracy in which the right to vote is retained but meaningless, and 'the relationship between Crown and Maori' overrides the traditional democratic relationship between us and our government.

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Feedback to maxheadroom979@yahoo.co.nz