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Accusations of racism from protesters as 'Stop Co-Governance' event bars Māori women

Kristie Boland · 21:50, Jul 06 2023



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In Otautahi Christchurch.

And, **as with other such events**, two Māori women were refused entry into the meeting.

Anti co-governance campaigner **Julian Batchelor** spoke at the 'Stop Co-Governance' meeting at the Scottish Society Hall in St Albans on Thursday, the latest stop in his national roadshow.

Events have been met with protests around the country, and in Christchurch its security team, some wearing balaclavas, refused the Māori women entry into the hall.

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Among the security staff was far-right activist Kyle Chapman, while members of Destiny Church and controversial **street preacher Lincoln Russ** also attended.

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One woman, Helena Winiata, tried to go into the meeting, saying she wanted to “just observe”, but was told it was a private event and she was not allowed in.

Her brother had been allowed entry just minutes before.

Winiata believes she was not let in because of her tā moko tattoo.

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Teresa Butler, who also has a tā moko, was told she could not enter the meeting because she was “a Māori activist”. She accused the organisers of only excluding Māori.

Security refused to comment on the decision-making behind who was allowed entry.

Ahead of the meeting, pressure had come on Scottish Society of NZ chief Gordon McIvor to cancel the event.

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STUFF

Kyle Chapman was among security staff outside the event in St Albans.

Mclvor was approached by The Press for comment but did not respond.

Protest organiser Josie Butler said she was there to “stand in the face of injustice”.

“We’re about unity, we’re about diversity, and there’s nothing to be afraid of with co-governance - it’s just a few extra brown faces round a board table,” she said.

Mananui Ramsden, chairperson of Te Rūnaka o Koukourarata said it was concerning to see events like this happening.

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The protest against the tour was planned on Facebook by anti-fascist group Ōtautahi - Stand up against Julian Batchelor's racist 'Stop Co-Governance' tour.



STUFF

Events have been met with protests around the country.

“A worry I have is what kind of future is this setting up for our kids,” he said.

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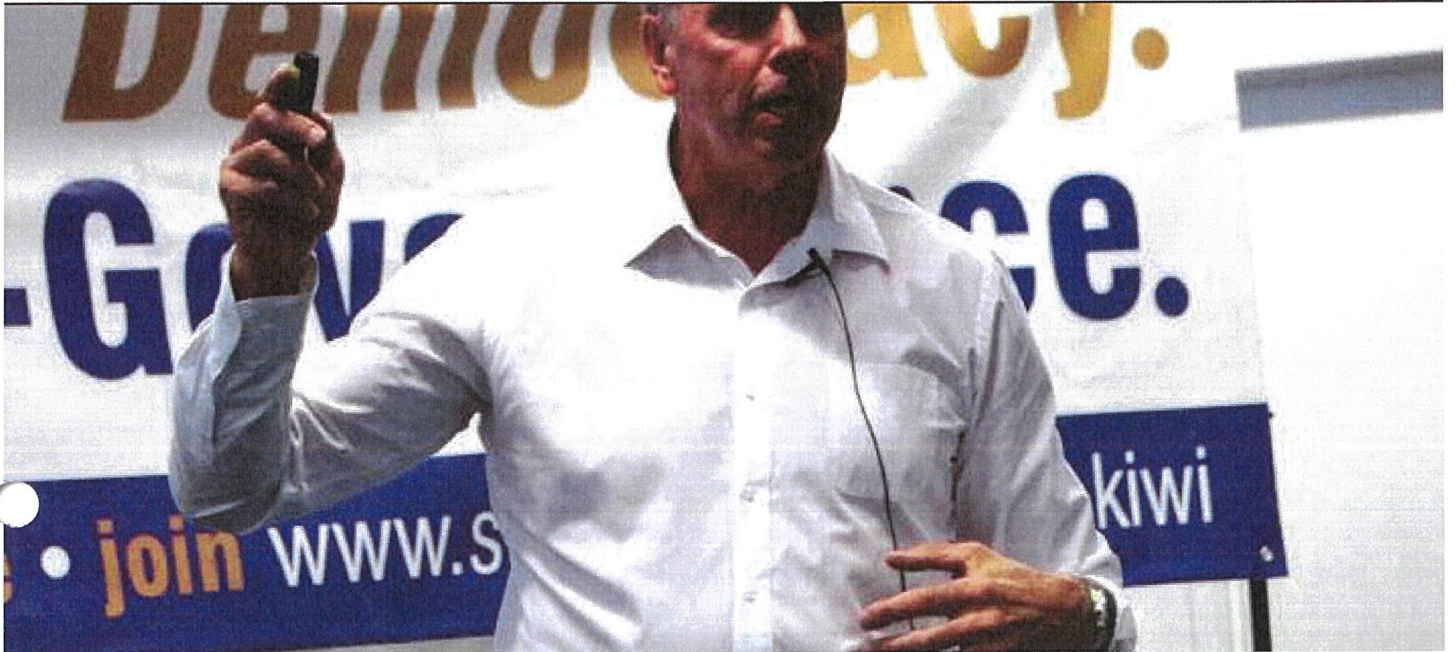
The protest against the tour was planned on Facebook by an anti-fascist group called Ōtautahi - Stand up against Julian Batchelor's racist 'Stop Co-Governance' tour.

Last month at a meeting in Blenheim, [Marlborough filmmaker Keelan Walker tried to attend](#) but Batchelor stopped him at the door, and said he couldn't come in because he wasn't a "good Māori" who would sit there and listen and "be respectful all the way through".

Batchelor's website says he is "fighting against tribal rule, racism, separatism, and apartheid ... for one person, one vote, for one law for all and racial unity". It also claims "protesters are simply pawns in the elite Māori plan to take over New Zealand".

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PETER DE GRAAF/NORTHERN ADVOCATE/LDR

Anti co-governance speaker Julian Batchelor in Blenheim.

The roadshow had been consistently met with protests, like in Levin, when a meeting was canned after clashes with protesters **who accused organisers of only excluding Māori.**

A Havelock North meeting was cancelled after the venue said **“no amount of security could control the level of noise or protest activity expected”.**

In Nelson, **city councillor Matty Anderson attended a meeting.** Before leaving, he told Batchelor: “I’m really sorry, but it’s horrible in here”.

The Human Rights Commission has received complaints about the tour.