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NEW ZEALAND (/NEWS/NATIONAL) / ...

Police step in as co-governance supporters clash with meeting organiser

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Julian Batchelor addresses the audience, in Dargaville. Photo: RNZ / Sam Olley

Police had to break up arguments and eventually ask people to leave an anti-co-governance event in Dargaville last night.

Organiser Julian Batchelor, who is a Christian evangelist, tried to give a one-hour talk - also opposing Māori MPs, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and iwi organisations.

But he was mostly drowned out by people who were upset by his words.

5th

Q About half of the 150 attendees came to **stick up for Māoridom** - upholding their mana from the moment they stepped in the door of the Kaipara Community Hall, welcoming visitors in te reo Māori.



Some of those who attended the meeting to defend Māoridom. Photo: RNZ / Sam Olley

But what Batchelor soon said shocked many, including his views of "fraud and corruption" around the Treaty of Waitangi.

P **The visit was part of an anti-co-governance roadshow being run the length of the country.**

He claimed co-governance was part of a war between "tribal representatives or elite Māori, and the rest of New Zealand". He said "elite Māori treatyists" were a distinct group, and if they did not stop New Zealand was headed to becoming the "Zimbabwe of the South Pacific".

He described policies specifically supporting Māori as treaty partners as "apartheid".

Tangata whenua - who protested against Kaipara mayor Craig Jepson's opposition to karakia in council meetings - again rallied to ensure they were not silenced.

Jamie Gray (Ngāti Maniapoto, Tainui) was among Batchelor's challengers.

He said the talk made him "furious".

"I can't believe that in this day and age, in this modern society that we live in, that there's still attitudes like this."

He saw an advertisement for the talk and "was quite surprised".

"I mean, I know our town. It can be quite polarising in its opinions. But I just couldn't believe that something like this would happen in our town."

Kaipara Māori ward councillor Pera Paniora (Te Roroa, Ngāti Whātua) said the talk she sat through was "utter blatant racism".

"I'm gonna call him for what it is. We're not going to tolerate it in our community - we're reeling from the cyclone. We've just started to re-establish... We've come together [through the natural disaster]."



Police were on hand as the meeting became more heated. Photo: RNZ / Sam Olley

Police were present throughout and by the end of the night, disagreements between different groups of roadshow supporters, had to be broken up.

When some Māori attendees tried to speak, Batchelor turned their mic off.

Then police asked people to disperse from the event.

Organisers ended the evening hurriedly but tried to sell and distribute books suggesting people had been "conned" by the Treaty of Waitangi.

When contacted by RNZ today, Batchelor said: "Ask the people who are curious to give some clear examples."

Batchelor's social media account describes his profession as a real estate agent, but his name could no longer be found on the public register for licenced real estate professionals.



Some of the material available at the meeting. Photo: RNZ / Sam Olley

- [ACT's Seymour targets National, co-governance in speech \(/news/political/483796/act-s-seymour-targets-national-co-governance-in-speech\)](/news/political/483796/act-s-seymour-targets-national-co-governance-in-speech)
- [Iwi leaders warn Hipkins not to bow on Three Waters co-governance \(/news/te-manu-korihi/483604/iwi-leaders-warn-hipkins-not-to-bow-on-three-waters-co-governance\)](/news/te-manu-korihi/483604/iwi-leaders-warn-hipkins-not-to-bow-on-three-waters-co-governance)
- [Māori seats don't 'make a lot of sense' - Christopher Luxon \(/news/political/483083/maori-seats-don-t-make-a-lot-of-sense-christopher-luxon\)](/news/political/483083/maori-seats-don-t-make-a-lot-of-sense-christopher-luxon)
- [Hipkins, Luxon sling accusations of divisive rhetoric at Rātana \(/news/political/483024/hipkins-luxon-sling-accusations-of-divisive-rhetoric-at-ratana\)](/news/political/483024/hipkins-luxon-sling-accusations-of-divisive-rhetoric-at-ratana)
- [Dozens of groups urge govt to pick up pace on co-governance \(/news/political/481016/dozens-of-groups-urge-govt-to-pick-up-pace-on-co-governance\)](/news/political/481016/dozens-of-groups-urge-govt-to-pick-up-pace-on-co-governance)