

THE TREATY FRAUD

Last week, a story ran in mainstream media under the headline, “[Northland Mayoral Forum to work alongside Taitokerau Iwi](#)” and in Māori media as, “[Northland hapū group says forum signing undermines sovereignty](#)”.

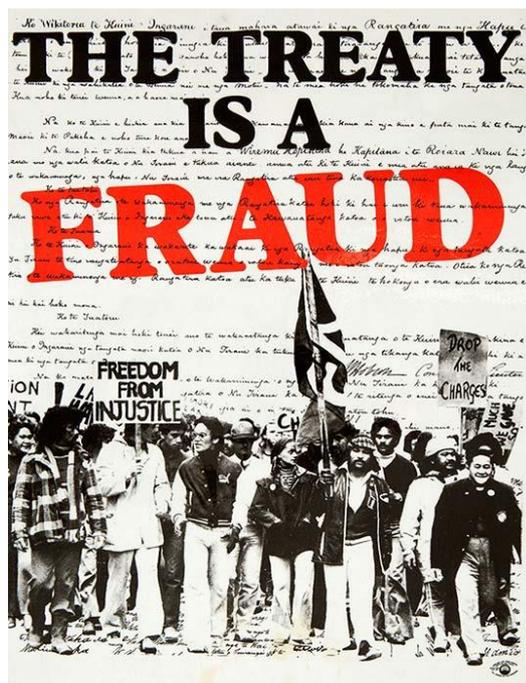
The event that triggered these different headlines was the co-signing of a ‘governance agreement’ between members of the *Northland Mayoral Forum* and the *Taitokerau Iwi Chairs Forum*. But a few Iwi, including Ngāti Kahu, neither supported nor attended its signing.

In the case of Te Rūnanga-ā-Iwi o Ngāti Kahu, that was because our analysis of the agreement identified several serious flaws in it, the worst being its constant and confused reference to *The Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi*. It is a standard Crown tactic to treat the two documents as if they are one and the same in content and intent; something they most definitely are not.

The Treaty of Waitangi is a fraudulent document that was never seen, debated, agreed to or signed by our tūpuna; it supports the Crown fiction that we ceded our sovereignty to it. *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* is the only treaty we signed; it reaffirmed the rangatiratanga declared in *He Whakaputanga*. To connect the two in this ‘governance agreement’ means that the *Mayoral Forum* members can, and will, continue to assume that *The Treaty of Waitangi* has some authority over us. It does not.

That treaty has always been used by colonialists and racists to justify removing our right to any role in our rohe other than that permitted at the whim of their Councils. The rest of the document bears that out; there is no mention of Iwi exercising any decision-making powers, and reference to decision-makers appears to refer solely to councils. Worse still, there is no mention of hapū at all.

There are some phrasings that give the document a veneer of being consistent with *Te Tiriti*; e.g. references in one section to *partnership, participation* and *protection*. But that veneer is dulled by *The Treaty/Te Tiriti* overlay which, in the same section, infers the ‘right to govern’ to councils while Iwi must provide and be provided with ‘full information in order to participate in the [council] decision-making process’. Where are *Te Tiriti* and *He Whakaputanga* in that?



Other serious flaws include little to no consultation about the agreement, lack of notice about its drafting and very short and limited notice about its signing.

Everyone in this country deserves better than this and, in fact, we can and will do better under a proper [Tiriti Partnership Framework](#) between Kawanatanga and Rangatiratanga that protects our right to determine the way we live and doesn't marginalise or criminalise us for doing so. More on this in future columns.

For now, as we gather at Waitangi to mark the 179th anniversary of the signing of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, we again declare that *The Treaty of Waitangi* is a fraud and, like the ‘governance agreement’ signed last week, it has no legitimate authority over our whānau, hapū and iwi.