SUBMISSION TO THE MINISTERIAL FORESHORE AND SEABED REVIEW PANEL

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I totally disagree with the Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004. It was a Government confiscation of taonga that was guaranteed to Maori under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It was as unjust as any of the colonial-era confiscations that Governments have been apologizing for in decades of Treaty settlements.

While it took away Maori rights to foreshore and seabed land, the Act did not take away the property rights of non-Maori who also own foreshore and land. This breaches the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination, to which New Zealand is a signatory.

As a Pakeha New Zealander concerned about our national sovereignty, I was against the Act because I believe that in Maori hands, the foreshore and seabed, or indeed any land in New Zealand, is much safer from sale to overseas interests than it is in the hands of the Government.

Since the Foreshore and Seabed Act was passed, the government has sold off areas of the seabed along the west coast from South Auckland to Whanganui for mineral and petroleum exploration under the Crown Minerals Act 1991.

The first license was issued on February 21 2005, which means that the sale was being negotiated even before the Act was passed. This suggests that the Government had a covert agenda for the legislation that was at odds with its “one law for all” rationale.

The Act should be repealed.

Instead, the Crown should recognise Maori right to this part of New Zealand in return for Maori guaranteeing public access to the foreshore and seabed.

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