
Migrants and the Waitangi Tribunal 4

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MIGRANTS

AND THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL: Can the Chinese support the Report on the Orakei Claim[i]?

1. BACKGROUND

Over the past 30 years the Treaty of Waitangi has become an integral part of New Zealand law, Government and society. At the same time the numbers of migrants and descendants of migrant, in particular the Chinese, have increased to become a significant component in the population. From time to time they hear that the Treaty of Waitangi has been invoked - by tribes seeking to lodge a claim, by the Waitangi Tribunal reporting on a claim and by the Government in negotiating the settlement of a claim or introducing a new law or practice.

Seemingly, all this is irrelevant to the migrant communities because, obviously they are not Maori and they do not believe that their interests and concerns as migrants and the descendants of migrant are represented by the Crown in Treaty-related matters. Few people, except the protagonists, have the time or inclination to examine the Treaty or a claim much less a Tribunal Report of several hundred pages. Mostly, even the interested and diligent among them glean their understanding from the news media

