

become transformed by Belich into 'crews'. This would be stimulating stuff in the pages of the *New Zealand Journal of History*; whether it is in a general history is another question. Belich will reach and influence the academic audience, but whether his reach will be wider, in the tradition of Sinclair, remains to be seen.

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*Muriwhenua Land Report. A Waitangi Tribunal Report.* GP Publications, Wellington, 1997. 456 pp. NZ price: \$99.95. ISBN 1-86956-202-X.

AS AN OUTSIDER, presumptuous enough to comment from afar, it seems to me that the *Muriwhenua Land Report* represents both the great strength and the distinct limitations of the Waitangi Tribunal process. The report is a detailed, meticulous and very impressive statement of the problem. At the same time, the Tribunal is equally clear that neither this report, nor necessarily the Tribunal itself, will provide the solution.

The *Muriwhenua Land Report* examines the claims of Maori in the far north of New Zealand up to 1865. The report begins with the people and the land of Muriwhenua and describes a pre-contact, independent Maori culture with a viable economy and its own world-view and laws. It goes on to look at private land transactions prior to 1840 and at the government's dealings over land between 1840 and 1865, and in each case finds in favour of the Muriwhenua people's claim that they were improperly deprived of their land. The initial 'sales' before 1840 were not valid contracts; then, after 1840, the government became complicit in these early dealings as well as continuing the process of alienation on its own behalf. None of these alienations, the Tribunal concludes, were carried out in a manner consistent with the Treaty of Waitangi or the fiduciary responsibility of the government to protect Maori interests. Though it did not end in 1865, the process of dispossession and its consequences were clearly established by then: the Muriwhenua people had been marginalized in their own land.

Of all Maori groups, the Muriwhenua hapu were among the first, and arguably the most, affected by the alienation of their land, and the Tribunal is also clear about the consequences of this marginalization. Left with insufficient land for either a subsistence or an agrarian economy, the people of Muriwhenua have faced a downward spiral of poverty and social dislocation. Their only option was to play a very limited role in an economy controlled by Europeans. Gumdigging briefly provided some income, but when it declined Maori had to move to the cities in the south to find employment, while the far north became one of the most depressed areas in New Zealand.

The Tribunal concludes this report by asserting the need for compensation to the Muriwhenua people for their many losses. It notes that, although relief cannot be dealt with in a piecemeal manner, there is also an urgent need for immediate action. The Tribunal recognizes that its next task is to propose a relief package that will compensate for past wrongs and provide an economic base for the hapu. And there the report ends.

At the heart of the *Muriwhenua Land Report* is a detailed examination, almost hectare by hectare, of the history of the alienation of the Muriwhenua from their land. Such careful historical research has become a hallmark of the Tribunal's work and there is undoubtedly great value in clearly stating the problem before entering substantive negotiations on the solution. These are lessons that other jurisdictions would do well to learn. In British

Columbia, where we are trying to resolve First Nations' Land Claims without benefit of treaty, the two processes of stating and attempting to resolve the issue are being run together. First Nations' concerns about whether the other levels of government will really understand the extent of the historical grievance hinders the negotiation of a resolution. The Waitangi Tribunal believes that it has written a report rather than a judgment, and in judicial terms it is probably right. But the Muriwhenua report does present a clear judgement on history as its authors hold the New Zealand government responsible for the improper dispossession of Maori in Northland.

While it is important that the issue be clearly stated, that is only the first step in a long process. Lasting resolutions of land claims will have to be political, rather than judicial or quasi-judicial, and they involve the hard issues of access to resources and the future of people's livelihoods. And that, as we are now learning in British Columbia, is when the going really gets tough.

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*Nga Patai: Racism and Ethnic Relations in Aotearoa/New Zealand.* Edited by Paul Spoonley, Cluny Macpherson and David Pearson. The Dunmore Press, Palmerston North, 1996. 300 pp. NZ Price: \$44.95. ISBN 0-86469-266-8.

*NGA PATAI* The Questions, is the third book in a series that began in 1984 with *Tauiwī* and continued in 1991 with *Nga Take*. Many of the themes raised 16 years ago remain in what has become a discourse on racism and ethnic relations. This conversation by New Zealand academics and researchers with other New Zealanders on the issues of race and ethnic identity is developed further in *Nga Patai*. The authors describe and develop an understanding of recent policy developments by highlighting a number of issues at the core of political and popular debate in the late 1990s. In this they succeed because the reader becomes engaged in an intellectual debate with each writer-commentator over the analysis and the conclusions offered. At the same time we are all left with further questions. The book is aptly named.

The book's value is in the diversity of writers and their analysis of current policies and trends. A third of the original *Tauiwī* writers are in *Nga Patai* thus providing the necessary continuity for the discourse. There are 16 contributors in the collection of 14 essays — Patrick Ongley, Ravi Palat, Paul Spoonley, Michael Reilly, Evan Poata-Smith, Robert Mahuta, Cluny Macpherson, Avril Bell, Wendy Larner, Jane Kelsey, Juan Tauri, Graeme Smith, Linda Smith, Judy McGregor, Joanne Te Awa and David Pearson.

The book is divided into three parts. The first discusses migration, the political economy and racialization. The second addresses the politics of difference, and the third, institutional policies and options. The range of policies covered and the passion of the debates emphasizes the complex nature of race and ethnicity in Aotearoa/New Zealand today. The authors engage us all in debates on immigration, particularly the growth of Asian immigration; on ethnic relations and identity formation of Pakeha, Asian, Pacific Island and Maori groups; on employment and the phenomenon of the racialization of work; on the use of history in New Zealand ethnic identity making; on the evolution of Maori protest; on Tainui as a case study of iwi development; on gender theories and ethnicity; on the role of a media capable of meeting the needs of diverse communities of