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The People's Inquiry into the aerial spraying of pesticides gets underway in Waitakere City on Tuesday evening with a powhiri at Te Piringatahi O Te Maungarongo Marae. An invitation has gone out to politicians at a national, local and regional level to attend the powhiri and the week long inquiry to listen to the testimony of the people affected by the aerial spraying. During the spray programme local MPs insisted that "the spray is safe", despite hundreds of constituent members raising concerns related to their health and the health of their families. "Because the community were unable to get Government support for an official inquiry, the community has initiated its own, to include evidence presented on the social, health, ecological and economic affects of aerial spraying on the community", said Hana Blackmore, convenor of the People's Inquiry. Testimony will be presented to four commissioners of national and international standing with expertise in the areas of pesticide and chemical effects on human health, on human rights and the social, community and ecological impacts. Prof Romy Quijano (Philippines), Dell Wihongi - Te Rarawa, Hokianga, Dr Joanna Goven (Aotearoa New Zealand), Dr Tom Kerns (USA). A major objective of the People's Inquiry will be the recommendations from the commissioners. These will cover not only addressing the Inquiry-identified impacts and the mitigation of those adverse effects, but proposals for dealing with future programmes that directly impact the community. Hana Blackmore said "It is our hope that local, national and regional decision makers will accept the community invitation to take the time to sit in on the inquiry to hear the evidence first hand. That way they may better understand the affected community which they represent".