

# Hawaiians may receive land, money from church

By Greg Wiles <sup>SAT 5-18-96</sup>  
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The United Church of Christ in Hawaii may put its bank account where its mouth is in making amends to Hawaiians for the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy.

The church is proposing a \$3.5 million payment and transfer of five plots of land to Hawaiian churches and a Hawaiian foundation as part of a redress and reconciliation package.

"This is an effort to say we are serious about the apology and wanting to make reconciliation," said the Rev. Wallace Ryan Kuroiwa, Nu'uano Congregational Church pastor and chairman of the Hawaii Conference of the United Church of Christ's Hawaii Apology Task Force.

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within the church and within the wider Native Hawaiian community."

The proposed redress has drawn opposition among some of the church's 19,000 members. It will be discussed and voted on when the Hawaii Conference of the United Church of Christ has its annual convention next month.

The church was not directly involved in the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani, but feels some complicity because it remained silent about the coup involving some descendants of its missionaries to Hawaii.

Lili'uokalani, a member of the church at the time, was denounced by her own pastor and derided by the editor of the church's publication.

During the 100th anniversary of the overthrow in 1993, the national head of the United Church of Christ, the Rev. Paul Sherry, issued a formal apology for the church.

Last year, the United Church of Christ's national leadership

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said it was following up the apology with a \$1.25 million payment to a foundation set up to help Hawaiians.

Kuroiwa said Hawaii members of a task force proposing that settlement decided to continue that work by proposing redress from United Church of Christ's Hawaii membership.

In the past 12 months the task force has worked to come up with a proposal of its own. Kuroiwa said the group decided on \$3.5 million broken into three parts:

■ \$1.5 million to Hawaiian churches that were members of

the Hawaii Evangelical Association — the predecessor organization to the United Church of Christ in Hawaii — at the time of the overthrow.

■ \$1 million to the same Hawaiian foundation receiving \$1.25 million from the national church. The foundation is to help Hawaiians seek self-determination and justice, while working on issues of education, community organizing, advocacy of justice and leadership development. The foundation is in its embryonic stage but has set up a board consisting of Puanani Burgess, Roberta Jarling, Alethea Kaohi, Ailka Kealahou, Kumani Nihipali and Mark Patterson.

■ \$1 million to the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches, a group that includes churches with Hawaiian congregations that are part of the United Church of Christ in Hawaii.

In addition, the church will transfer five properties that it owns on Oahu, Kauai, Maui, Molokai and the Big Island to the foundation.

Kuroiwa said the redress is meant as an act of repentance and to bring about healing.

"We know that while this is considerable, it will not solve all the ills of the church or the Hawaiian community," he said.

The redress issue is being dis-

cussed as Sherry and two other national leaders of the United Church of Christ are in Hawaii to symbolically present the \$1.5 million to the foundation, which has yet to settle on a name.

Accompanying Sherry are the Rev. Thomas Dipko, executive vice president for the church Board for Homeland Ministries and the Rev. David Hiran, executive vice president of the church's Board of World Ministries.

The three are traveling to churches on the Big Island, Maui, Oahu and Kauai to discuss the gift and reasons for the redress.