

NOTES ON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH INVOLVEMENT IN THE OVERTHROW  
by Ronald S. Fujiyoshi

1. Quoted in Hawaii's Story: By Hawaii's Queen:<sup>1</sup>

a. His cousin, Kamehameha V., had such advisors as Mr. R.C. Wylie, Mr. C. C. Harris, Mr. F. W. Hutchinson, Hon. S. H. Phillips, and others, all men of ability, but not associated with what is known as the missionary party. On the accession of Lunalilo, this latter party showed a determination to control the king, and by subjecting his weakness to their strength, to influence the state of the Hawaiian people and the destiny of the Islands. They succeeded in securing the following cabinet: Hon. Charles R. Bishop (Foreign Affairs), E. O. Hall (Interior), E. Stirling (Finance), A. F. Judd (Attorney-General); two out of these four were from families who landed upon our shores with the single intention to teach our people the religion of Christ. The policy of the new cabinet was distinctively American, in opposition to that which may properly be called Hawaiian; the latter looking to the prosperity and progress of the nation as an independent sovereignty, the former seeking to render the Islands a mere dependency, either openly or under sufficient disguise, on the government of the United States. Then, as at the present day the entering wedge was the concession of a harbor of refuge or repair at Pearl River. The proposition created great excitement, and was vehemently opposed by those of native birth; for patriotism, which with us means the love of the very soil on which our ancestors have lived and died, forbade us to view with equanimity the sight of any foreign flag, not excepting the one for which we have always had the greatest respect, floating as a matter of right over any part of our land. (pp. 37-38)

b. September 1st, 1892, witnessed the opening of the legislative assembly. There was nothing lacking of that pomp and display which had been first inaugurated in the days of Kanikeaouli, the third of the Kamehamehas. These forms and ceremonies were suggested and taught to the Hawaiian people by Mr. G. P. Judd, Mr. W. Richards, and Mr. R. Armstrong, men who originally came to Hawai'i with no other avowed object than that of teaching the religion of Jesus Christ; but they soon resigned their meagre salaries from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and found positions in the councils or cabinets of the Kamehamehas more lucrative and presumably more satisfactory to them. (pp. 231-232)

c. It is more to the point that Kalakaua's reign was, in a material sense, the golden age of Hawaiian history. The wealth and importance of the Islands enormously increased and always as a direct consequence of the King's acts. It has been currently supposed that the policy and foresight of the "Missionary Party" is to be credited with all that he accomplished, since they succeeded in abrogating so many of his prerogatives and absorbing the lion's share of the benefits derived from it. It should, however, be only necessary to remember that the measures which brought about our accession of wealth were not at all in line with a policy of annexation to the United States, which was the

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<sup>1</sup> Lili'uokalani, Hawaii's Story: By Hawaii's Queen (Rutland & Tokyo: Charles . Tuttle Company, Twenty- fifth printing, 1986)

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increase her own power at the expense of her subjects, they agreed sadly that Hawai'i would be better off when, in a few short weeks, it became part of the great American Republic. But they could not carry their congregations with them. In some places they were driven from their pulpits or shut out of their chapels. For the most part the people simply stayed away from the sermons or listened in sullen silence and thought what they pleased. (p. 44)

d. In Honolulu at the old stone Kawaiaha'o Church, where a haole pastor, a son of the mission, had preached for almost thirty years, a substantial core of Hawaiians accepted the changed order, albeit with sorrow and heartache. Here Lili'uokalani, when she was a princess, had played the organ and directed the choir; and later, though she liked to worship sometimes at the Anglican cathedral and sometimes at Kaumakapili in western Honolulu, she had sat in the red plush box pew reserved for royalty. After January 17, 1893, the royal pew went unoccupied, and the queen transferred her allegiance to the Episcopal church, whose rector continued to pray for her publicly each Sunday. pp. 44-45)

e. At Kaumakapili all was strife and confusion. The followers of the Reverend Waiama'u, who accepted the overthrow, sought to oust Deacon Alapa'i, the queen's friend and supporter, on charge of heathenish practices. On four successive Saturdays a jury of native elders heard testimony. But, though Alapa'i's wife was known as a kahuna who kept an 'unhipili, the decision went in the deacon's favor, and he continued to foster royalist sentiment in the congregation. For weeks, to the dismay of those who lived within its sound, the Kaumakapili bell tolled each morning between four and four-thirty to call members to prayer for restoration. (p. 45)

f. J. K. Iosepa, long a staunch Reformer, ... (spoke) 'I am today abused because I take up annexation, but ... I am not going to move back one inch. I stand on this platform and shall stick to it until we reach the hour of annexation.' ... As for Iosepa's fellow Hawaiians, most of them hated him bitterly for his stand. (p. 2)

g. The last day of 1893 fell on a Sunday. From Washington Place Lili'uokalani could see the "missionary" people flocking to the evening service at Central Union Church to give thanks for their deliverance from doubt and fear. She could hear their hymns of faith and praise; she knew the songs well, for her choir at Kawaiaha'o had sung them in Hawaiian in days gone by. But tonight the P.G.'s were not depending on God alone; their watchmen (Lili'uokalani called them spies) were all around—on the corner by the church, in the school yard ewa of her house, in Miller's Lane, over by the Episcopal church— all carrying guns. (p. 85)

h. They assembled on May 30— six native Hawaiians (John 'Ena of the advisory council was Chinese-Hawaiian), fourteen Hawaiians of foreign parentage (half of them missionary sons), nine Americans, three British, three Portuguese, and two Germans. "Aliens and foreign adventurers," an angry royalist proclaimed them. "Men who were either born here or have resided here a long time— all fully identified with the country, W. O. Smith retorted. (p. 98)

i. At Central Union Church the exuberant sharpshooters--'we good Americans,' one of them called the troop--marked their return from the skirmish in Manoa valley by petitioning the government for the prompt arrest of Lili'uokalani. (p. 168)

9. Quoted in Shoal of Time: History of the Hawaiian Islands <sup>9</sup> :

a. One of the most enthusiastic blackeners of Lili'uokalani's character was the Reverend Sereno Bishop, who was the Hawaiian correspondent of United Press and a frequent writer of articles for newspapers and periodicals on the American east coast. When Lili'uokalani came to the throne in 1891 Bishop described her as a pious Christian lady. But within a year or two Bishop convinced himself of the righteousness of the annexationists' cause, and this meant that he had also to convince himself of the queen's essential wickedness. He shone the white light of his pure intentions on the ruins of the Hawaiian royal house and caught glimpses of appalling things scuttling about in the shadows-- or perhaps just on the edges of his own mind. The queen was under the influence of kahunas, heathen sorcerers, so Bishop said; she encouraged the dancing of the lascivious hula; she made sacrifices to the volcano goddess, Pele; and, horror of horrors, her blackness was physical as well as moral-- she and her brother Kalakaua were notoriously the children of a female chief of the second rank and her paramour, a negro bootblack named John Blossom. If this kind of talk would not discredit the queen nothing could, and Bishop could be sure, as he needed to be, that his motives were of the best. Lili'uokalani's people were no better than she was, according to Bishop. Two out of three native Hawaiians could read, and most of them called themselves Christians, but this could not be taken to mean that they were responsible citizens. They were shiftless, drunken, untrustworthy, with no idea of the value of work. In fact, the great majority of them earned whatever money they had by selling their women as prostitutes to Chinese and Japanese laborers. Once again, of course, Bishop was arguing against the monarchy and for the republic but it was just possible that he was digging a pit for his own annexationist hopes. Why would the United States want to annex such a sink of depravity? (p 284-285)

b. They were told that this was for the best, but they found it hard to believe. It sounded like more missionary talk, of the kind they had been hearing for decades, and they said so. In fact the word "missionary," used by people like Robert Wilcox, was a horrible epithet. And Wilcox used it generously: In his language anybody who wanted the Islands to fall into the hands of the United States was a missionary. Of course it was true that among the revolutionaries of 1887 and 1893 and the annexationists of 1898 there were a good number of descendants of Protestant missionaries-- the 'mission boys,' as Lorrin Thurston described them. In his own confused way Wilcox was right about the intentions of the mission boys; they were fond of saying that they looked always to the greater good, and by the eighteen nineties the United States had come to embody the higher good. The United States responded in kind; in the mixture of motives that led to the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands a strong strain of Protestant religiosity was present; a desire to do good for unfortunates regardless of what the unfortunates thought about it. The Hawaiians were unable to do much about their political fate, but in good Christian fashion they voted with their consciences. As

<sup>9</sup> Gavan Daws, Shoal of Time: History of the Hawaiian Islands (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1976)

recently as 1870 one Hawaiian in every four had thought of himself as Protestant. After it became clear that Protestantism entailed aggressive Americanism the Hawaiians began to drop away from the old missionary church. They did not abandon Christianity altogether, but they changed their allegiance. At the beginning of the eighteen nineties the Roman Catholic church and the Mormon church had more than eighteen thousand members between them, and the Protestant church had fewer than three thousand members. (pp. 291-292)

10. Quoted in Address to the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society 10 :

In 1863 there was a church membership of 19,725 in the care of 16 American missionaries and 4 native helpers. But the 57 churches in 1895 were in the charge of native ministers almost wholly, and church membership had dropped to 4,784.

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10 O. P. Emerson, Address to the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society (Hawaiian Mission Children's Society library, 1895) cited by Nancy J. Morris, "Hawaiian Missionaries in the Marquesas," the Hawaiian Journal of History, vol. XII, 1979, p. 54.