

*From Minutes of the 168th Aha Pae'aina, Hawaii Conference United Church of Christ  
Central Union Church, Honolulu, Hawaii, June 13-17, 1990*

RECOGNIZING THE RIGHT TO SELF GOVERNANCE OF NATIVE HAWAIIANS

- WHEREAS, the triumph of people striving for individual initiative over collective authority has spread most rapidly in 1989 to 1990 throughout countries in Eastern Europe, Africa, and South America; and
- WHEREAS, the United States has a history of granting indigeuous native peoples-including American Indian, Eskimos, and "Aleuts" - their inherent right to a self-determined form of self governance and management of resources; and
- WHEREAS, the development of individual initiative, self-esteem, and self-sufficiency is an most effective way of overcoming personal poverty, coupled with external factors such as availability of, low to moderate affordable housing and decent paying jobs; and
- WHEREAS, the need to enable Hawaiians to help themselves get out of poverty rather than have them rely solely on public programs planned for them - is generally acknowledged by leaders in government and the public, too; and
- WHEREAS, Hawaiians themselves in growing numbers (at least 32,000 petitioners on a petition sent to Congress in 1990) demand more individual initiative; that is the right to be heard, the right to help themselves rise above poverty, and the right to self-governance; and
- WHEREAS, according to a provision in a resolution adopted by a major political party in 1990: "...the citizens of the State of Hawaii acknowledge the difficulty of this process (of defining self-determination and giving form to group governance) and its central role in ensuring the future full empowerment of the Hawaiian people in managing their resources and defining their destiny" and
- WHEREAS, the Democratic Party of Hawaii (at its 1990 Convention) adopted a resolution that recognizes the inherent right of Native Hawaiian people to self-determined governance; and
- WHEREAS, according to scriptures, God is on the side of the poor and the oppressed, and in the Exodus story, where God spoke to Moses we find this expression: "I have surely seen the affliction of My people...and have given heed to their cry...for I am aware of their sufferings. So I have come down to deliver them from the power of the Egyptians..." (Exodus 3:7,8)
- WHEREAS, the Church as the body of Christ, has a commitment and responsibility to speak for the voiceless, to represent the powerless, to give aid to the oppressed, and that this is the ministry of Jesus Christ, which is the ministry of reconciliation,
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the 168th Aha Pae'aina of the Hawaii Conference, United Church of Christ, that it recognize the inherent right of the native Hawaiian people to self-determined governance, and that it pledges its support and solidarity, and advocacy of the same, in the name of Christ.