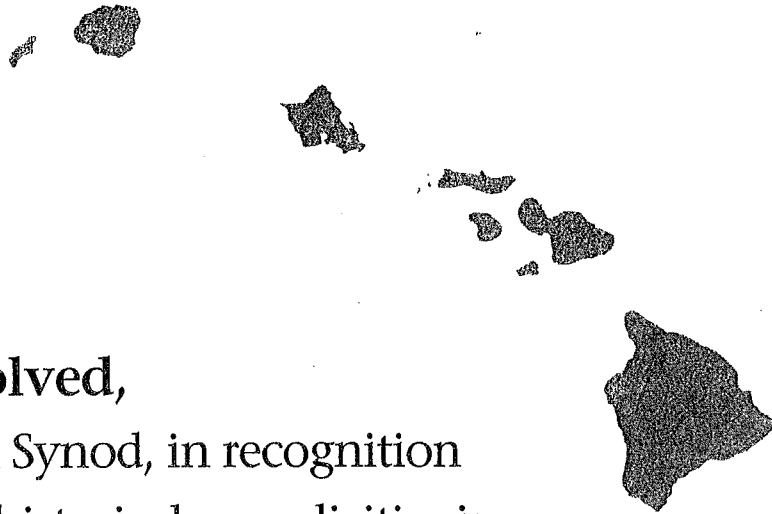


Spring, 1993

New Conversations



Therefore, be it resolved,
the Eighteenth General Synod, in recognition
of our denomination's historical complicities in
the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy
in 1893, **directs the Office of the President of the
United Church of Christ to offer a public apology to
the native Hawaiian people, and to initiate a process of
reconciliation** between the United Church of Christ
and native Hawaiians . . .

— General Synod XVIII,
United Church of Christ,
Norfolk, Virginia, June, 1991

New Conversations

Volume 15, Number 1

This issue contains an apology and its rationale offered by the leaders of the United Church of Christ to the native Hawaiian people. A future issue will include responses by native Hawaiians, both those who are members of the UCC and those who are not.

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the United Church Board
for Homeland Ministries

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Executive Vice President

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Conversation Piece

On January 17, 1893, marines from the USS *Boston* landed in Honolulu, Hawaii, and took possession of its main government buildings. In this act they were supported by a group of white men, some of them the children or grandchildren of the first Congregational missionaries to the islands. A Provisional Government, composed entirely of whites, declared that the reign of Queen Lili'uokalani was at an end. Their action was later declared illegal by high officials in the U.S. Government, including President Grover Cleveland himself. It was, however, never abrogated, and became the groundwork for first, the annexation of Hawaii by the United States, and then the admission of the state of Hawaii to the union.

On January 17, 1993, another group of white men—the President of the United Church of Christ and the Executive Vice Presidents of the Board for World Ministries and the Board for Homeland Ministries—will journey to Hawaii. There, in several places in that island chain, they will formally apologize to the native Hawaiian people (the *kanaka maoli*) for the “complicities” of our Congregational predecessors in this illegal act. Theirs will be an act of extraordinary significance, both for what it says about the church of the nineteenth century, and for

what it says about the United Church of Christ today.

Some readers of this issue of *NEW CONVERSATIONS*, which is being sent to all the churches of the United Church of Christ, may find that their first response to this apology will be to dismiss it as faddism, a piece of “political correctness” with which they have no sympathy. We ask them to read the materials here provided before they judge, so that they may understand more fully the history which informs this radical and courageous act.

The act of apology raises several important questions for us, the heirs of these 19th-century Congregationalists. Many of them were, as you will see from reading the words of one of their major apologists, the Rev. Sereno E. Bishop [See p.52], absolutely convinced of the rightness and necessity of the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani, and believed devoutly that they were acting for God in this world. We today, who often share the same conviction about our own actions, must consider carefully the implications of that belief, both in the 19th century and our own.

Looking back, we can now say with considerable accuracy that those of our Congregational ancestors who were involved in the

overthrow of the monarchy illustrate the ease with which people of faith can be captured by the culture in which they live. The Rev. S.E. Bishop's fulminations against the abomination of the *hula* are, to modern sensibilities, a humorous example of that captivity; indeed, it is hard to determine which Bishop dislikes more, the dance or the Queen's effort to achieve financial independence by supporting a lottery and the importation of opium. Unhappily, we also see in some of the writings and actions of these good Calvinist people the assumptions of superiority—in this case racial superiority, of white over brown or any other shade—which were dominant in many church folk of that time, and which are still alive and well among us, though now apparently focusing more on sexual orientation than on skin color.

The inevitable interplay of religion and the larger world continues. Would the Hawaii Conference have passed its resolution in support of the sovereignty claims of the indigenous people if we were not living in a time when small lands are throwing off the yoke of foreign rule? Would the General Synod of the United Church of Christ have echoed that resolution if it had not, at the same time, been planning our response to the quincentenary of Columbus' “dis-

covery" of the "new" world? And would three of our leaders have taken this task upon themselves had we not gone through the civil, feminist, indigenous, and gay rights movements in the United States?

Today Hawaii is in the grips of a political movement which provides the background for the actions of the Hawaii Conference and for that of our mainland leadership. Some groups in Hawaii (which many of them spell Hawai'i) want "nation within a nation" status for indigenous Hawaiians, who now number only about 20% of the islands' population. Such a status would be comparable with that of Native Americans on the mainland.

Others see nation-within-a-nation status as only a first step toward ultimate independence. Many hesitate to change, recognizing that full independence would bring to an end the many supports of American society, including financial benefits such as Social Security. Many wonder what solution would deal justly with Hawaii's many racial groups and racial mixtures. Some want all those who are not descendants of

the original inhabitants of the island to leave, while others would allow any one who would renounce his/her loyalty to any other country—including the United States—to remain. Still others want to try the United States for war crimes, and for violation of the 1946 charter of the United Nations. ("A Century After Queen's Overthrow, Talk of Sovereignty Shakes Hawaii," *New York Times*, November 6, 1992; see also the article by Milliani Trask, a leader in the sovereignty movement, in *NEW CONVERSATIONS*, Spring 1992.)

Recognizing the cry for justice in the sovereignty movement, the Hawaii Conference of the United Church of Christ, at its Aha Pae'aina in 1990, passed a resolution in support of sovereignty for the native people of Hawaii, and brought that resolution to the General Synod of the church later the next year. The committee dealing with the resolution not only supported it, but added the request that the president of the United Church apologize to the Hawaiian people for the complicities of missionary descendants in the overthrow. General Synod 18's action is the groundwork for the journey

to Hawaii of the leaders of our church.

The actions of the Hawaii Conference demonstrate clearly its respect for the political and civil aspirations of the people of Hawaii. Equally clearly, we see how necessary it is for people of faith to deal with the social issues of their time. Faced with the same necessity, most of our ancestors in the church one-hundred years ago opted to support their own culture over that of the Hawaiian people.

Today the leaders of our church are apologizing for these actions, and speaking out in support of the movement for self-governance. But because we are aware that we are as prone to error as they were, and because we know that we too see through a glass darkly, we take this action in deep humility. Our ancestors in the church led imperfect lives; so too do we. In that awareness, we offer this act of apology thoughtfully and prayerfully, in the hope that, when we are judged by our descendants a hundred years hence, they will find that we have been faithful servants, and will respect our effort to redress a long-standing wrong. □

Resolution: Self-Governance of Native Hawaiians

General Synod
18 (June, 1991)

Whereas, the Seventeenth General Synod, which adopted a Hawaiian homelands resolution, heard a pronouncement about the westernizing and destruction of Pacific Island ways before Euro-American contact. It stated, Hawaii was owned by God, and the people were stewards of the land. Then the Great *Mahele* (land distribution), a foreign idea of private land ownership, was introduced. The Kingdom of Hawaii¹ enacted this system by Euro-American design and pressure. The same was true with the dethroning of Hawaii's last monarch, Queen Lili'uokalani. In both instances, American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions missionary descendants were involved. Unable to relate to this land system, native Hawaiians became dislocated strangers at home, and many still ache with pain stemming from the tragic overthrow. Previous General Synods have passed resolutions and a pronouncement in support of Native Americans whose experiences are similar to Native Hawaiians; and

Whereas, the Congregational Church, a historic member of the United Church of Christ, sponsored and sent 100 [almost 150—Ed.] missionaries to Hawaii between 1820 and 1850. Many times that church has been rightly commended and credited for all the

good works it did related to converting many Hawaiians to Christianity; and

Whereas, the United Church of Christ has yet to acknowledge that some of its missionary descendants were party to an illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. In fact, U.S. President Grover Cleveland, on December 18, 1893, said to Congress, "... The military occupation of Honolulu by the United States on the day mentioned was wholly without justification, either as an occupation by consent or as an occupation necessitated by dangers threatening American life and property;" and

Whereas, there is a rising consciousness to reevaluate the circumstances surrounding the overthrow. And, with the coming of the hundredth anniversary of that sad historic event for Hawaiians, an honest appraisal and acknowledgment of the Congregational missionaries' descendants' role in it should be made, because our church needs to bring that matter to some appropriate closure; and

Whereas, the Hawaii Conference UCC, at its 1990 annual meeting, enacted Resolution X, "Recognizing the Right to Self-Governance of Native Hawaiians." Through this means, the Hawaii Conference is supporting the movement to

correct injustices to native Hawaiians; and

Whereas, in 1970 President Richard Nixon changed existing U.S. policy toward America's native peoples by rejecting all past policies which had kept Native Americans wards of the government. He announced a national policy of self-determination on Indian tribes; and

Whereas, the United States has a history of granting indigenous people, including American Indians, Eskimos and Aleuts, the inherent right of a self-determined governance and management of resources, and the Native Hawaiian has yet to be included among these.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, the Eighteenth General Synod recognizes the inherent right of Native Hawaiians to self-governance and pledges it support and solidarity in the name of Christ; and

Be it Further Resolved, the Eighteenth General Synod urges the Hawaii State Legislature and the U.S. Congress to recognize the right to self-governance of Native Hawaiians; and we urge these governments to make available resources to support grassroots initiatives toward self-governance; and

Be it Further Resolved, the Eighteenth General Synod, in recogni-

tion of our denomination's historical complicities in the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, directs the Office of the President of the UCC to offer a public apology to the native Hawaiian people and to initiate a process of reconciliation between the United Church of Christ and native Hawaiians; and

Be it Further Resolved, the Eighteenth General Synod directs the Office for Church in Society to develop resources in collaboration

with the Hawaii Conference to enable churches and conferences to engage in study about the substance of this resolution; and

Be it Further Resolved, the Eighteenth General Synod also directs the Office for Church in Society to monitor and to follow up on this resolution, to report progress in UCC publications and, in collaboration with the Hawaii Conference, to report to the Nineteenth General Synod; and

Be it Further Resolved, the Eigh-

teenth General Synod share this resolution and follow-up study and report with other denominations in order to encourage their support of this initiative of Native Hawaiian self-governance. □

Note

¹ As noted earlier, many proponents of Hawaiian sovereignty prefer the spelling *Hawai'i*. In this issue we have reproduced the spellings used by the individual authors represented.

An Apology to the Indigenous Hawaiian People

This apology to the Hawaiian people will be given by the President of the United Church of Christ on January 17, 1993, the 100th anniversary of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy.

We are gathered in this place, at the request of the 18th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, to recall with sorrow the unprovoked invasion of the Hawaiian nation on January 17, 1893, by unauthorized forces of the United States. We are gathered here so that, as President of the United Church of Christ, I can apologize for the support given that act by ancestors of ours in the church now known as the United Church of Christ. We do so in order to begin a process of repentance and reconciliation for wrongs done. We are here not to condemn, but to acknowledge. We are here to remember and ask forgiveness. We are here to commit ourselves to work alongside our Hawaiian sisters and brothers—both those in the United Church of Christ and those beyond—in the hope that a society of justice and mercy for them and for all people, everywhere, may yet emerge.

We remember that in 1820 the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, now known as the United Church Board for World Ministries, sent missionaries to Hawaii to preach the good news of Jesus Christ. These women and men, often at great

personal sacrifice, witnessed to the Gospel in compelling ways. Their lives of Christian commitment and generosity are an inspiration, and their contributions endure. We thank God for them.

Some of these men and women, however, sometimes confused the ways of the West with the ways of the Christ. Assumptions of cultural and racial superiority led some of them and those who followed them to discount or undervalue the strengths of the mature society they encountered. Therefore, the rich indigenous values of the native Hawaiian people, their language, their spirituality, and their regard for the land, went unappreciated. The resulting social, political, and economic implications of these harmful attitudes contributed to the suffering of the native Hawaiian people in that time and into the present. Justice will be pursued and reconciliation achieved as, together, we recognize both the strengths and the weaknesses of those who preceded us, as we celebrate that which is good, and as we make right that which is wrong.

Through the years, the Hawaiian people have experienced virtually the total loss of their land. Their sovereignty has been taken from

them. Many suffer from severe poverty, lack of educational opportunity and decent health care, and their cultural heritage is under severe threat. Justice and mercy demand rectification (*pono*) of these wrongs, so that we may be reconciled with each other and walk, together, toward a common future.

We recognize that, in collaboration with others from the United States and elsewhere, a number of descendants of the missionaries helped form the so-called "Provisional Government," which conspired with armed forces of the United States in the invasion of 1893. With the involvement and public support of local Protestant church leaders, the Provisional Government appropriated all Crown and public lands for eventual forfeiture to the United States, in exchange for annexation. On January 17, 1893, Queen Lili'oukalani, temporarily and under "solemn protest," abdicated to this provisional group "until such time as the Government of the United States shall, upon facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representatives and reinstate me. . . ."

Queen Lili'uokalani rejected not only the legality of the overthrow but also its morality. She appealed directly to the American people:

Oh, honest Americans, as Christians hear me for my down-trodden people! Their form of government is as dear to them as yours is precious to you. Quite as warmly as you love your country, so they love theirs. . . . With all your goodly possessions, covering a territory so immense that there yet remain parts unexplored, possessing islands that, although near at hand, had to be neutral ground in time of war, do not covet the little vineyard of Naboth's, so far from your shores, lest the punishment of Ahab fall upon you, if not in your day, in that of your children, for "be not deceived, God is not mocked." The children to whom our fathers told of the living God, and taught to call "Father," and whom the sons now seek to despoil and destroy, are crying aloud to Him in their time of trouble; and He will keep His promise, and will listen to the voices of His Hawaiian children, lamenting for their homes.

Sadly, the Queen's appeal was ignored.

A long century later, the 18th General Synod of the United Church of Christ, while celebrat-

ing the good fruits of the mission enterprise, recognizes also, far too late, the wrongs perpetrated upon the Hawaiian people. Therefore, the General Synod has instructed me, its President, to begin a process of reconciliation, beginning with a formal apology to you, the Hawaiian people.

We acknowledge and confess our sins against you and your forebears, the indigenous people of Hawaii. We formally apologize to you for "our denomination's historical complicities in the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy in 1893," by unduly identifying the ways of the West with the ways of the Christ, and, thereby, undervaluing the strengths of the mature society that was native Hawaii. We commit ourselves to help right the wrongs inflicted upon you. We promise appreciation of the traditions, spirituality, and culture that are distinctly yours. We promise to receive the gifts you offer, and we commit ourselves to stand with you in your quest for justice and self-determination. May God guide us all into a new day of reconciliation, in which justice is pursued and mercy received. □

Members of the United Church of Christ Delegation to Hawaii:

- Paul H. Sherry, President,
United Church of Christ
- Scott S. Libbey, Executive Vice-
President, United Church
Board for World Ministries
- Thomas E. Dipko, Executive Vice-
President, United Church
Board for Homeland Ministries
- Denise Page Hood, Chair,
Executive Council, United
Church of Christ
- Dorothy Gentry Kearney,
President, United Church
Board for World Ministries
- César A. Coloma, Chair,
United Church Board
for Homeland Ministries
- Reba Walker, Chair,
Office for Church in Society,
United Church of Christ
- Armand Schmidt, Executive
Director, Council for
American Indian Ministries

Pono

(to Make Right)

Paul H. Sherry

President
United Church of Christ
Cleveland, Ohio

As the President of the United Church of Christ, I have been asked by the 18th General Synod of the United Church of Christ to make a formal apology to the native Hawaiian people for "our denomination's historical complicities in the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy in 1893." This apology is a significant step toward the reconciliation that we of the United Church of Christ seek with the native Hawaiian people—both those who are members of the United Church of Christ and those who are not.

We of the United Church of Christ are committed to help shape, under God, a world-wide society of justice and mercy for all people; wherein we share our gifts with each other, seek God's way for us through the confusions and injustices of our age, ask God's forgiveness for our waywardness, and walk, together, toward God's promised future. The apology we offer to the native Hawaiian people seeks

to embody that commitment, in order that justice may be done and mercy pursued.

Our Hawaiian sisters and brothers remind us, however, that as important as an apology is, true reconciliation depends on rectification, making right (*pono*) that which is wrong, so that we can walk, with integrity, toward a common future. That is our task. As we respond in faith to that task, we will be the faithful people that these times demand.

The native Hawaiian people have suffered greatly. Their sovereignty has been taken from them. Their culture has been denigrated. They have been denied their land. Many among them suffer greatly from poverty, and from a lack of educational opportunity and decent health care. Reconciliation demands rectification of these ugly abuses, in the name of justice and mercy. But rectification demands also that the leadership for this journey toward justice and mercy

rest in the hands of the native Hawaiian people. And as we of the United Church of Christ respond, as we seek to make right that which is wrong, may God grant that the reconciliation we seek will indeed come to pass.

Acts of repentance and reconciliation remind us that our God is not finished with us yet. In a world of injustice and hostility, we are all tempted to despair. We wonder if the truth will ever be told, if the hungry will be fed, if the excluded will find a home, if justice will be served and mercy received. But even as we wonder, we trust that, since our God is with us, our journey is not in vain. In the midst of the brokenness, God forgives, God renews, God transforms.

This day, far too long delayed, we ask the forgiveness of God and of the native Hawaiian people, and we re-commit ourselves to continue the journey toward a world of justice and mercy, for all people, everywhere. □

Solidarity and Apology— The Surprising Shape of Grace

- to stand in solidarity with Native Hawaiian peoples, and
- to join in the development and presentation of an apology to the Hawaiian peoples for our direct or indirect complicity in the illegal and immoral overthrow of the rightful Hawaiian government and royalty.

These two acts are called for by a resolution voted by the United Church of Christ (USA) General Synod in 1991. These proposed acts are stimulating the rediscovery of some needed, but painful, perspectives on history.

We are challenged to try to get our historical facts straight. And we are forced to see, once again, the truth that good and honorable intentions can easily be victimized by a failure to understand the radical extent to which intentions are always shaped by the parochial and partial vision of the truth as it is experienced and interpreted in a particular context. We are also reminded of the vulnerability to sin and self-interest which is part of our humanness in both personal and social behavior.

- to stand in solidarity
- to apologize

These acts call forth a profound pilgrimage. For most of us this journey offers a spiritual gift and

may, by grace, be a season of grace.

I hasten to affirm my belief that, by grace, these acts of the United Church of Christ may in some small but significant ways contribute to a spiritual journey which many of the Native Hawaiian peoples have already begun. For them the journey can connect with a new self-understanding bringing a sense of dignity, self-worth, pride, and integrity rooted in their own history and culture. To realize these connections and find this new life would surely be a spiritual journey. It would be a journey toward justice and reconciliation. For Native Hawaiian peoples, such a journey and new life would be a gift of God's grace—not the product of any resolution or any government's legislation.

And I am also convinced that a terribly, terribly important need and gift of the spiritual journey flowing out of these acts relates to those of us who are descendants of, and participants today in, the faith view and world view which led to, and leads to, the denigration and exploitation of the Native Hawaiian peoples and their culture. We recognize, in the history of mission and colonization in Hawaii, one more face of the same forces which have oppressed and are oppressing indigenous peoples in many places of our planet earth.

We surely see aspects of this same violence and injustice in the treatment of Native Americans on the mainland, USA, the Native Africans in South Africa, the Aboriginal peoples of Australia, and many, many others. In discussing "The Historical Role of the American Indian" in his book, *The Dream of the Earth*, Thomas Berry notes a predisposition which seems to belong to those whose ancestry has roots in Europe. He writes about

... our compulsive Savior instincts. We take up the burden of saving others even when in fact we destroy them. Religious personalities from the European culture have been especially limited in their ability to see the profoundly religious and spiritual qualities of the Indian traditions. European-derived peoples have consistently had difficulty communicating with others in a shared human context.¹

We are torn in this necessary, but painful, spiritual journey, for we must genuinely acknowledge that our ancestors were and we today are, oppressors.

The surprising grace of this spiritual journey of standing in solidarity with Native Hawaiian peoples and presenting an apology may be ours if we experience a radical conversion, wherein the gospel liberates us to see every political, eco-

Scott S. Libbey

Executive Vice-President
United Church Board
for World Ministries

conomic, and social structure, including our own, judged by God's love and righteousness. This grace may be for us if we are liberated to an honest and deep repentance for the reality of our historic complicity in these sins against the peoples of God nurtured in the Hawaiian Islands. Grace may come to us as repentance forms a readiness for a soul-racking confession. And this repentance and confession may form the foundation for a genuine apology, leading to a redeeming reconciliation empowered by forgiveness.

Are these not some of the essential ingredients of a spiritual journey?

- Conversion and liberation
- Repentance
- Confession

- Reconciliation empowered by forgiveness
- New community, under the sovereignty of God.

This spiritual journey is a profound need inherent in the very fabric of being faithful to the gospel in the 19th and 20th century USA church.

Perhaps it is too presumptuous to suggest that these acts of solidarity and apology may contribute to such a journey, but I am convinced that, within the surprising shape of God's grace, all things are possible.

In a recent penetrating essay, Dr. Elsa Tamez, a lay theologian teaching at the Latin American Biblical Seminary in Costa Rica, wrote:

Conversion to the neighbor is a conversion to God, and that

conversion manifests itself in the real fruits of solidarity. [She concludes:] This is good news for a world which lives with wars and a human race living on a rapidly degenerating planet. Solidarity among all humankind is more vital than ever. . . .²

I am grateful for the opportunity which is ours to share in this solidarity and apology—the seedbed for a spiritual journey—again, the surprising shape of grace. □

Notes

¹ Thomas Berry, *The Dream of the Earth*, (Sierra Club Books, 1988), p. 182.

² Elsa Tamez, "The Indigenous Peoples Are Evangelizing Us," *The Ecumenical Review*, October 1992 (World Council of Churches), p. 465.

An Apology After 100 Years

Next to "I love you," few words in any of the languages of humankind hold the awesome healing power of an apology, often expressed in the simple petition, "I'm sorry, please forgive me." In these unadorned, transparent, what-you-hear-is-what-I-mean sounds, there is grace large enough to stem the tide of colossal hatred and cool the fuses of pending war. Perhaps that is why Jesus wisely enshrined the apology of the sinner in the prayer that admits no other way to receive pardon than first to give it to others.

An apology, in the sense that it is used here, is the opposite of what the early church intended by its "apologia" or logical defense of the truth. An apology, in the penitential sense, meant an admission that something *indefensible* has happened, even if it occurs in relation to what is intended as good and noble. It is in this causative and negative sense that the United Church of Christ recognizes its historic role in the suffering and injustice experienced by the Hawaiian people after the arrival in their Pacific homeland of Christian missionaries and other persons of European descent.

Without judging the hearts of individual Missionaries, the evidence is compelling that the Christian Message was presented to

Hawaiian people in the cultural idiom of white, western, Protestant representatives who did not distinguish between the message and the medium. One consequence of this conflation of holy Word and human words was the radical displacement of the indigenous people of Hawaii from their land, language, and customs of governance, and the imposition of norms that left them vulnerable to the self-interest of foreigners residing in their midst.

The unauthorized invasion of Hawaii by armed forces of the United States on January 17, 1893, and the ultimate failure of church or state to protest and redress this injustice are two signs of the triumph of "self-interest" over both gospel and democracy. The testimony of the deposed Queen Lili'uokalani, a baptized member of the church founded by our missionaries and now known as the United Church of Christ, reveals her grave disappointment in the local churches and their autonomous Hawaiian Evangelical Association that failed to minister to her during her house arrest. Her shock was exacerbated by the silence of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which officially ended its work in Hawaii in 1863, but whose agent, according to the Queen, was present in Hawaii during this troubled time. Her even-

tual visits to Washington, D.C. and Boston moved no one in either church or state to restore her legitimate government to its rightful place in history.

Reinhold Niebuhr cautioned Christians in 1945 that it is always "necessary to distinguish what is false in democratic theory from what is true in democratic life."¹ Of those who would discern the difference he wrote, "They must know the power of self-interest in human society without giving it moral justification. They must have this wisdom in order that they may beguile, deflect, harness and restrain self-interest, individual and collective, for the sake of the community."²

The gradual imposition of cultural triumphalism and political hegemony in Hawaii by foreigners was anticipated in 1836 by Samuel Parker, an explorer for the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Although he hoped that the foundations being laid by the missionaries would prepare the Hawaiian people for enduring independence, he recognized the menacing self-interest of foreign powers. Before leaving Oahu in 1836, he wrote in language reminiscent of "manifest destiny,"

The perpetuity of the independence of this nation, and with it

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their existence, is very problematical. A disposition to possess these islands, has evidently been manifested by foreign powers. Whether the paw of the Lion (England), or the talons of the Eagle (the United States), shall first make them its prey, or whether they shall be mutual checks upon each other, and thus prolong the life of this feeble nation, is not known.³

By January 17, 1893, it was known. Foreigners from the United States, including missionary families and their descendants, became a proverbial Trojan horse of internal invasion. Politicians and theologians found it possible to justify the imprisonment of a nation precisely because the standards of the conqueror were perceived to be morally and spiritually superior to the "primitive" ways of an entire indigenous people, even though they had embraced the Christian

faith! To those today who think this is preposterous, Jon Sobrino offers the warning, "Theology, too, can be sinful. Indeed it has a sinfulness peculiar to itself: a concupiscence for self-absolutization."⁴

Self-interest and self-absolutization, in an unholy alliance, have suppressed the truth of our complicity as a church and as a nation in the internal exile of a people in their own homeland. Elsa Tamez is quite right when she sees in our recognition of our complicity in this bondage the promise of our own liberation. Where this honesty prevails, she writes, "We can thus state that the indigenous peoples, out of their situation and with the challenges they present us, are evangelizing us."⁵

I cannot speak for you, but my heart tells me that my church and my country owe the Hawaiian people an apology. It is an apology

that will require much more than words. But as surely as the Word lives in me, it cannot begin with less than my own words. Here there are. I offer them to Queen Lili'uokalani and all her people: "I'm sorry, please forgive me." □

Notes

¹ Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1945), 40.

² *Ibid.*, 41.

³ Samuel Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour* (Moscow, Idaho: University of Idaho Press, 1990), 373.

⁴ Jan Sobrino, *Spirituality of Liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1988), 77.

⁵ Elsa Tamez, "The Indigenous Peoples Are Evangelizing Us," *Ecumenical Review* 44:4, October 1992, 464. Emphasis added.

On the 100th Anniversary of the Overthrow of Queen Lili`uokalani of the Kingdom of Hawaii

Some Preliminary Thoughts

Without knowing what the President of the United Church of Christ plans to say in response to the mandate given him by the General Synod to apologize for our denomination's complicity in Queen Lili`uokalani's overthrow, I am responding to the invitation to reflect on the event's anniversary from my perspective as Conference Minister. Being neither *kama`aina* (not born in and lived my life in Hawaii) nor native Hawaiian, I have felt reluctant to participate in activities commemorating the overthrow, an event that is internal to the history to Hawaii.¹ And then to reflect on it after only a little over three years residence here—I feel like I am intruding into a situation where I am not welcome.

But, like it or not, it is my business. As a citizen of the United States I ruminate on an event that joins a seemingly endless procession of events, recently, requiring revision of American history, questioning the idealistic rhetoric of our origins as a nation.

But, for me, my particular responsibilities in the ecclesiastical descendant of the Hawaii Evangelical Association require me to participate. I cannot escape from being swept up into the activities, from the declarations and conflicts evoked by the pluralistic interpre-

tations of the overthrow. And the General Synod's mandate to the Office of the President of our Church to apologize for the denomination's complicity in the overthrow puts me there. In the past year or more I have sought an appropriate role for the *malihini* (newcomer) conference minister that I am in these very internal, very Hawaiian, issues. I admit I have not found a comfortable place in these events, yet.

I am assuming there is sufficient information in the other articles of this issue of *NEW CONVERSATIONS* to provide the reader with a rudimentary understanding of the actual events of the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy, and that I need not summarize them here. I want to try to sort it out from several perspectives, at least enough so that I can approach the week leading up to January 17, 1993, with some degree of equanimity, if not confidence.

First, I will wander in and out of the history which surrounds the events of the overthrow. Then, I will review my experience in the Hawaii Conference as we have anticipated the anniversary, but more particularly as the General Synod imposed its agenda on us by mandating an apology. I will conclude by attempting a modest form of theological reflection upon it all.

Wandering Around the History

I want to make clear that what follows in this section is not to be construed as a narrative history of the overthrow of the monarchy. I pick and choose from various sources and events,² and attempt to reflect on what I think I have seen.

Robert B. Reich reminds us that

politicians of the age [1870s plus] were proud to call themselves imperialists. National expansion, influence, and economic growth were wrapped in the same cloak. "Territorial expansion," explained an official of the Department of State in 1900, "is but the by product of the expansion of commerce."³

Hawaii participated in the economic development of the time in a way that almost guaranteed internal conflict. "Education, industrial development, and national security were seen as tightly inter-related."⁴ Hawaii became a pawn of sorts in the larger imperial games of the nations. Not only were the sugar plantations beginning to shape a new Hawaii by agriculture, commerce, and securing laborers from Asia, Norway, and Portugal,⁵ but also leaders of the United States, Britain, and Japan clearly grasped and plotted around the strategic location of the islands in the Pacific for military purposes. The old and tradi-

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tional conflicts around economics and power found Hawaii to be a strategic setting in the late 19th and early 20th Century.

Native Hawaiians, with their land- and family-based culture, and tradition-oriented royal family, were unable to provide an immovable object in the way of the trio of irresistible forces of economic expansion, nationalism, and the use of military power to establish and protect the first two. In this regard, I need not remind the reader that Hawaii was not the only place, nor Hawaiians the only people, who were sacrificed on the altar of economic and national "progress" as conceptualized in the 19th century.⁶

The *mythos* of our nation is based upon freedom, the pursuit of happiness, new opportunity. And, it may be said, for some, the promise of the myth was fulfilled in the reality of their experience. Yet, at the same time, whole generations wound up sacrificing themselves before their offspring began to experience a taste of the mythological⁷ promise of America. The gap between the mythological American promise and its tangible fulfillments remains a major economic, political, and social reality to this day for native Hawaiians. Indeed, the indigenous peoples who were in the present adjacent 48 states, Alaska, and Hawaii have had few opportunities to participate in this

promise-fulfillment paradigm of the Americas.

The leaders of commerce, those who led the revolution for the "Bayonet Constitution" (1887), and who eventually formed the Provisional Government after the overthrow, based their mythology on commerce, on America, and on the inevitable surges of imperialism and development. They believed that business and prosperity would be hindered by the Hawaiian monarchy, particularly if Lili'uokalani was able to rescind some of the limitations forced on the powers of the monarch by the "Bayonet Constitution."⁸

By 1887, an unfamiliar Western political system and a new land-title regime had been superimposed on the kingdom. King Kalakaua was balking at the latest demands of the *haole* businessmen. What they wanted was annexation by the United States, to get around sugar import tariffs. But, aware of popular opposition to annexation, they sought a renewal of the Reciprocity Treaty that let sugar into the United States duty-free.⁹

I read this story as a struggle for power and control of these islands characteristic of its moment in history. Rationalizations for legitimation, for a constitutional monarchy, for "manifest destiny" abound

in this struggle. Native people, their culture and values (even those persons who had adopted Christianity), were set aside, as sacrificeable to the future.

The United Church of Christ must now deal with the fact that many of the leaders of the overthrow were not only Congregationalists, but some of them were "missionary sons," that is, the sons and grandsons of those who brought the Gospel to Hawaii beginning in 1820. They were Americans, and according to the Queen,¹⁰ they denied the Christian base and commitment she had learned from their parents and grandparents. They formed what has been called "the missionary party."

Based on what Andrew H. Walsh¹¹ says about those identified Congregationalists who participated in the overthrow [See pp. 23 ff], I infer they were a powerful minority in the Hawaii Evangelical Association. They were Caucasian, American, leaders in the HEA, and several of the key leaders were "missionary sons."¹² In the early 1890s there were 56 Hawaiian language congregations, and four English language churches. In contrast, there were four Hawaiian clerics on the HEA Board and eight white ministers on the board and its executive committee. One important indication of native Hawaiian reaction to such involve-

ment is their departure from the local churches. In the 1880s there were about 19,000 members in the churches. Several years after the overthrow it was down to 5,000, so many Hawaiians left our church in response to the overthrow.

Regarding Hawaiian attitudes toward the church and the overthrow,

the HEA interpreted disagreement with whites as disaffection towards the Gospel, that falling away from the truth, which is so apt to be induced in the minds of the weak when offenses come. We look with desire for the days when the minds of the people, disembarrassed of present exigencies, may be led again, without such painful distraction, to the glad contemplation of spiritual things.¹³

Walsh goes on to describe how white church leaders became more aggressive in the presence of Hawaiian disquiet. "In 1898, Frank Damon, whose work with Chinese migrants was supported by both the HEA and the ABCFM," wrote:

The old missionaries were not reinforced, and on the shoulders of a native ministry was laid a burden too heavy to bear. There should be a foreign missionary on every island.¹⁴

And, following the revolution, the ABCFM did send a small contingent of missionaries back to Hawaii.

I suspect that historical forces were at work that from our view one hundred years later appear to be larger and more powerful than any of the actors in the scene. I am not suggesting an historical fatalism. But I read or hear of no individual or group or congregation able to mount a prophetic, effective challenge to these forces as incarnated in the participants. The leadership of the HEA became split between active support for the revolution by white leaders, and the opposition of native Hawaiian leaders by passive aggressive means—which appear to me to be the only viable means available to them in their opposition. I do not know what ethnic congregations in the HEA other than Caucasian or Hawaiian did during this time, but I suspect they were peripheral to the power politics of the day.

I have drawn some operating hypotheses for myself as a result of this attempt to read and understand some of the sources available about this painful moment in Hawaiian and United States history.

First, the combination of democratic capitalism, imperialism, and the growing impotence of indigent peoples wound up writing this chapter of history. If there were lonely prophets calling for justice, they were the proverbial "voice of one crying in the wilderness." Essentially, it was an illegal

overthrow, cast in the rationalizations of the powerful of the age.¹⁵

Second, the leaders of the HEA (both white and Hawaiian) reflected—more than they challenged or shaped—their culture and the historical forces and the conflicts of the time. I have not seen evidence that anyone sought for and/or created a Christian witness as an alternative. Both the social gospel, and the sophistication required to analyze the relationship of Gospel to culture, were yet somewhere in the future.

Third, even though these events happened one hundred years ago, they evoke powerful passions, mostly, I suggest, because we in Hawaii have not had either the courage, or a strong enough need, to look at and resolve the issues which underlie our interpretation of the events.

The Hawaii Conference, the General Synod Resolution, and the Anniversary

We (the Hawaii Conference) forwarded our own resolution to the 18th General Synod calling for Synod to affirm the action of the 168th *Aha Pae'aina* (Hawaii Conference Annual Meeting) in June, 1990. The policy part of the vote of the Hawaii Conference states:

Therefore, be it resolved, by the 168th *Aha Pae'aina* of the

Hawaii Conference, United Church of Christ, that it recognize the right of native Hawaiian people to self-determined governance, and that it pledge its support, solidarity, and advocacy of the same, in the name of Christ. [See p. 61]

The resolution forwarded to the General Synod embellished and fleshed out some of the issues around self-governance, and instructed the Office for Church in Society to work collaboratively with the Conference to develop resources for study.

The Committee of General Synod which processed the resolution added the following resolve to what we had forwarded:

Be it further resolved, the Eighteenth General Synod, in recognition of our denomination's historical complicities in the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, directs the Office of the President of the UCC to offer a public apology to Native Hawaiian people and to initiate a process of reconciliation between the United Church of Christ and native Hawaiians.

By identifying "our denomination's historical complicities in the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy," the General Synod interposed itself into the life of the Hawaii Conference in startling and

dramatic ways. The resolution added three new agenda items to an already heavy educational and reconciliatory Mission: 1), it asserted that our denomination had historical complicities in the overthrow; 2), it called on the Office of the President¹⁶ to offer a public apology to the Native Hawaiian people; and, 3), it asked that same Office to initiate a process of reconciliation between the United Church of Christ and native Hawaiians.

As stated above, there is something of a consensus about the illegality of the overthrow, including participation by the United States government as it came to terms with its own imperialist and expansionist ambitions. The Blount report identifies the problems. President Cleveland supported the Blount report, but when President McKinley entered the White House, annexation became a "done deal."¹⁷

However, if there is consensus about the illegalities of the overthrow, a comparable consensus regarding complicities of the denomination has not been established. I am not aware that such has been discussed widely. While there are those on these islands who have been critical of the mission, who possibly believed there was denominational complicity of some form, they had not yet called for a Conference forum in a compelling way.

I doubt if those persons who did sense such complicities would challenge the proposition that they held a minority view. This does not mean, however, that the roles of men in significant places in the HEA who were also leaders in the overthrow have been ignored.

The Conference's Justice for Native Hawaiians Task Force was working diligently, if without a very broad base of support from the Conference, to educate us about Hawaiian self-governance. It became a concept which moved quickly into the more explicit, complex, and controversial questions about Hawaiian sovereignty. I thought they were laying out an appropriate program of education and advocacy. They had some good plans, and were developing constructive relationships with various leaders among the diverse groups of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement. They were beginning their educational program within each *Mokupuni* (Association) and several local churches. Their forwarding the resolution to the General Synod to secure national support was part of their strategic plan.

Then, the General Synod spoke to us and to the nation.¹⁸ Its speech far exceeded the Hawaii Conference's speech on this matter.

Interposing the judgment of denominational "complicities," and

calling for a public apology, preempted both our agenda and our focused energies. When it is all over will we assess this gift from the General Synod to the Hawaii Conference as either constructive, educational, and reconciling, or as destructive, surfacing latent conflicts and alienation? It clearly surfaced "stuff" we have worked to keep in a latent state and under control. What all that "stuff" turns out to be will shape our future pilgrimage together.

As word of Synod's action took wings throughout the islands, it evoked anger and hope.¹⁹ Few people were prepared for the United Church of Christ to offer an apology. Fewer still knew what to do with it. Intuitively, we knew we were in for some rough times ahead, for only an apology for the mission, itself, could have stimulated a stronger response.

Initially, the scuttlebutt that did the rounds said that the UCC had, indeed, apologized for the mission, if not for the missionaries. I received irate phone calls, the kind my colleagues in conference ministry know well. I had to interrupt one caller, a person who has held a significant political office, three times to insist that Synod did not apologize for the mission. After what I believed to be two clear statements that the action was about a proposed apology for our

denomination's complicities in the *overthrow* of the monarchy, *not for the mission*, I thought the caller would understand. But, not so. The caller fired further angry fulminations for the foolishness to apologize for the heroism, faithfulness and beneficial results of the missionaries. At this point I fear I may have blown what little cool was left in my soul. I interrupted, shouting at the caller that there was no apology for the mission, the missionaries, or anything like that. Perhaps my irate tone caught the caller's attention. Finally, I got through. *Not for the mission!* The caller regrouped, and in my judgmental perception of the moment, sputtered a bit, and thanked me for my time.

I relate the above incident not to belittle such responses, but to indicate how wrapped up into one package are the mission, the missionaries, the church's story in Hawaii, the theology, the tradition, and the present. Dissect one and at least one other, if not all, will bleed. Several descendants of missionaries insisted we make it clear that it was not the missionaries, but their offspring, who held leadership in the Provisional Government.

The anger response to the General Synod's addition of the "Be it Resolved" identified above focused on two substantive issues: on the understanding of "denominational

complicities," and on the "apology."

The anger demanded that the people responsible for the phrase point unequivocally to the complicities. Why didn't they provide to people in Hawaii their understanding of those complicities? They pointed to no "smoking gun" in their Synodical charge. What would a "denominational complicity" look like? Walsh points to an action of the Prudential Committee²⁰ of the ABCFM, but it is vague, took place after the overthrow, and hardly could be the proverbial "smoking gun." It seems to me that Walsh infers there was an "attitude" of support for the revolution that could not be directly expressed. But did the Synod delegates refer to that?

So, naturally, the question arose, "How do you *define* denominational complicity?" Must denominational complicity be an official act or stated policy of either the HEA or the ABCFM? Or, perhaps complicity hovers over the ethos and behavior of the leadership of the church—and/or perhaps its silences. Could complicity inhabit the attitude toward Hawaiians that led to a drop in membership from 19,000 to 5,000 during these crucial years? Maybe complicity wanders through the documented implicit racial and cultural prejudice that permeates the writings of the white leadership through the years

of the mission. Or, it might be in the refusal to train and enable native leadership for the Hawaiian churches, and to encourage a contextualized expression of the faith (though in all fairness, such a concept would not and could not develop until the middle of the 20th Century).²¹ The Synod in its wisdom chose not to define "denominational complicities" for us. Now, the President of the Church has that complex, delicate, and consequential task.

The mandate to "apologize" provided the other major source of anger. The following reasons have surfaced so far: 1), in the absence of a definition of "denominational complicities," for what does one apologize?; 2), how can one apologize for what one did not do? (I wasn't around 100 years ago—my ancestors who *were* around 100 years ago had nothing to do with the events of the overthrow); 3), some believe annexation and eventual statehood were the right move; and 4), through quite complex mixtures of belief and perceptions about the organic connections of everything, some feel such an act of apology is very threatening, calling into question both the content and integrity of our historic faith and accomplishments.

The anger becomes somewhat passive-aggressive at times. The Board of Directors of the Conference

voted to remove the word "apology" from its action affirming the President's visit to the Islands with his Synod-imposed mandate. The "apology" is a *national agenda*, not a Conference agenda. As such, we will receive his visit, with his entourage of national leadership, and wish him well.²²

That an apology is interference from "national" is, of course, another cause of anger in a Conference whose relationship to the national bodies has been somewhat ambivalent through the years.

Those who have seen hope in the Synod action have sensed we could go more deeply into our history, become freed from some of our time-bound mythologies, and see with new eyes that the faith has not been indigenized, contextualized, or inculturated²³ for Hawaiian people. The Synod action has come at a potentially kairotic moment, a moment when worlds all over are changing, and so we must reassess our history, how it shapes and nurtures us, and feeds into our vision for the future.

I have seen over and over again that new conversations are taking place, individuals who have remained silent are now "talking-story" in new ways, revealing that inwardly they have felt pain and anger at a century or more of paternalism. As new information about

the details of the overthrow becomes apparent, and the texts prejudicially judging Hawaiians and their culture become more widely known, it is necessary to reassess a previously unquestioned tradition. There are those now ready to begin that heavy and hard work.

The constructive aspects of this total syndrome of events are coming slowly, but in many surprising quarters, *they are coming*. The unasked-for paragraph in a General Synod action has generated a willingness to look again at our history and at what, finally, is our faith. What we are experiencing is more than cognitive dissonance, yet probably something less than a new divine revelation. It is another of those opportunities which God provides a people from time to time to work out their salvation for the next chunk of time.

I want to leave this section with several preliminary conclusions.

First, our composite reaction to the General Synod has revealed how the history, the mission, the missionaries, our theology, and present attitudes are all bound up into one. Our mythology has wrapped all of this up into a tight ball, and to look at one piece requires unraveling carefully a complex entity bonded together by strong emotion. I believe I am making an observation here, and not a judgment.

Second, the difficulty with the Synodical action is that "denominational complicities" is a matter of arbitrary definition, and not an objective set of behaviors. Thus, the whole discussion becomes a Rorschach ink blot writ large. "Denominational complicities" mean what each observer projects onto the conversation, and it is difficult to debate, explore, or discuss such projections as if they were a search for truth.

Third, the Hawaii Conference is tenaciously held together by delicate and complex strands. Each Sunday our people worship God in at least fifteen different languages, only one of which has a European origin. We are a diverse Church. We are constantly influenced by centrifugal and centripetal forces all at once. It is not our racial or ethnic diversity that will separate us, though such diversity is a constant challenge. It is our theological diversity that challenges our commitment to Christian unity. It is theological differences which transcend the racial ethnic groups that get activated by Rorschachs like "apology" and "denominational complicities."

I hope it will prove to be constructive in the long run.

A Bit of Theological Reflection

Obviously, to do an adequate theological reflection on all of this

would require far more time and space than is available at the tail end of this article. Perhaps the best observation I can offer is that we in the Hawaii Conference have our theological work cut out for us. There is hardly an issue of mission, ecclesiology, or the Christian life that is not in some way involved as it touches us. We must work on it.

Comparable to Biblical interpretative questions, what do we ask about the "then" and the "now"? Can we deal with the "now" (that is, January 17, 1993, the day we commemorate the overthrow) without dealing with the "then" (the events, dynamics and perspectives of January 17, 1893)? Or do we disregard these distinctions as Biblical theology seems to be doing?²⁴ While it is possible for people starting from different places to arrive at the same geographic place with the use of a map, I ponder whether people who start from different places theologically can arrive at the same place of faith. I think that is an important question for us.

After reading, experiencing this past year and a half, and talking to a variety of people, I conclude there is not one voice in interpreting our history, but that each voice is a voice of advocacy²⁵ urging a perspective theological, economic, and political. Our politics around the overthrow and Hawaiian sov-

ereignty seem to inform our theological views as much as they are informed by them.

Hence, my first theological observation. We need to find our way through the thicket of being influenced by our culture and influencing it. This complex task relates to how we understand the contextualizing of the faith. I sense there is a belief that there is a universal, a-cultural expression of the Gospel, rather than many local theologies.²⁶ The universal form of the gospel would liberate us from being caught up in the advocacies that seem political. My experience and observations, however, suggest that we are more likely to hang on to a limited perspective when we believe it is universal.

My major theological observation coincides with my primary concern and anxiety. Berger summarizes how we build our stories to construct our reality.²⁷ Schreier outlines carefully how the story, or narrative, is essential in our faith, self-understanding, and capacity to live constructively in our world.²⁸ In Hawaii, we "talk story." There is an instinctive understanding about the cruciality of narrative, or story, in our faith and self-understanding. I believe the events around the overthrow, which have become almost more symbolic than empirical for us, have put several narratives, or stories (or ver-

sions of reality), into conflict. It is like a power struggle. Whose story will prevail? Who will have the power, finally, to define our reality? The consensus that has held for over 170 years regarding the mission, the missionaries, and our theology, has lost its capacity to hold us all together. Whose story will prevail? Or, will any one story dominate, become establishment, as it has up to now? I fear a destructive power struggle for the story.

It is within the context of the struggle for the story that we live with both hurt and hope. Those whose story has been dominant and establishment for over a century are hurt that it no longer holds unequivocally, while those who are challenging the story with another version are filled with hope for a new day. Those whose hurt is grounded in the negative judgments of their culture made by the mission feel the irony that the hope that was given them in Christianity is that which judged their culture. Those whose personal history is not impacted by the symbolic struggles around these events both hurt and hope: we hurt over the fracture of the *ohana* (family; community; bonding); we hope something constructive and reconciling will emerge.

It would be comforting to define a transcendent hope that emerges from this all-too-human hurt.

Those conditions which have created hurt continue to exist. They exist under more contemporary names, e.g. racism, classism, sexism. To the extent these -isms existed in our history as endemic to the culture, our hope is to be able to perceive them and then, exorcise them.

Perhaps a major hope is that the cultural imperialism is diminishing which asserts there is only one cultural expression of the faith, as we now challenge ourselves and our Hawaiian sisters and brothers to claim their cultural expressions. There is much more to be said about these complex questions.

Finally, I am concerned about the content of the reconciliation for which we all yearn. The Board of Directors, in discarding "apology," urged a time of reconciliation. Of course, we all want, hope for, and pray for reconciliation. The *Kairos Document* reminds us:

There can be no doubt that our Christian faith commits us to work for *true* reconciliation and *genuine* peace. But as so many people, including Christians, have pointed out there can be no true reconciliation and no genuine peace *without justice*. Any form of peace or reconciliation that allows the sin of injustice and oppression to continue is *counterfeit* reconciliation. This

kind of "reconciliation" has nothing whatsoever to do with Christian faith.²⁹

Schreiter³⁰ reminds us that reconciliation is not a hasty peace, a form of conflict management, a substitute for liberation, or a managed process of any kind. It is a spirituality rather than a strategy; it is initiated by God and not by us. It is a gift of grace and not an achievement.

Now, this does not mean we do not work for peace, but we do not seek peace to avoid the alienating issues. The reconciliation we yearn for will result from facing head-on into the conflicts with a sense of humility, and a prayer on our lips, and working them through with each other.

In Conclusion

These will be difficult times for us. In one sense the "apology" will be a symbolic blip on the electrocardiogram of the heart of the Conference. It is "national's" agenda. But it intrudes deeply into our life, our story, our basic convictions about God, the Church, and the mission. I am confident in the grace of those who will come to us from Cleveland. I am even more confident in the Grace of the One who gave us life, and is available to us as we live through these times. To God be the Glory! □

Notes for "On the 100th Anniversary of the Overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani of the Kingdom of Hawaii"

¹ Apparently I am not the only one who wonders about how or whether to participate in these events. A recent article in a Honolulu paper raised a similar question, quoting people who had strong convictions about the illegality and injustice of the overthrow, but who were not clear what role they should or could have in the events leading up to and including January 17, 1993.

² I recognize that by "picking and choosing" I can be accused of selectively making my own point. I will take that risk. The reader will see later in the article that I have my suspicions about all who write in this kind of value-conflict historical event, particularly when contemporary folk are as emotionally invested in their point of view as they seem to be in this one.

³ Reich, Robert B., *The Work Of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st Century Capitalism* (New York: Vintage, 1992) pp. 29-30.

⁴ Reich, *op cit*, p. 30.

⁵ For a history of the laborer in the plantations, of those brought to Hawaii from elsewhere, see *Pau Hana: Plantation Life and Labor in Hawaii 1835-1920*, by Ronald Takaki (Ho-

nolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1983.) Takaki's grandfather came to Hawaii as a contract laborer in 1886, and his mother was born on the Hawi plantation in Kohala. For a similar treatment of a comparable theme in the United States see his *Iron Cages: Race and Culture in 19th-Century America* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979).

⁶ I am sometimes overwhelmed by the similarity of the native Hawaiian story to that of the American Indian. While the fates of the two peoples have been tragically similar, and many of the dynamics leading to those fates resemble one another, some of my Hawaiian friends continually remind me not to jump to conclusions in Hawaii based on understandings, alone, of the American Indian genocide. And, of course, their reminders are both appropriate and accurate.

⁷ I do not use the word "mythological" here to mean an untrue story, but rather to refer to the energizing myth that provided the base for the beliefs and norms of nation-building.

⁸ Present-day critics of the monarchy criticize Lili'uokalani for resisting what she called the Bayonet Constitution, and being willing to remove some of its provisions. This constitution is perceived as one which provided a constitutional monarchy, which limited the absolute rule

of the monarchy. It introduced some republican dimensions to the government. When Lili'uokalani showed willingness to amend the Bayonet Constitution to return to a stronger monarchy, she was responding to her understanding of the wishes of her people, which she claimed emerged from an attempt to discern their views. The Queen outlines her point of view on the matter in *Hawaii's Story: By Hawaii's Queen*, p. 237 ff. It is difficult to assess this conflict apart from our present-day perspectives regarding republican democracy versus the native Hawaiian perspective of the 1890s, which clung to their monarchy for cultural and other reasons.

⁹ Keppler, H.K. Bruss, "Sovereignty: 'It Will Happen,'" *Sunday Honolulu Star-Bulletin & Advertiser*, December 20, 1992, p. B3.

¹⁰ See Lili'uokalani, *Hawaii's Story: By Hawaii's Queen*, Rutland, Vermont and Tokyo, Japan, Charles E. Tuttle Company, First edition 1898, First Tuttle Edition, 1964). In this book Queen Lili'uokalani tells her own story. I reread the last half of the book, which covers the overthrow and the years following, in preparation for writing this set of reflections. She tells her side, and there is sufficient information to suggest that her version of the story is as accurate, or more so, than any other, particularly some of those that attempt to justify the

overthrow by vilifying the character of the Queen.

¹¹ See his article in this issue of *NEW CONVERSATIONS*, pp. 23 ff.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 29 ff.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 36. Walsh quotes from the *Thirtieth Annual Report of the Hawaii Evangelical Association, June 1883*, (Honolulu: HEA Board, 1893), pp. 14–15.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Another quote from Keppler: "Let's summarize. The Kingdom of Hawaii was illegally overthrown with the direct assistance of the U.S. Government, and the trustees of the several trusts established by the U.S. government for the benefit of Hawaiians have repeatedly breached their fiduciary duties." p. B3.

¹⁶ When I was Executive Associate to the President for almost eight years, polity purists continually reminded me that there is no official entity called "the Office of the President." As I work with the General Synod Committee on Structure, I have more or less concluded the purists are correct: there probably isn't any such formal entity in our polity. However, there is a President's office, and there is an Executive Office. In implementing this resolution they have acted as if the mandate for an apology was

given to the President, the Rev. Dr. Paul Sherry, and he has, with some courage, taken up the challenge.

¹⁷ Observers in Honolulu have whimsically noted the prominence of McKinley High School, but the absence of a Cleveland school—or anything. Thus, informal commentary on the establishment of the power brokers in support of annexation.

¹⁸ Our polity says the General Synod does not speak *for* the churches, but rather speaks *to* the churches. In this instance, the General Synod clearly took the initiative, moving beyond our Conference overture to the Synod, and spoke to the Hawaii Conference, the local churches, the people of Hawaii, the UCC, and the nation.

¹⁹ While I use the word "anger" here juxtaposed to "hope," later in this article I shall juxtapose "hurt" with hope, having been helped by Walter Brueggemann's *Old Testament Theology: Essays on Structure, Theme, and Text*, edited by Patrick D. Miller (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.) More will be said about this dialectic of hurt and hope, later. There was hurt in the Conference response to the Synod action, but anger was stronger, so I focus on that dialectic here. Of course, anger and hurt are at least siblings, if not identical twins.

²⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

²¹ I am told the Rev. Abraham Akaka is the first native Hawaiian to graduate from an accredited theological seminary, and that was well into the 20th century. It seems clear that the missionaries, and their white successors, maintained control of the HEA through the years.

²² President Paul Sherry came to the Islands last May, with Scott Libbey of the UCBWM and Tom Dipko of the UCBHM, for hearings to gather data and to listen to people from a wide spectrum of opinion. He and the others did a brilliant job. They listened, asked questions, spoke mostly when requested to, and displayed a remarkable sensitivity that won over many skeptical people. Because of their previous visit they are trusted and welcomed in a manner that is to their enormous credit.

²³ That the missionaries presented a culturized gospel from New England, imposed many "cultural" judgments, and lacked our present-day sophistication into the relationship between the Gospel and its necessity for cultural expression—that, indeed, there is no universal acultural expression of the Gospel—is a truism. What, unfortunately, seems also to be the case, from my perspective, is that native Hawaiians have been discouraged from contextualizing the Gospel in

their own way, using their own cultural expressions, etc. As a result, many Hawaiian churches continue to express the faith as they were taught by the missionaries, in church buildings that look very much like New England meeting houses, and using a theology that is devoid of contemporary methodologies of Biblical and theological interpretation.

²⁴ Brueggemann, *op cit.*, p. 111.

²⁵ See Brueggemann, *op. cit.* p. 68 for how I have "lifted" this rhetoric from his summary of sociological criticism in Bible study. Here, he follows from Gottwald's contributions. I believe one finds value

from this methodology not only for Bible study, but also for a perusal of history.

²⁶ Schreiter, Robert J., *Constructing Local Theologies*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985). Schreiter reviews the contemporary mission movement, and identifies that all theologies are "local," that none are "supraregional," or normative beside which all others are deviations or "culture bound." All theologies are local in that they are expressed in a specific cultural context, using that culture's forms, language, assumptions, and questions.

²⁷ Berger, Peter L., *The Sacred*

Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion, (New York: Doubleday, 1967) p. 19. Several of Berger's other works describe the dynamic of reality construction. It is best to understand Berger as describing a dynamic, and not discounting one's faith.

²⁸ Schreiter, Robert J., *Reconciliation: Mission and Ministry in a Changing Social Order*, Orbis Books and Boston Theological Institute, p. 34 f.

²⁹ *The Kairos Document: Standing With South African Christians*, Willis H. Logan, ed. (New York: Friendship Press, 1988) p. 16.

³⁰ Schreiter, *Reconciliation*, p 18 f.

Congregational Influences in Hawaii (1820–1893)

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American Congregationalists had a formative impact on Hawaii during the 19th century. From 1820–1863 missionaries dispatched by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), the predecessor of the Board for World Ministries, operated one of the most successful missions in the history of American evangelization. American Congregationalists also maintained close ties to the new church organized by their missionaries, the Hawaiian Evangelical Association (HEA). In addition, while many missionaries eventually served the Hawaiian royal government, some of their children led the 1893 movement that overturned the monarchy and led to the incorporation of Hawaii into the United States.

Hawaiian history during the 19th century was complex, and considerable disagreement remains among historians about its proper interpretation. The historical literature is full of accounts that either glorify the missionary contribution to Hawaii, or vilify missionaries as white supremacists and imperialists. I have largely relied on a significant body of his-

torical literature on the “revolution of 1893” published after World War II in presenting my account of the revolution.¹ I have focused on the ABCFM, the HEA, the missionaries, and their descendants to describe the attitudes or involvement of the “missionaries.”²

At the level of broad generalization, the original missionaries had virtually nothing to do with the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani. Almost all of them were dead by 1893. Several of their children and grandchildren were, however, among the key protagonists of the revolutionary movement. The “missionary party,” so frequently criticized in the historical and polemical literature, was no longer composed of missionaries. But many of its leading figures had close family ties to the first generation of missionaries. Furthermore, most of the mission descendants still living in Hawaii supported the revolutionary movement, even if they did not help to plan or execute it. They frequently justified their support on the grounds that the revolution was provoked by the unconstitutional and illegal actions of the queen. Historical disagreements begin at this point.

ABCFM

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) endeavor in Hawaii began on October 23, 1819, when a company of 17 men and women left Boston on the brig *Thaddeus*, bound for Honolulu. Over the next 28 years, 11 more “companies” of ABCFM missionaries journeyed to the Sandwich Islands to join the most successful and celebrated American foreign mission of the 19th century.

The missionaries arrived in a society struggling to cope with rapid social change. Western explorers, whalers, and traders began arriving in Hawaii in large numbers at the end of the 18th century. They introduced new diseases, new economic systems, alcohol, prostitution, and other disruptive forces. While the islands remained independent, the indigenous population had begun to fall, and the complex ritual systems of traditional Hawaiian religion were already breaking down.

Led by the Rev. Hiram Bingham, the American missionaries interposed themselves between the indigenous population and other Westerners. They learned Hawaiian, and preached and published in the native language. As vocal critics of the behavior of other Westerners, they were soon seen

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by the Hawaiian monarchy and the ruling class as potential allies against aggressive Western commercial interests.

The monarchy invited the ABCFM to expand its mission, and by the mid-1820s many of the ruling chiefs and other members of the elite were converting to Christianity. In what was widely hailed as the most remarkable missionary accomplishment of the 19th century, tens of thousands of Hawaiians converted during a massive wave of revivals beginning in 1837. As the mission matured, many of its members abandoned their American citizenship and were naturalized as Hawaiians citizens. During the late 1830s, a number of the missionaries also resigned from the ABCFM to take up important posts with the royal government.

Despite the rather spectacular success of the mission, tensions developed between the missionaries in Hawaii and the ABCFM headquarters in the United States. After 1840, the American Board, wanting to reallocate its resources to other mission fields, began to complain about several trends developing in Hawaii. The Rev. Rufus Anderson, the secretary of the board, criticized both the movement of missionaries into the government and their reluctance to promote Hawaiians into positions of authority.³

While American missionaries at both the beginning and the end of the 19th century were consciously dedicated to spreading both the Gospel and the benefits of American "civilization" to the non-Christian world, during the middle decades of the century the ABCFM strove consciously not to impose Western culture on converts. "As a missionary society and as a mission we cannot proceed on the assumption that the Saxon is to supersede the native races," Anderson wrote to Hawaii in 1846. He believed missionaries should plant the gospel and then move on, and was especially critical of the movement into the government:

It is better for the islanders, and it is essential to the continuance of their institutions as a nation, that the offices should be filled by natives. Better have the duties performed imperfectly, than not be done by them.⁴

The role of American missionaries in the Hawaiian government also posed problems for the ABCFM in Asian and Middle Eastern mission fields, where the board dealt with deeply suspicious host governments.

The American board gradually decreased the number of missionary reinforcements after the great revivals of the 1830s. The final ABCFM "company" sailed from

Boston in 1847. By 1848 only four of the roughly 90 American missionaries in Hawaii were under 50 years of age.⁵ In 1863, Anderson visited Hawaii himself to supervise the termination of the mission and the organization of a new, independent church in Hawaii. His pressure on the Hawaiian mission did not, however, produce the indigenous church for which he had hoped. Only a few missionaries moved on to other fields, and many settled in Hawaii permanently. The ABCFM abetted this process by allowing the transfer of the property it had acquired in Hawaii over the course of 40 years (mostly as a result of royal grants) to mission families.

The Hawaiian mission was formally concluded in 1863, with the reorganization of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association (HEA) as a freestanding church in the Congregational tradition. The new church, however, was still led and controlled by the missionaries and their children. It included 25 churches and a total of 19,725 communicants (almost entirely native Hawaiian). Only four of its 20 pastors were Hawaiians. The HEA moved rapidly to ordain a Hawaiian clergy, but control remained largely in the hands of missionaries and their children.⁶

After 1863, the ABCFM's direct involvement in Hawaiian affairs was

small. Honolulu remained the supply base for its expanding Micronesian missions, and ABCFM personnel passed through frequently. The American Board also cooperated closely with the HEA; after the mid-1870s it provided small subsidies to the salaries of a few Congregational workers in Hawaii whose work supported the missions.⁷

Politics, Demography, and Economics

The Revolution of 1893 followed fundamental changes in the islands' economic structure and an extremely complex internal political process. Over the course of the 19th century, the Hawaiian kingdom had developed an unstable, hybrid political structure that attempted to blend indigenous Hawaiian and American elements. Both Americans and Hawaiians participated in the development of this political system, and so many factions and tendencies developed that it is difficult to generalize about 19th century politics. Under a broad constitutional pattern that emerged during the 1840s, the Hawaiian monarchy remained the most powerful political institution. It was, however, supplemented and partially checked by an elected Legislative Assembly, an appointed House of Nobles, and an independent judiciary. Al-

though the constitutional system reserved considerable power for indigenous Hawaiians, naturalized American-Hawaiians played a very large, perhaps even dominant, role in the politics and governance of the kingdom.

The rapid development of a sugar-based export economy during the 1870s and 1880s radically altered the Hawaiian situation. It transformed the distribution of wealth and power, the composition of the population, and the politics of Hawaii. By the early 1880s, both indigenous Hawaiians and descendants of missionaries feared that control over Hawaii was slipping through their fingers. The alliance between the Hawaiian ruling class and the mission families began to come apart.

Between the 1840s and the 1860s, members of the missionary group and the Kamehameha dynasty had cooperated effectively. While the monarchs played a large role, former missionaries were extremely influential in the kingdom's administration. The judiciary became a particular stronghold of the American-Hawaiians. The first important changes in the balance of power were economic. The Pacific whaling industry declined radically during the 1860s, and, during the late 1860s and early 1870s, a group of capitalists developed a

plantation-based sugar economy. They and the Hawaiian government pushed hard for a trade agreement with the United States that would guarantee favorable tariff policies for Hawaiian sugar.

The controversial "Reciprocity Treaty of 1876" bound Hawaii closely to the United States and triggered an explosive sugar boom that enriched a small group of planters. The boom created a significant demand for labor during a period when the indigenous Hawaiian population was falling rapidly. The sugar planters—dominated by Americans and including some members of missionary families—arranged the importation of contract labor, first from Norway and Portugal, then from China and the Pacific Islands, and then from Japan. The arrival of tens of thousands of laborers radically changed the population.

By 1890, indigenous Hawaiians made up a bare plurality of the total population 89,900. The American-derived population contributed only a tiny share:

Hawaiians and	40,623
"half-castes"	
American	1,928
British	1,344
Chinese	15,301
German	1,034
Japanese	12,360
Portuguese	8,602 ⁸

These shifts left both indigenous Hawaiians and Americans intensely concerned about losing control of the islands' political future. By the late 1870s, Hawaiian politicians had gravitated into two loose, competing groups. As the economic transformation of the sugar boom took effect, race became a far more divisive factor than it had been previously.⁹

The role of missionary families in this process of transformation is disputed, but the scholarly consensus is that only a few missionary descendants became part of the immensely wealthy planter group. Most of the mission families belonged to the small group that supplied the kingdom's mercantile, administrative, and professional classes.

As a further complication, after the American Civil War colonial rivalries among Western powers began to be felt strongly in the Pacific. The islands attracted British immigrants during the 1870s and 1880s, and trade with Australia, New Zealand, and Canada grew to be significant. American-Hawaiians increasingly feared that Hawaii might move into the orbit of the expanding British empire, or even into that of the Japanese Empire. As early as 1874 a monarchical election pitted pro-American and pro-British factions among the Hawaiians against one another. The

victor, King Kalakaua, was viewed as the pro-American candidate, although his personal political attitudes proved to be nationalist and monarchical.

These economic, demographic, and geopolitical developments put strain on the political arrangement between the Hawaiian monarchy and its long-favored, American-derived subjects. After 1881, Kalakaua attempted to reassert monarchical authority. In this effort he derived considerable legislative support from indigenous Hawaiians and mixed-race Hawaiians. White Hawaiians, who paid most of the island's taxes, complained bitterly about treaty policy, Kalakaua's patronage practices, governmental corruption and ineptitude, and high taxes. After 1881, Hawaiian cabinets, which had been fairly stable, rose and fell frequently, as factions maneuvered.

The Revolution of 1887

The defining political event of the 1880s was the so-called "Revolution of 1887." Unhappy with Kalakaua's control of the legislature, and complaining of open corruption in government (most spectacularly Kalakaua's sale of a license to sell opium to Chinese merchants), a secret group of white citizens and foreigners (the Hawaiian League) staged a rebellion in Honolulu. After violent civil disturbances and

what appeared to be a white-led military mutiny, some Reform Party figures and members of the judiciary forced a new constitution on Kalakaua. The document [the "Bayonet" Constitution—Ed.] drastically reduced royal power and increased the role of Westerners at the expense of indigenous Hawaiians and Asian immigrants.

Hawaii's 1864 constitution had limited the power of the monarchy, but it still empowered the monarch to appoint and dismiss the governing cabinet. The charter imposed in 1887 prescribed a British-style "constitutional monarchy," ended the King's power to appoint members of the House of Nobles and to dismiss the governing cabinet, and changed suffrage laws to the detriment of indigenous voters. Westerners not Hawaiian citizens were granted suffrage, while the vast majority of indigenous Hawaiians were excluded from the electorate that selected the Nobles. The revolutionaries hoped to guarantee white, Western control and to reduce the monarchy to a symbolic role.

Many of those involved in the Reform Party, the "revolution," and the drafting of the 1887 constitution were connected to mission families, and subsequently played leading roles in the final overthrow of the monarchy in 1893.¹⁰ White and "missionary" senti-

ment was not, however, monolithic during this period. The Hawaiian League had two wings: the dominant group, led by Sanford B. Dole, favored reformation and limitation of the monarchy and continued independence. A smaller group of "radicals," led by Lorrin A. Thurston, favored either annexation by the U.S. or an independent republic under a constitution giving whites the balance of power.

Understandably, the response of the indigenous Hawaiians to the Revolution of 1887 was extremely negative. Tensions hardened along racial lines. King Kalakaua continued to resist white control, and Hawaiian politics factionalized even more deeply. The Western-dominated Reform Party, aiming to hem in the monarchy and cut government spending, lost a bitter election in 1890 to the royalist National Reform Party. A severe economic downturn caused by changes in American tariff policy further complicated matters. Political tensions rose further when Queen Lili'uokalani succeeded to the throne in late 1891. An ardent nationalist, she wished to restore the traditional, unchecked power of the monarchy.

The 1893 Revolution

The legislative elections of February 1892 launched a chain of

events leading to the 1893 Revolution. Factionalization had increased, and four parties and many independents competed for office, resulting in increasing instability. The Queen, pressing to assert her authority, rejected three compromise cabinets proposed by the legislature, and months of maneuvering followed. In November Lili'uokalani finally accepted a compromise cabinet led by George N. Wilcox, a conservative mission descendant.

Bills licensing the opium trade and a lottery passed early in January of 1893, despite the feverish opposition of many foreigners, especially Americans. On January 13, on its second attempt within a few weeks, a Hawaiian block in the legislature brought down the Wilcox cabinet.¹¹ The next day, Saturday, January 14, 1893, the Queen appointed a cabinet of close allies, several considered corrupt by many foreigners and naturalized Hawaiians, and prorogued the legislature. She then announced plans to promulgate a new constitution, wishing to nullify the 1887 Constitution, restrict suffrage to Hawaiian citizens, and return full franchise to indigenous Hawaiians. Most of all, she wished to restore monarchical prerogatives to control the cabinet and the course of Government. She argued that she had legal authority to promul-

gate any constitution she chose, but most whites viewed her action as unconstitutional and illegal.

The Revolution of 1893

The exact origins of the anti-monarchical revolution that followed remain disrupted. It is still unclear when planning began and what exact role the American minister to Hawaii, John L. Stevens, played.

It is fair to say that American, American-Hawaiian, and other elements of the Western population were galvanized over the course of 1892 into drastic opposition to Lili'uokalani. While the royalists intended the licensing of opium and a lottery to produce unfettered income for the monarchy, whites interpreted them as a symbolically powerful rejection of the missionary venture. The threat of a new constitution also substantially diminished internal divisions among the whites.

When the Queen attempted to proclaim a new constitution, anti-monarchical political activists were ready. They formed an *ad hoc* Committee of Public Safety, [See p. 62] which began meeting in Honolulu on Saturday, January 14. Lorrin A. Thurston, W.O. Smith, and W. R. Castle led the group, almost certainly in close coordination with Minister Stevens. Thurston, Smith, and Castle were

members of mission families, active Hawaiian politicians, veterans of the Revolution of 1887, and moving figures behind the secret "Annexation Club" that had been organized after the 1892 elections.

On Saturday evening, delegates of the Committee consulted with Stevens, two of the Queen's ministers, and others in the expatriate community. Most historians agree that by Sunday morning a firm plan to overthrow the Queen had been forged. The plotters spent much of Sunday drawing other white Hawaiians into the plan, including Sanford P. Dole, the subsequent leader of the Provisional Government.

One Monday morning, the Committee drafted a letter to Stevens, asking him to land troops from the warship the U.S.S. *Boston*, stationed permanently in the harbor. That afternoon, as in the Revolution of 1887, the Committee called a mass meeting in the armory of the Honolulu Rifles, a volunteer military unit that had supported the earlier revolution. The meeting of more than 1,500 whites was addressed by Thurston and several other "incendiary" pro-revolutionists. Supporters of the Royalist "Committee of Law and Order" staged a simultaneous rally in the Palace Square, attended largely by native Hawaiians, who appealed to Stevens not to land troops.

An armed force of 162 men from the *Boston* landed Monday afternoon, possibly at the instigation of Stevens, possibly on the independent authority of the ship's captain. Although the police and others remained loyal to the royal government, the monarchy and cabinet did not challenge the troops, and the situation remained unresolved overnight. Meanwhile, the Committee of Safety organized a provisional government.

Complicated negotiations followed. On Tuesday morning, foreign diplomats refused to support the Queen, and the Committee of Safety occupied the government building. Later that afternoon Dole proclaimed the deposition of the Queen in the name of the Provisional Government. Dole's government was immediately recognized by Stevens. The Queen protested, but was in no position to resist.

It is most likely that Stevens and the most radical leaders, certainly Thurston and Smith, had been actively planning some action since at least the fall of 1892. Proposals for annexation to the U.S. had been floated intermittently among Hawaiian whites as early as the 1850s. But it is unlikely that there was broad support for a coup until the Queen attempted to promulgate a new constitution on January 14. In the wake of that

action, the rebels won the support of many whites.

The timing of the revolution was also affected by American political factors. In March of 1893 the anti-imperialist Grover Cleveland would replace President Benjamin Harrison, whose foreign policy had tended towards expansionism. Prospects for annexation seemed remote under Cleveland.

Both major parties [i.e., pro-annexation and pro-monarchy] immediately dispatched delegations to Washington. The Harrison administration opened negotiations with the revolutionaries and sent a treaty to the Senate. When he took office, Cleveland withdrew the treaty, and sent former congressman James Blount to Hawaii. Blount's famous report condemning the revolutionaries was issued in December, 1893, along with Cleveland's eloquent repudiation of the revolution and of Stevens' activities. Cleveland pressed briefly for the restoration of Lili'uokalani, but the Provisional Government refused, and in 1894 it won the recognition of many governments for the establishment of a Hawaiian republic.

Annexation negotiations were reopened when the Republicans returned to power in 1897. In 1898, Hawaii became an American territory.

Missionaries, Revolution, Land

By 1892 only a handful of the members of the original Sandwich Islands Mission survived.¹² None participated directly in the 1893 revolution; most of the original missionaries had retired by the early 1870s. By that time indigenous pastors had replaced Americans in all but one of the islands' Hawaiian churches. Several who either came as missionaries late in the life of the Hawaiian mission, or who were sent after its formal conclusions, were, however, active during the revolutionary period.¹³

If the original missionaries can be assigned any degree of "complicity" in the revolution, it must be on their decisions to settle in the islands and, on the part of some, to take part in the royal government. Mission families were frequently charged with having grabbed land during the 1840s and '50s, but studies of Hawaiian land records have generally absolved the missionaries of charges of having exploited Hawaiians, or of making large profits in land dealing.¹⁴

While a number of early missionaries entered government service and exercised formidable influence, by and large they served at the behest of the Kamehameha dynasty. There was, apparently, little strain between the monarchy and its American-Hawaiian civil

servants before the 1860s. In addition, almost all of the original missionaries had died or left government service before the transformation of Hawaiian society, economy, and politics in the late 1870s.

The missionaries did, however, leave their children on the islands, and it is at this level that the question of "missionary" complicity rises. The missionary families, totaling several hundred persons by the last decades of the 19th century, formed a close-knit and significant social group. They dominated two influential and mutually-supportive organizations: the Hawaiian Evangelical Association and the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society. While a few prospered mightily during the sugar boom, most of the missionary children made their mark on the basis of their educations and their local roots rather than through wielding power as an explicit political group. They played a large role in the Hawaiian professions, functioning as influential merchants, physicians, lawyers, judges, and administrators. The small class of political leaders also contained a large number of "mission boys."

Children of the Missionaries

Recent historians, unlike their pre-World War II counterparts, have tended to discount the continuing political importance of the mis-

sionary families as a group. Some have argued that by the 1890s missionary influence was vestigial and symbolic; even some who are generally critical of the missionaries believe that their role in Hawaiian government, both before and after the revolution, has been overemphasized. Yet several mission children were among the most visible and influential leaders of the 1893 Revolution, the Provisional Government, and the Republican government that followed it. While they made up a relatively small percentage of those who eventually held office, mission children played key roles. The "missionary" character of both the Reform Party and the revolutionary government became an item of contemporary political controversy. While not perhaps a strictly accurate epithet, critics of the revolution found "the missionary party" a highly successful label.

It is difficult to generalize about the political positions of the whole body of the descendants of the missionaries. While well organized as a social group, they did not often combine publicly to take political positions.¹⁵ Like virtually all island whites, the missionary families supported the January revolution once it had been launched. I have found no evidence that any missionary or missionary descendant took a strong public stance against the revolution or annexation.

Most historians seem to agree, however, that until the events of early January 1893, most whites expected that Hawaii would function as an independent constitutional monarchy for an indefinite, and probably extended, period (although they preferred a tightly restricted monarchy). The wealthiest planters certainly resisted annexation, partly because it might threaten their practice of importing indentured laborers (the U.S. had recently passed laws barring the immigration of Asians.)

Revolutionaries

Several of the most active precipitators of the revolution were mission children. Some of them, notably Lorrin A. Thurston, worked for years to secure the annexation of Hawaii. Others supported the revolution once it had begun and played roles in the governments that followed, but probably were not directly involved in planning the coup. Among the coup leaders, Lorrin A. Thurston, W.O. Smith, and W.R. Castle played especially large roles. Those who played critical supporting roles included Chief Justice A.F. Judd, H.P. Baldwin, Sanford B. Dole, and William P. Alexander. Five of the fourteen original members of the Committee of Safety were members of mission families: three sons or grandsons of missionaries, and two

naturalized Hawaiian citizens who had married into missionary families.¹⁶ None of the other committee members held Hawaiian citizenship.¹⁷

Two of the four members of the executive committee of the Provisional Government (formed on January 16) were missionary descendants: Sanford B. Dole and W.O. Smith. A third, P.C. Jones, was an officer of the Board of the HEA. Of the fourteen members of the Provisional Government's advisory council, three were descendants of missionaries and two had married into missionary families. In addition, the public face of the revolution in the US (the five-member Commission dispatched to the U.S. by the Provisional Government) was dominated by missionary descendants.

The role of the "missionaries" in the revolution was bitterly denounced by supporters of the monarchy, who tended to make no distinction between actual missionaries and their children. However, even royalists agreed that the presence of mission descendants was strongest at the top levels of the revolutionary government. In October, 1893, the annexationist *Honolulu Star* printed a breakdown of missionary descendants holding office under the Provisional Government: 3 of 18 members of the

executive and advisory councils, 1 of 7 Supreme Court justices, 1 of 16 officials in the Department of the Interior, 1 of 5 in the Customs Bureau, 1 of 8 in the Bureau of Finance, 2 of 7 in the Department of the Attorney General, 1 of 7 on the Board of Immigration, 2 of 14 on the Board of Health, and 1 on the Board of Crown Land Commissioners. No descendants of missionaries served on the circuit court, the Bureau of Agriculture, or the Board of Education.¹⁸

The Plotters

The single most important figure in the Revolution of 1893 was Lorrin A. Thurston. His grandparents on both sides were members of the Sandwich Islands Mission. Born and raised in Hawaii, Thurston returned to the islands after college and embarked on an active career as a lawyer, journalist, politician, and government official. Probably the most ardent annexationist in Hawaii, he was considered too "radical" by his colleagues to serve as a member of the Provisional Government's front bench.

Thurston was an active publicist for an expanded American role. He pushed hard in the early 1890s for an American naval base at Pearl Harbor, warned of the rising threat of Japanese imperialism, and frequently argued that Hawaiians

were not capable of governing. In 1892 and 1893 he became the most important organizer against Lili'uokalani. Acting with his law partner, W.O. Smith, Thurston called together the Committee of Safety, and quickly pushed toward deposing the monarchy. He remained an important participant in the movement until annexation in 1898.¹⁹ He was one of the most vigorous defenders of the descendants of the missionaries, asserting defiantly in his memoirs that "the sons and grandsons of American missionaries were ultra-active in the overthrow of the monarchy."²⁰

James Blount concluded, probably on solid grounds, that the revolutionaries of 1892 were authoritarians who sought the annexation of Hawaii because they thought they could control suffrage and maintain an oligarchy dominated by whites. In the eyes of many whites, the rapidly growing Asian population "would inevitably smother American or white domination unless Hawaii was under the aegis of a power strong enough to keep whites in the saddle. . . ."²¹

Thurston himself portrayed the Hawaiians as a "conservative, peaceful, and generous people," who had been gradually nurtured by American laws and customs over the course of two generations:

The Hawaiians are not Africans,

but Polynesians. They are brown, not black. There is not, and never has been, any color line in Hawaii as against native Hawaiians, and they participate fully and on an equality with the white people in affairs political, social, religious, and charitable. They are a race which will in the future, as they have in the past, easily and rapidly assimilate with and adopt American ways and methods.²²

Reacting to mainland criticism of the Republic's government, Thurston regularly argued that the revolutionaries had no intention of completely disenfranchising indigenous Hawaiians, who, he believed, were being "crowded to the wall" by Asian immigrants.²³

While not a member of the HEA's leadership, Thurston appealed to the manifest support of the church for the Republic. In an 1897 appeal directed at readers in the U.S., Thurston noted that

every native minister of the gospel, most of the better educated natives; almost without exception all the white ministers of the gospel; the representatives of the American Board of Foreign Missions; the Hawaiian Board of Missions; the practical educators: those who have for years contributed their time, their money, and their lives to the Hawaiian people; who feel

their welfare is a sacred trust—all of these are working, hoping, and praying for annexation as the one last hope of the native Hawaiian.²⁴

Other Important Revolutionaries

Thurston's law partner and political ally, W.O. Smith, was also a key participant in the January revolution. The son of the Rev. Lowell and Abigail Smith of the Hawaiian Mission, Smith never joined the Hawaiian League. He did, however, help to draft the Constitution of 1887. Smith and W. R. Castle drew Sanford B. Dole and other figures into the movement to depose Lili'uokalani and participated in meetings with Minister Stevens during the three-day revolution.²⁵ William R. Castle served with Thurston and Smith on the Committee of Safety and in the Provisional Government. Two additional missionary sons played critical but less central roles in launching the revolution: A. Francis Judd and Sanford B. Dole. Both were sitting justices of the Hawaiian Supreme Court. Dole, a friend of W.O. Smith's, was also both a substantial sugar planter and a senior figure in the non-annexationist wing of the Reform Party. According to most historians, neither man played any role in the preparations for the revolu-

tion, but both supported it once it had broken out.

Chief Justice A.F. Judd played a minor public role in the revolution, but intervened several times in Hawaiian politics at crucial moments. Judd told James Blount that he had persuaded King Kalakaua to accept the Constitution of 1887, and had issued rulings checking royal power during the late 1880s and early 1890s.²⁶ He also told Blount that he did not participate in the revolution because of his position as a judge, but added that he supported annexation and limited suffrage, asserting that, "as a property-holder and a man of family" he would not like to take his chances with the ability of a native government to "make life and property safe and preserve order."²⁷

While Sanford B. Dole was probably more reluctant than Judd to overthrow the monarchy, he ended up with a far higher public profile. Throughout the 1880s and early 1890s Dole, like most sugar planters and many naturalized Hawaiians, preferred a restricted constitutional monarchy to annexation or to a republican form of government. During the first days of the revolution Dole, who had a huge economic stake in Hawaii, was ambivalent. He would not join the Committee of Safety, although he was pressed by others into joining the meetings with U.S. Minis-

ter Stevens on Saturday, January 14. On Tuesday, however, Dole agreed to join the Provisional Government and to serve as its head, recognizing that "the logical events and the manifest destiny of the island was annexation."²⁸ He remained the leader of the government until annexation in 1898.

Other leading missionary descendants also paused before backing the revolution. A.F. Baldwin, one of the largest planters and a Reform Party legislator, was reluctant to embrace either annexation or a republic. Two days into the revolution, Baldwin still favored a reformed and more limited monarchy.²⁹ But as the revolution progressed, Baldwin backed the Provisional Government and white power. He told Blount in April, 1893, that the best solution for Hawaii was annexation to the United States as a territory. Hawaii would then have an appointed governor and a legislature elected by limited suffrage. Blount asked Baldwin if he thought that the "controlling vote" should go to "the intelligent classes" and Baldwin responded, "As far as possible."³⁰

The Church in Hawaii

The Christian church founded by American missionaries in Hawaii played no direct role in the Hawaiian Revolution of 1893. The HEA

was, however, clearly under the control of white leaders who backed the revolution and attempted—at some cost—to influence indigenous Hawaiians to accept its outcome. The church's leaders endorsed the revolution in their correspondence with Congregational officials in the United States and vigorously attempted to enlist American Protestant support for annexation. In addition, several individual ministers of the HEA played active roles as advocates of the revolution to the American public.

While the vast majority of the HEA's clergy and laity were indigenous Hawaiians, control of the church remained largely in the hands of the missionary families which had supervised its formation in 1863. In 1890, 17 of the 27 members of the board of the HEA were of American or European origin. Several of the key revolutionaries were HEA board members, including W.O. Smith, Henry Waterhouse, and P.C. Jones, a member of the executive committee of the Provisional Government. In addition, Chief Justice A.F. Judd served as president of the association during the entire period, and Henry P. Baldwin also served on the board.³¹

In the early 1890s, the HEA included 56 Hawaiian-language churches (all but one pastored by

Hawaiians) and four English language churches. In 1890, there were four Hawaiian clerics on the HEA board and eight white ministers on the board and its executive committee.

The situation in the Hawaiian church bothered the Rev. Charles M. Hyde, the lone official ABCFM missionary assigned to Hawaii. Hyde was not comfortable with the high level of white control of the church. He found, however, that he could understand and justify it. He told James Blount:

When I arrived here June 1, 1877, and began to study the situation, I found . . . the church and state, nominally Hawaiian, were really managed by the few foreigners who had direction of affairs. Not that the foreigners were exercising an usurped authority, but rather this, that the management of affairs of church and state was under the direction of the missionaries in the one case and trusted advisors in the other; and without such direction, not to say control, both churches and government would disintegrate speedily because of utter lack of needful ability to maintain an independent organic existence.³²

Despite his status as a missionary, Hyde played a small role in the Revolution of 1887. He had re-

fused to join the Hawaiian League because it was a secret organization. But, on his own initiative, he wrote letters to newspapers complaining of about "the character and conduct" of King Kalakaua and calling for a public meeting to discuss the corruption of his government. The subsequent mass meeting was a major event of the Revolution of 1887.³³

Most of the white clerical and lay leaders of the HEA agreed that the ABCFM had moved too quickly to wind up the mission in the 1860s. They thought the Hawaiian church needed extended missionary supervision to allow time for the through Christianization of Hawaiian mores. They complained of the persistence of some elements of traditional Hawaiian religion among the indigenous church members, particularly of the influence of Hawaiian *kahunas*, or medicine men, whom they linked to the monarchy. Despite the efforts of the clergy, "fetichism [sic] and spirit-worship" remained "a pall on the spiritual life of the people." In the view of the HEA board, superstition and fetish worship led to drinking, "general license, and gambling. The Hawaiian mind works slowly, and it has been only by the most persistent and outspoken exposure of these evils that the best of the people are beginning to realize their enormity."³⁴

HEA leaders backed the January revolution immediately. There is no evidence that any of its ministers collaborated in planning the coup, but several of them were close to the annexationists. Even Charles Hyde, probably the most troubled by white dominance in the church and state, swung into line. In December, 1892, Hyde wrote to the ABCFM to praise John L. Stevens, who was about to lose his diplomatic post as a result of Grover Cleveland's victory. Stevens, said Hyde, "has been a regular attendant with his family at the Central Union Church, though he was formerly a Universalist minister in Maine."³⁵ While he was socially involved with the descendants of the missionaries, Hyde tended to be more detached from the white position than many others involved in the HEA.

Like many others in the missionary community, Hyde repeatedly expressed surprise when the revolution actually came. By the spring, however, he was worried that the Cleveland administration and American popular opinion would not support annexation, and wrote, "I wish people in the U.S. could be convinced that it is simply the necessary setting aside of an obsolete, decrepit, effete, social and political system. What is desired here is a radical change and the only way to secure it is by an-

nexation."³⁶ While Hyde was weary of "Hawaiian style of misrule," unlike most of his white colleagues, he supported the eventual statehood of Hawaii, but always supported full civil rights for indigenous Hawaiians.

Hyde largely restricted his lobbying to internal Congregational channels. Several of his HEA colleagues, less constrained by ties to the ABCFM and linked even more closely to the American expatriate community in Hawaii, took more active steps to influence American opinion. Four of them became significant spokesmen for annexation, and several left the islands during 1893 to campaign in the United States. These ministers were Oliver P. Emerson, William P. Oleson, Thomas L. Gulick and, most prominent of all, Sereno E. Bishop.

Emerson, one of five sons of members of the Hawaii mission eventually ordained to the ministry, served as secretary of the Hawaiian Mission Board and was deeply involved in the administration of the HEA. He told Judson Smith of the ABCFM that events had "moved rapidly, and we feel as if they have taken a direction that only a most merciful and all wise Providence would have given them. . . . Never did an arrogant legislature and guilty queen both

at once have such a speedy humiliation and overthrow meted out to them."³⁷ During the summer and fall of 1893 he traveled in the United States, where he attempted to influence Congregational opinion and worked to win passage of a motion supporting annexation at the annual meeting of the ABCFM.

The Rev. William P. Oleson served as principal of two schools in Hawaii supported by the HEA and the ABCFM from 1878 to 1893. An active Reform Party figure, he had helped to draft the Constitution of 1887. Until the very eve of the revolution, he apparently opposed annexation. As late as December 1889, Oleson took a strong public stand against it, issuing a pamphlet that declared,

I am convinced that the autonomy of this country should be preserved, and the present monarchical government be perpetuated. . . . In my own country, I should be opposed to the annexation of these islands, believing in the non-colonial policy.³⁸

Within a few weeks after the revolution had succeeded, however, Oleson accepted a subsidy from H.P. Baldwin and other "mild" annexationists, who paid him and W.D. Alexander, another missionary son, "to write and lecture

on the mainland."³⁹ Oleson, who eventually took a pulpit in Worcester, sent a letter of resignation to the ABCFM that did not mention his new commission.⁴⁰ That spring, Oleson published a warning in the *Independent* that failure to negotiate an annexation treaty would offer Japan an "opportunity in Hawaiian affairs that she would not hesitate to avail herself of."⁴¹

The Rev. Thomas L. Gulick, pastor of a white HEA church on Maui, was a less equivocal public advocate of the Provisional Government. Soon after Cleveland took office he wrote to the ABCFM, proclaiming that "whoever or whatever opposes, we are confident that annexation will eventually come. Christianity, civilization, commerce, the natural interests of America and of Hawaii, the very preservation of the life of the native Hawaiians, as well as their best welfare, all demand it."⁴² Gulick also contributed a series of pro-annexation letters to American newspapers, and strenuously opposed the restoration of Lili'uokalani.⁴³

The pro-annexation activities of these ministers were dwarfed, however, by those of the vigorous Sereno E. Bishop, editor of the HEA newspaper, *The Friend*, from 1887-1902 [See pp. 53 ff], and an active

correspondent on Hawaiian matters for a number of American publications. Bishop, a "second generation" member of the ABCFM mission, was the son of the Rev. Artemas and Elizabeth Bishop. He was born in Hawaii in 1827 and educated and ordained in the U.S. He rejoined the mission in Hawaii in 1853 and served with the ABCFM until 1865. He then held a series of HEA posts until his death in 1909. Described as "the most prolific writer on things Hawaiian," Bishop contributed regularly to a number of mainland publications, including *The Washington Star*, and the Congregational journal, *The Independent*. His views on Hawaiian affairs also appeared frequently in other important American magazines.⁴⁴

A vocal critic of the Hawaiian monarchy, Bishop was a member of the Hawaiian League, and, although, he denied it, probably an annexationist of long-standing by 1893.⁴⁵ Within the HEA, he was a notable critic of non-Christian practices among Hawaiian church members. In 1884 Bishop still forecast a future for Hawaii as an independent republic where, as in European monarchies, the Hawaiian monarchy would fade away when "native sovereignty comes to an end, whether by the decay of the native people, the lack of chiefs, or a general end of its usefulness."⁴⁶

Lili'uokalani's determination to reestablish monarchical power altered Bishop's gradualism. In January, Bishop supported the revolution vigorously, heaping withering scorn on the queen and the Hawaiians. In a private letter to James G. Blaine, he termed the Hawaiians a "weak and wasted people," whose

only claim can be to the compassionate help and protection of their neighbors. Is it not an absurdity for the aborigines, who under most favorable conditions have dwindled to having less than one third, (now barely one-fourth, probably) of the whole number of males on the Islands, and who are mentally and physically incapable of supporting, directing, or defending a government, nevertheless to claim sovereign rights. It would seem that forty millions of property interests held by foreigners must be delivered from native misrule. Not to do that will be the wrong!⁴⁷

Hawaiian Reactions to the Revolution

Although white HEA leaders repeatedly assured their ABCFM correspondents that influential Hawaiian clergy and members supported the revolution, it badly damaged the reputation of the HEA among the indigenous Hawaiians. Writing on February 28,

Charles Hyde reported that "the change has been so sudden and complete that the Hawaiians are simply stunned and stupefied. As they begin to find out where they are and what is the result of what has been done, they are naturally sullen and resentful."⁴⁸

One of the HEA's first concrete reactions to the revolution was to seek white contributions in order to increase the circulation of its Hawaiian language newspaper, which backed the overthrow of the Queen. The HEA hired Hawaiian seminararians at the North Pacific Missionary Institute to deliver the newspaper, but the carriers encountered deep resistance to the newspaper and to the revolution. Hyde wrote Boston that the news carriers "tell us that the natives say 'What! The missionary paper! Won't have it in my house.' So there is a good deal of missionary work to do to convince the people that the change is for the ultimate good of the Hawaiians."⁴⁹

In a subsequent letter, Hyde reported that church attendance was falling in Hawaiian churches and that his own visits had made no impact on the situation. "The Hawaiians of the zealot order, devoted to the Queen and to the Hawaiian style of misrule, say there are to get help from Mr. Blount."⁵⁰

In its 1893 annual report, the

board of the HEA admitted that the "winding up of the monarchial system in these islands has been the occasion of considerable disturbance to the native work." Congregations attempted to fire Hawaiian pastors who supported the revolution. Resistance was widespread: "To pray or not to pray for the restoration of the deposed Queen has proved a test question in many a meeting of many a church." Furthermore, the HEA interpreted disagreement with whites as

disaffection towards the Gospel, that falling away from the truth, which is so apt to be induced in the minds of the weak when offenses come. We look with desire for the days when the minds of the people, disembarassed of present exigencies, may be led again, without such painful distraction, to the glad contemplation of spiritual things.⁵¹

The next year the Board noted that the church had undergone "a severe test" and that "every native church has born the strain of a divided political sentiment, every native pastor has had to stand between two political parties."⁵²

White church leaders reacted to the disquiet among the indigenous Hawaiians by taking an even more aggressive attitude.

Writing in 1895, the Rev. O.P. Emerson argued that the old Hawaiian mission had been ended prematurely and that subsequent events showed that "the Hawaiian character had been tried overmuch." In 1898, Frank W. Damon, whose work with Chinese migrants was supported by both the HEA and the ABCFM, agreed: "The old missionaries were not reinforced, and on the shoulders of a native ministry was laid a burden too heavy to bear. There should be a foreign missionary on every island." In the wake of the revolution, ABCFM missionaries were sent back to Hawaii, although only in small numbers.⁵³

Congregational Reactions in the U.S.

By and large, officials of the Congregational churches reacted cautiously to the revolution. ABCFM executives responded sparingly to the entreaties of HEA leaders. The Rev. Judson Smith, the ABCFM's foreign secretary, had not answered letters from Hawaii during the fall of 1892. In late January he did, however, write to reassure both Charles Hyde and O.P. Emerson in the wake of the licensing of opium and the lottery. "The course of things in your Legislature must be a great burden to you," he wrote, "let us hope that it is the dark period that just precedes

some brighter and better epoch for the native population of the islands and for all the foreigners who are there."⁵⁴

The ABCFM took no public or private actions, either supportive or critical, of the Provisional Government during the remaining months of the Harrison administration. Smith, in fact, did not respond further to letters from Hawaii until after the Cleveland administration had taken office. At that point, although Smith offered some private encouragement to the revolutionaries, he consistently directed the attention of Hawaiian church leaders to the religious, rather than the political, situation. He also advised church leaders to cooperate with the Blount Commission.

Smith's attitude was complex, but he did not regard annexation as a solution to the problems faced by Hawaii's Christians. Writing to Hyde on April 3, 1893, he allowed that the overthrow of the Queen was a positive development, mostly because of the moral dangers inherent in licensing the opium trade and the lottery:

I do not wonder that all who have regard for the highest Christian welfare of the Islands feel devoutly thankful that the end of such rule has been reached.⁵⁵

While Smith praised the white leadership of the HEA, he repeatedly emphasized their obligation to defend the interests of the indigenous population. In his letter of April 4, for example, he supported the HEA's attempts to "increase the information of the Hawaiian people [via pro-revolutionary church newspapers] regarding their own best interests," but insisted that the "sentiments of the civilized world will sustain all reasonable measures to secure for the native population of the Hawaiian Islands the best possible advantages in the future form of government there."⁵⁶

Congregational officials were reluctant to engage in public advocacy over the situation in Hawaii, partly because they knew that the Hawaiian Revolution could damage ABCFM interests elsewhere. During the early 1890s, ABCFM missions in Turkey and Syria were under real threat of Ottoman persecution, and the German and Spanish colonial governments were cracking down on its missionary efforts in the Marshall and Gilbert Islands. The American Board also needed the willing cooperation of the U.S. State Department in its negotiations with foreign governments. It was, therefore, reluctant to criticize the Cleveland administration. A revolution in Hawaii linked to

American missionary activity was not good news.

Board officials also made some attempts to restrain the lobbying endeavors of their Hawaiian connections. Smith wrote to Hyde in April, 1893 that the Prudential Committee felt that,

our best wisdom causes us to carefully abstain from any participation in these matters. This, of course, is not saying that annexation substantially on the conditions already proposed is not the step that ought to be taken, but only that it is right that the Hawaiian people should, as far as possible, be assured from first to last that in the changes that are proposed they are not left out of account, but are carefully considered.⁵⁷

Smith also noted that the editor of the important Boston weekly, the *Congregationalist*, had refused to publish an article of Hyde's on the Hawaiian situation. The editor, Smith explained, did not "wish to print anything in the *Congregationalist* which would unduly favor annexation if the outcome is in doubt."⁵⁸

While Smith and the ABCFM refused to offer public support, they did not criticize the leaders of the Hawaiian church in their private correspondence, and, in certain ways, indirectly facilitated the

public relations campaigns of pro-annexationists. The Prudential Committee of the ABCFM authorized previously unscheduled leaves of absence for both Hyde and O.P. Emerson, and accepted W.P. Oleson's rather sudden resignation. All three men returned to the United States, where they spent at least some time agitating on behalf of the revolution.⁵⁹

The Prudential Committee also allowed annexationists time to make their case at the annual meeting of the ABCFM held in October 1893, when annexationists were desperately trying to influence public opinion in anticipation of a very negative report from the Blount Commission. O.P. Emerson laid the groundwork in a letter asking that the Rev. Edwin Pond Parker, an influential Congregational minister from Hartford, be permitted to speak on Hawaii at the annual meeting. "Parker . . . can speak with much acceptance and has an effective style. . . . We of Hawaii would feign lift up our voices in the father land."⁶⁰

The ABCFM eventually passed a rather vague, but pro-revolutionary, motion on October 13, 1893, and on October 31 the Prudential Committee approved, unanimously, a minute that included the text of a message to Secretary of State William Q. Gresham:

The Prudential Committee of the American Board, in common with the Christian People of all names in this land, recognizes the perils to Christian civilization in the Hawaiian Islands arising from the recent course of events, and views with grave concerns the recurrence of revolution and turmoil in that Kingdom. They desire that our Government give the fullest consideration to the existing situation in order that actions taken may contribute effectively toward allaying the strife and promoting domestic tranquillity in Hawaii.⁶¹

Gresham responded rather shrewdly, noting the relevance of the Hawaiian case to broader ABCFM interests. The State Department, he wrote, would "sustain in all proper ways the legitimate and peaceful endeavors of this earnest class of our citizens in Hawaii, on whose behalf you write, consistently with the solicitude for similar American interests in other lands."⁶²

Subsequently, the ABCFM took little formal notice of the Hawaiian situation, although some of its less formal publications reflected anti-monarchical sentiments. The board's *Almanac*, an annual publication designed for mass circulation among American Protestants, in both 1893 and

1894 suggested that monarchy had "become intolerable to all the better class on Hawaii. The result . . . was [the Queen's] removal and the establishment of a Provisional Government."⁶³

Gauging Congregational reaction outside of the ABCFM is more difficult, since the Congregational churches had no central administrative bureaucracy. Reaction in the Congregational press was mixed. During the first half of 1893, as noted above, the *Boston Congregationalist*, refused to print advocacy pieces. But the *Independent*, probably the largest circulation general circulation magazine in the United States, did carry pro-annexation dispatches by S.E. Bishop. After the Cleveland administration came down against the revolution late in 1893, both the *Congregationalist* and the *Outlook* opposed the restoration of Lili'uokalani.

Conclusion

Before summing up, I would like to offer several cautionary remarks. This paper presents ample evidence of attitudes and actions on the part of white Congregationalists that are painful to reflect upon. Their attitudes, actions, and rhetoric were, in many ways, repugnant to late 20th century sensibilities. This paper does not, however, offer a full, thoroughly-researched,

analysis of the Hawaiian revolution of 1893. It presents only one aspect [the involvement of missionary descendants] of an extremely complex historical event.

I do not offer these remarks to excuse or justify the actions of a tiny number of whites who set up a racially exclusive, pseudo-democratic government in Hawaii. However, this sorry result unfolded in the course of a long, complex struggle to control the future of the Hawaiian islands. Once close allies, the Hawaiian monarchy and the descendants of the missionaries moved, step by step, into combat under the pressure of dramatic economic, demographic and political changes that neither group could control completely. Those on the royal side of the struggle were not blameless. Many of the disturbing remarks made by the descendants of the missionaries were uttered in the course of heated arguments with opponents who were also vituperative and insulting.

I offer here my best judgments on the complicity of the missionaries, of their descendants, and of the church:

1) The missionary generation: While the missionaries of the ABCFM's Sandwich Islands Mission inserted themselves into the politics of the Hawaiian kingdom

and often displayed condescending attitudes toward Hawaiians, it is difficult to argue that they bear a high degree of responsibility for the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. After the late 1830s, they did take a larger role in Hawaiian politics and government than their supervisors in the ABCFM thought was suitable. They certainly bore significant responsibility for creating the unstable political order destroyed by the revolution. So, however, did the Hawaiian monarchy itself.

The events of 1893 were played out in a political and economic climate created largely by the sugar boom of the late 1870s and 1880s—in other words, well after the vast majority of American missionaries had died or otherwise left service. While the missionaries claimed power and influence in Hawaii for themselves and for their children, given the geopolitical context of the 19th century, it is also likely that their activities delayed by several decades the outright colonization of Hawaii, and thus probably prolonged the existence of the Hawaiian monarchy.

2) Missionary Children: It is obvious that some missionary children were directly responsible for the overthrow of the monarchy. The inner circle of “revolutionaries” was disproportionately composed of men from mission families. Fur-

thermore, men like Thurston, Smith, Castle, Judd, and Dole took leading roles in creating and exploiting racially divisive politics of the 1880s. They staged the revolutions of 1887 and 1893, ended the Hawaiian monarchy, curtailed the autonomy of the indigenous Hawaiian people, and sought the annexation of the islands by the U.S.

Like most other whites on the islands, the vast majority of mission descendants supported the coup and the subsequent annexation campaign, even if they did not participate in it actively. The polity imposed by the white-dominated Provisional Government was not only fundamentally undemocratic, it enshrined discrimination based upon race. Whites, including the children of missionaries, took control of Hawaii for themselves and excluded most Hawaiians and all Asians from full suffrage. Many of the whites—inside and outside the church—also defended their actions on the grounds of pseudo-scientific theories of white racial superiority common among Westerners at the end of the 19th century.⁶⁴

3) The Church: It is also clear that the leadership of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association collaborated closely with the leaders of the coup and the Provisional Government. Several lay members of the HEA board were key figures in the

revolt. In addition, several important clerical leaders—S.E. Bishop above all—proved to be ardent apologists for the revolution. These ministers argued strenuously that white political control served the best interests of indigenous Hawaiians, even though they knew that most Hawaiians bitterly opposed the termination of the monarchy. Many whites were, in fact, outraged by Hawaiian resistance to white control. The white leaders of the HEA were usually less bluntly racist in their utterances and actions than the politicians who led the coup. But they fell quickly into line with other whites when the Hawaiian situation polarized.

The reaction of Congregational officials in the United States to the coup was muted and unemphatic. The coup posed problems for the ABCFM, and it did not give its Hawaiian correspondents anything like a blanket endorsement they sought. After prolonged public silence, the American Board eventually backed the annexationists in a vague way. But the ABCFM's efforts to sway the Cleveland administration and American public opinion appear to have been perfunctory. The pressure to endorse annexation came from the floor of its annual meeting, not from the deliberative processes of the Prudential Committee. □

Notes for "Congregational Ministries in Hawaii (1820-1893)"

¹ My account of the pre-revolutionary period is drawn largely from these major scholarly works: Ralph Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3 vols, (Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1936-67); Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power*, ((New York: Harper & Row, 1961); William Adam Russ, *The Hawaiian Revolution (1893-94)*, (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1959); Sylvester K. Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii, 1842-1898*, (New York: Russell and Russell, 1945); William R. Hutchison's *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: Univ. Press, 1987); and *Missionary Album: Portraits and Biographical Sketches of American Protestant Missionaries to the Hawaiian Islands*, Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, rev. 1937. I have also used the membership rosters in the annual reports of the Mission Children's Society.

² My research was limited to Boston and resources available there, including: records of the ABCFM at the Congregational Library and the Houghton Library of Harvard University; minutes of the Prudential Committee, and correspondence with Hawaii and the U.S. government; reports of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association, and the Hawaiian Mission Children's Association;

publications of the U.S. government, most notably the massive report of U.S. Commissioner James L. Blount, (*House Executive Document 47 (53 Cong. 2 Sess.)*), cited as *Blount Report*; and many contemporary journalistic articles by both supporters and critics of the revolution.

³ Anderson, called by Hutchison "the outstanding American organizer and theorist of foreign missions in the nineteenth century," discouraged the "civilizing" approach to missions. His views anticipated the approach of 20th century mission theorists who stress "indigenization." "Andersonists" dominated the ABCFM during the middle decades of the 19th century; after 1880 the policies of the American Board shifted quietly, and missionary control of native churches was considered more acceptable. Hutchison makes Hawaii an exemplary case study in his history of American Protestant mission theory. See *Errand to the World*, 62-63, 69-77, 86-89. See also Torben Christiansen and William R. Hutchison, eds., *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era, 1880-1920*, (Cambridge: Harvard Theological Review, 1984).

⁴ Letter to the Sandwich Island Mission, 1846. Cited in Clifton Phillips, *Protestant America and the Pagan World*, (Cambridge: East Asian Research Center, Harvard, 1969), 126.

⁵ Fred W. Goodsell, *The Sandwich Islands*, ABCFM Manuscript Histories, v. 16, *The Sandwich Islands*, Houghton Library, Harvard, 70.

⁶ Statistics for 1863 from reports of the HEA. By 1868 there were 50 churches with 12 American-Hawaiian and 35 Hawaiian pastors. By 1888, only one American-Hawaiian pastor remained, alongside 32 Hawaiian pastors. Despite the increase in the Hawaiian clergy, Hawaiian-Americans retained a massively disproportionate role in the association. During the 1890s, two thirds of its officers were whites. By 1895, church membership had dipped under 5,000, reflecting both drops in the Hawaiian population and disaffection following the Revolution of 1893.

⁷ The scale of ABCFM's involvement is indicated by its annual allotments to Hawaii. Only \$8,425.77 of ABCFM's 1892 budget of more than \$700,000 was allotted to Hawaii. The chief beneficiaries were the Rev. Charles M. Hyde, who went to Hawaii in 1877; and Frank Damon, former ABCFM missionary in China, who worked with Chinese immigrants. Only Hyde and his wife were carried on the roster of ABCFM missionaries. *ABCFM Annual Report*, 1892.

⁸ *The Report of the Commissioner to the Hawaiian Islands*, 136.

⁹ The first political group was composed of native Hawaiians and "part-Hawaiians." The second group was white and largely consisted of descendants of missionaries (nine of the eleven men identified by Kuykendall were sons or grandsons of missionaries). This white grouping

consisted of Sanford B. Dole, Lorrin A. Thurston, William R. Castle, A. F. Judd, Charles H. Judd, Henry A. P. Carter, Joseph O. Carter, W.O. Smith, Henry M. Whitney, who were all descended from missionaries. Two others had close ties with missionary families and the HEA. Members of both groups would play large roles during the 1880s and the revolutions of 1887 and 1893. They were not rigidly structured groups, however. Hawaiian politics remained fluid, with significant policy disagreements within both groups and between them. See *Hawaiian Kingdom*, v. 3, 187.

¹⁰ The text of the Constitution of 1887 was drafted by members of the Hawaiian League and forced upon the King. Kuykendall reported that an early draft of the constitution, which survives in the W. O. Smith papers, indicates that the charter was drafted by a committee of 18 American-Hawaiians, Americans, and Europeans. See Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, Vol. 3, 367. Nine were closely connected with the missionary group and belonged to the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society.

¹¹ By changing cabinets at the last minute, the Hawaiian block was bidding to control government for a year and a half.

¹² Hyde said that in 1893 only three "superannuated missionaries" survived. *Blount Report*, 356.

¹³ S.E. Bishop and O.P. Emerson were

sons of the original mission. Both were leading figures in the HEA; Charles M. Hyde was assigned by the ABCFM to Hawaii in 1877.

¹⁴ Sanford Dole, in his 1888 presidential address to the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, said that in contemporary Hawaii, the missionaries were "prejudged and cursed. This is exceedingly common at the present day and prevails among newcomers and transient visitors who know little or nothing of the persons and things they presume to judge . . . He added that "the missionaries are charged with accumulating wealth; and it did come about that lands given by the chiefs to the mission with the generosity which recognized the benefits the nation had received at their hands, and which lands were afterwards distributed among some of the missionary families; became in later years of great value and enriched their owners; and it is true that some of the missionaries upon reasonable grounds left the mission and engaged in secular pursuits, and were prospered; this is all true and let us rejoice that we have these illustrations of the Master's words that every one who hath left houses or brethren or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for his name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold." *Thirty Sixth Annual Report of the Hawaiian Mission Children's Society*, May 26, 1888. (Honolulu: Press Publishing, 1888), 34-5.

¹⁵ A tabulation in the Honolulu *Ad-*

vertiser, April 5, 1893, indicated that only 8 of 101 cabinet ministers between 1842 and 1893 were either missionaries or sons of missionaries. Russ and Stevens tend to see American, English, and German expatriate communities functioning as a single political community defined by racial politics during the revolutionary period.

¹⁶ Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, *Forty-First Annual Report* (1893), 64-65.

¹⁷ See Russ, *Hawaiian Revolution*, 78.

¹⁸ *Star*, October 25, 1893. See Russ, *op. cit.*, 199.

¹⁹ Thurston was an apologist for the Provisional Government and Republic between 1893 and 1898. See "The Advantages of Annexation," *North American Review*, CLII (March 1893) and *Handbook on the Annexation of Hawaii* (Honolulu: n.p. 1897)

²⁰ Lorrin A. Thurston, *Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution* (Honolulu: Advertiser Publishing, 1936), 277.

²¹ William A. Russ, *The Hawaiian Revolution (1893-94)*, (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna U. Press, 1959), 35.

²² Thurston, *Handbook*, 27-28.

²³ *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

²⁵ *Blount Report*, 491-503.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 372-3.

²⁷ Ibid., 374.

²⁸ *Blount Report*, 497, 501.

²⁹ *Two Weeks*, 24–5.

³⁰ *Blount Report*, 218.

³¹ *Annual Reports of the HEA*, 1890–96.

³² *Blount Report*, 356.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ *Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Board of the HEA*, June 1892, 13.

³⁵ C.M. Hyde to Judson Smith, Dec. 7, 1892, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

³⁶ Hyde to Smith, April 26, 1893, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

³⁷ O.P. Emerson to J. Smith, February 24, 1893, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

³⁸ Cited in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, vol. 3, 566.

³⁹ Ibid., 637.

⁴⁰ An example of his work in the United States is the pamphlet *The Political Evolution of Hawaii*, (Boston: Rockwell and Churchill Press, 1893), which reprinted a talk to the Congregational Club of Boston. He defended the actions of the revolutionaries: "The foreign population that has been such a potent factor in the political evolution of Hawaii has never taken united action except in behalf of good government. It has been moderate in its demands, humane in its actions, patient with the frailties of an effete

monarchy, and uniformly considerate of the political rights of native Hawaiians." (p. 12).

⁴¹ *Independent*, May 11, 1893.

⁴² T.L. Gulick to N.G. Clark, April 14, 1893, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

⁴³ Gulick's account appeared in the *New York Tribune* of Feb. 24, 1893. The Republican newspaper was vigorously pro-annexation. Letters from Gulick on the Blount report and the Hawaiian situation appeared in the *Tribune* of Nov. 19 and Dec. 23, 1893. W.B. Oleson also published a pro-annexation letter in the *Tribune* on July 23, 1893, soon after his arrival in the U.S.

⁴⁴ During the crisis Bishop contributed, "The Hawaiian Queen and Her Kingdom," to the *Review of Reviews*, September, 1891, and "The United States and Hawaii," to the same journal in March, 1893. His article, "How the United Hawaii Became Americanized," appeared in *Overland* 25:507. He participated in the symposium, "Our Policy" in the *Independent*, February 8, 1894; published one of the first defenses of the Revolution in the February 16, 1893 edition of the *New York Tribune*; and an autobiography, *Reminiscences of Old Hawaii* in 1916.

⁴⁵ Julius Pratt, ardent opponent of American imperialism, argued fairly persuasively that Bishop and J. L. Stevens intentionally slandered Lili'uokalani, accusing her of paganism, being influenced by

kahunas, and sexual immorality. See Pratt, *Expansionists*, 160 ff.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 278.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 634.

⁴⁸ Hyde to Smith, February 28, 1893, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Hyde to Smith, April 26, 1893, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

⁵¹ *Thirtieth Annual Report of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association*, June 1893, (Honolulu: HEA Board, 1893), 14–15.

⁵² *Thirty-first Annual Report of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association*, 1894, (Honolulu: HEA Board, 1894), 16.

⁵³ Quotes from the Rev. and Mrs. Orramel Gulick, *Pilgrims in Hawaii*, (New York: Fleming and Revell, 1918), 311; in 1894, after years of lobbying by the HEA, Gulick and his wife were transferred from Japan to work with Japanese laborers in their native Hawaii. Gradually missionaries were assigned to each of the major islands.

⁵⁴ Smith wrote a very similar letter to O.P. Emerson, several days before news of the events of January 14–17 were received and published in the United States. (The first accounts appeared on Jan. 29). Smith to Hyde, Jan. 25, 1893, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*. Houghton Library, Harvard.

⁵⁵ Smith to Hyde, April 4, 1892, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Smith to Hyde, April 3, 1893, *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

⁵⁸ Smith to Hyde, April 23, 1893. *ABCFM Foreign Letters*.

⁵⁹ None of the Hawaiian ministers explicitly asked permission to come to the United States to campaign on behalf of the revolution. But all three did so, though Hyde actually spent much of his leave in Europe with his wife.

⁶⁰ O.P. Emerson to Judson Smith, Sept. 23, 1893, *ABCFM Documents*.

⁶¹ *Minutes of the Prudential Commit-*

tee of the ABCFM, Vol. 23, 361–62. Judson Smith wrote to Gresham on Nov. 2.

⁶² William Q. Gresham to Judson Smith, November 6, 1893, *ABCFM Letters from Government Officials*, Vol. 2, 1890–1899.

⁶³ *Almanac of the ABCFM for 1894*, (Boston: American Board, 1895), 22. The 1895 edition reported that 1894 had “witnessed a peaceful change from a Provisional Government to a well-established Republic, which has already been recognized by the great nations of the world.” (p. 25). By 1896, the *Almanac* mentioned briefly that “the new Republic

stands firmly, not withstanding its numerous foes.” (p. 19).

⁶⁴ In general, the prevailing form of race ideology in Hawaiian mission circles was based on popularized evolutionary concepts. In broad outline, this tendency argued that all human races were evolving in the same direction, but at different rates. The “burden” of the white race was to supervise the evolution of the others. It is probably fair to add that many of the American whites who opposed the annexation of Hawaii in the early 1890s did so on the basis of even more regressive race theories.

Background for an Apology to Native Hawaiian People

This article is addressed to the issues raised by the 17th and 18th General Synods of the United Church of Christ. In a resolution on "Self-governance of Native Hawaiians," the 1991 Synod directed the President of the church to offer a public apology to the Hawaiian people for "our denomination's historical complicities in the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893," and to initiate a process of reconciliation between the UCC and native Hawaiians. The reason given for this action was that "the Congregational Church, a historic member of the United Church of Christ, sponsored and sent 100 missionaries [the actual number is closer to 150] to Hawaii," and that some descendants of those missionaries "were party to an illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy in 1893." The resolution notes, however, that the Congregational Church "has been rightly commended and credited for all its good works it did related to converting many Hawaiians to Christianity."

The resolution also refers to a pronouncement by the 17th General Synod which charges that descendants of missionaries sent to Hawaii by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions were involved in "the destruction of Pacific Island ways," particularly by the introduction of

private land ownership in Hawaii, as well as in the dethroning of Hawaii's last Queen.

Our purpose here is not to rehearse the story of the Sandwich Islands Mission of the American Board, with all its complexities. Quite specifically our aim is to do the following:

- Provide a very brief indication of the scope and character of the "good works" of the mission, and their effect on the "Pacific Island ways" of Hawaii;
- Assess the relation of the American Board mission, and of children of missionaries, to the UCC;
- Evaluate the connection of the mission and mission-related personnel with the introduction of private land ownership;
- Trace the relation of the American Board, its missionaries and their children, to the political developments in Hawaii which led to the overthrow of the monarchy and annexation by the United States.

An intelligent understanding of these matters would seem to be a prerequisite for an appropriate apology by the President and an effective effort at reconciliation.

Thoughts on "Good Works"

The mission was not only an evan-

gelistic but also a vast educational venture, involving the creation of a written Hawaiian language, literature, and music; the fostering of widespread literacy; and the development of a large system of schools and other educational programs. Moreover, the mission vigorously promulgated a social vision characteristic of Puritan New England in that era, which emphasized a highly disciplined Christian morality and benevolence, as well as constitutional government. The mission was a deliberate attempt to revolutionize traditional "Pacific Island ways," as the Board's instructions to the missionaries made clear. They were to "aim at nothing short of covering these islands with fruitful fields and pleasant dwellings, and schools, and churches; of raising up the whole people to an elevated state of Christian civilization," to form them "into a reading, thinking, cultivated state of society . . . to turn them from their barbarous courses and habits."¹

It is essential to recognize that the missionaries provided only part of the heavy European and American influence which revolutionized traditional Hawaiian society. From the very beginning of European contact, in 1778, the consequences of that contact were often tragic. Almost immediately venereal and other diseases were intro-

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duced which contributed to a rapid decline in population. The missionaries found when they arrived forty years later that the native Hawaiian population had dropped by almost half.²

The great king Kamehameha I unified the islands, with the aid of Western guns and ships and using *haole* (white, stranger, a generic term still in use for Europeans and Americans) advisors. His example was quickly taken up by other chiefs. Also making an impact on "Island ways" were the eager traders and competing imperialisms of Britain, France, and the United States. Hawaii was a magnet for a great number of ships criss-crossing the Pacific, and many *haoles* settled in the delightful climate and became active in business and political life. In various ways, and for various reasons, the missionaries were often in conflict with these other foreign influences, generally on behalf of the interests of the Hawaiian people as they understood them.

Dr. Abraham Akaka, probably the best-known Hawaiian of the day, summarized one view of the impact of the American Board mission when he spoke at a service in Kawaiahao Church celebrating the inauguration of Hawaii's statehood in 1959:

On April the 25th, 1820, one

hundred thirty-nine years ago, the first Christian service of worship was conducted in Honolulu on this very ground. From that beginning a new Hawaii was born. Our missionaries, under God, became the greatest single influence in Hawaii's whole development, politically, economically, educationally, socially, and religiously.

On October 23, 1975, the 155th anniversary of the mission, Samy Amalu, a columnist in the Honolulu *Advertiser*, wrote in a more secular vein:

We were an illiterate people, and in 15 years the missionaries made us the most literate nation in the world. We were a neolithic people confronted with a technology infinitely superior to our own. . . . The American Missionaries grabbed the Hawaiian people and wrested them across a cultural chasm that no other primitive people have ever been able to cross so successfully.

How appropriate that crossing was is the fundamental question at issue in the General Synod resolutions.

American Board Mission and Successors

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission was founded in 1810 by the initiative

of New England Congregationalists, but almost immediately it came to be recognized as the foreign missionary agency of the Presbyterian, Dutch, and German Reformed Churches as well. It had no formal ecclesiastical connection with any of them, but was a voluntary society operating under its own charter, with a self-perpetuating corporate membership. It was accountable to its supporting churches for proper stewardship of funds contributed and for faithfulness to their fundamental convictions and beliefs.

These wider connections of the Board were gradually eroded by the rise of denominational consciousness until, in 1869, with the departure of the New School Presbyterians, its only remaining formal connection was with the Congregational churches. Two years later the national Council of Congregational Churches was established, thus providing for the first time a national fellowship to which this independent Board could relate. In the 20th century the links between the Board and the denomination were progressively strengthened until, for all practical purposes, the Board became an organic part of the denomination.

Before these developments took place, however, in 1863, the American Board had formally

ended its missionary connection with the Islands. From the beginning its fundamental policy was to establish self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating churches. When that goal was reached, the mission was to disengage and invest its energies in new fields. Twenty-two years after the arrival of the mission, the Hawaiian king proclaimed that "the Protestant religion [i.e., that of the mission] is the religion of the government of Hawaii," and approximately half the population was related to the mission churches.³ Five years later the Board began formulating plans to terminate the mission in order to press the Hawaiian churches toward full self-direction and support, and to set an example of native leadership in the churches which would also encourage the government to rely more on Hawaiian leadership rather than leaning so heavily on *haoles*.

In 1853 the annual meeting of the ABCFM heard a report on "The Sandwich Islands, a Christian Nation," and voted to proceed with disengagement. Missionaries were encouraged to remain in the Islands on a self-supporting basis, as home missionaries, or to return home. An indigenous church structure had gradually emerged. In 1823 an Evangelical Association of missionaries had been

formed, in 1852 a Hawaiian Missionary Society was organized to undertake a mission to the Micronesian Islands, and in 1854 the Hawaiian Evangelical Association (HEA) was constituted, to include all ordained Congregational and Presbyterian ministers, with lay delegates.

In 1863 Rufus Anderson, the American Board Senior Secretary, primarily responsible for the focus on self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating churches, went to Hawaii to preside over the termination of the mission and the turning over of responsibility to the newly organized Board of the HEA. In effect the HEA became the Congregational home missionary agency for Hawaii. The arrangements included an agreement by the American Board to continue paying salaries of some of the older missionaries still serving as pastors, so as to free resources of the HEA for support of Hawaiian ministers. With the formation of the United Church of Christ in 1958, the HEA became the Hawaii Conference.⁴

Clearly there were Congregational/United Church of Christ connections through the American Board and its mission; clearly also, by the time the monarchy ended, the relevant connection was through Hawaiian Congrega-

tionalism, in which many of the missionary descendants were significant actors.

The Change to Private Land Ownership

The 18th General Synod resolution quoted the pronouncement of the 17th General Synod, which states: "Hawaii was owned by God, and the native population were stewards of the land. The Great *Mahele* (land distribution) was a process that introduced a totally foreign concept, that of private land ownership." It further asserts that descendants of American Board missionaries were among the "political powers" which pressed for this change, with the result that Native Hawaiians became strangers in their own land.

Clearly, God owned Hawaii along with all other land on earth; but as late as 1836 the operative system, non-theologically considered, was that the King formally owned all the land, a class of chiefs held much of the land under him as feudal tenants, and commoners were tenants of the chiefs, whose exactions averaged as much as 2/3 of the tenants' production. In 1840 a Constitution, shaped in large part by missionary influence, stated that the lands belonged "to the chiefs [supreme among them the King], and the people in common." Both the chiefs and the

haole community were eager to move to a system in which individual landholdings would be secured as against the prospect that at any time the King could exert his preemptive right.⁵

The missionaries supported this system for three major reasons: they believed that giving common people their own land would relieve them of onerous feudal burdens; that Hawaiians would be motivated to increase their productivity and hence their prosperity, since the reward for their efforts would be secure; and that the discipline of systematic work would have a salutary moral effect.

Legislation of 1847 provided the framework for a new landholding system, and beginning in 1848 a Land Commission began the Great *Mahele*, the land distribution which is still the basis on which land titles are held. All the land was divided between the King and the chiefs; then the King divided his land into Crown Lands, kept for his own use, and Government Lands, which could be sold to commoners and also to foreigners. The *kuleanas*, lands lived on and cultivated by the common people, were taken from the holdings of the King, chiefs, and government, and given outright to the occupants. Commoners could also buy lots of from one

to fifty acres at a nominal price.

A principal role in the whole process was played by Dr. Gerrit Judd, who had left the mission in 1842 to take up a series of major posts in the government. Other ex-missionaries in government service also played a part, and some active missionaries assisted in the work of surveying for the Land Commission. Some missionaries bought land for themselves, although Rufus Anderson wrote from Boston warning against speculation and the "lure of filthy lucre."⁶ By 1852 one-third of the missionaries possessed land titles, averaging almost 500 acres per man. A significant number of these holdings had come as gifts from chiefs or the King.

Some children of missionaries were very active in land speculation in the years after the termination of the mission.⁷ Judd was opposed to allowing foreigners to hold land in fee simple, and others feared the consequences of allowing Hawaiians, utterly unused to private landholding, to sell the lands they were given. Voicing that concern, Amos Starr Cooke, who had gone into business to support himself as the mission wound down, wrote in his journal,

While the natives stand confounded and amazed at their privileges [to acquire land] and

doubting the truth of it all, etc., the foreigners are creeping among them, getting their largest and best lands. . . . This is trying, but we cannot help it. It is what we have been contending against for years.⁸

Cooke's melancholy prediction proved all too accurate. But it is difficult to judge what the consequences of retaining the feudal system into the 20th century would have been.

The Mission and the Overthrow of the Monarchy

As the foregoing makes clear, the American Board mission to Hawaii had ceased to exist long before the overthrow of the monarchy. The connection of the Congregational Churches with that event, if any, was through children of the mission who had settled in Hawaii.

In terminating the mission, the American Board encouraged mission families to stay in the Islands, partly because it was felt that the churches still needed the presence and pastoral service of former missionaries, and because it believed the mission families would provide a core of Christian citizens as the nation continued to move into the complexities of modern life. In fact, the heavily intermarried informal network of these families, symbolized by the Hawaii Mission

Children's Society, organized in 1852, became a major factor in the development of Hawaii. Many of its members had prominent positions in the economic, professional, social, and political life of the Islands. They were a significant sector of the *haole* oligarchy which came to rule Hawaii in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Long before 1893, and indeed from the beginning, the missionaries had been drawn into political involvements in spite of repeated warning from Boston to avoid them. The mission won its way initially by capturing the devotion of the leading chiefs, who had moved to abolish the old religious system just before the mission arrived, and who found a replacement in Christianity. Significantly, the monarch always held the mission at arm's length, although a number of the very highest *alii* (nobles, chiefs) became major instruments of the Christianization of the Islands.

As these Hawaiian leaders struggled in the 1830s and 1840s to come to terms with an international system dominated by European and American powers, they turned to missionaries for guidance and leadership. A thoughtful Hawaiian wrote to the *kahina nui* (regent),

If a big wave comes in, large fishes will come from the dark Ocean which you never saw before, and when they see the small fishes they will eat them up. . . . The ships of the white man have come, and smart people have arrived from the great countries which you have never seen before; they know our people are few in number and live in a small country; they will eat us up. . . . Therefore get your servant ready who will help you when you need him.

Such thoughts motivated a request that the American Board send them "a teacher of the chiefs in what pertains to the land, according to the practice of enlightened countries."⁹

In 1838 William Richards was asked to give instruction in economics and political economy to the chiefs. Later he held a number of high positions in government. Similarly, Dr Gerrit Judd began in 1842 a series of responsibilities which made him for more than a decade the most powerful man in Hawaiian political life, a very trusted adviser to the king. Richard Armstrong virtually built the public education system of Hawaii, between 1848 and 1860. Missionaries who accepted formal positions in government could do so, however, only after severing their ties with the mission. Others partici-

pated in political life in less formal ways. From the 1850s on, missionary children frequently occupied important government positions. Many other *haoles* also played major roles in Hawaiian political life; the missionary element was strong but seldom dominant.

The aims of the missionaries in politics were focused on establishing the independence of the kingdom, protecting against competing imperialisms, and on modifying its character from a theoretical royal absolutism toward a constitutional monarchy, with a Bill of Rights and provision for popular participation. Beginning in 1840, as a series of Constitutions were promulgated, a fundamental tension became increasingly evident. The monarchs were eager to exalt royal prerogatives, and became increasingly restrictive under constitutional restraints. The *haole* oligarchy, which more and more dominated economic and social life, pressed insistently for legal barriers against royal freedom.

In 1864 King Kamehameha V promulgated a constitution which gave the crown considerably more power. At his death in 1874 his successor, Kalakaua, whose chief advisers were distrusted by the business community, embarked on a number of ventures opposed

by the *haole* oligarchy. Among them were an effort to establish Hawaiian primacy over all of Polynesia, a buildup of military forces, the establishment of a lottery, and the licensing of opium. With the participation of a number of missionary sons, the Hawaiian League was formed in 1887, together with a paramilitary group, the Hawaiian Rifles. Under the threat of armed revolt the king was presented with a demand for acceptance of a new Constitution. This "Bayonet" Constitution reduced the monarchy to a ceremonial office, with effective power in a cabinet appointed by the king but responsible to the legislature. Voting rules effectively barred all Asians, by then an important part of the population, and most Hawaiians.

For four years there was political turmoil, royalists of the Hawaiian community contending with the Reform part of the business community, and both with Liberals who wanted to move toward a republic. When Kalakaua died in 1891 he was succeeded by his sister, Lili'uokalani, who bitterly resented the Bayonet Constitution of 1887, and was determined to restore the prerogatives of the monarchy. She appointed Hawaiians and part-Hawaiians to key posts and backed a number of measures opposed by the *haole* oli-

garchy—a lottery, the licensing of opium, and the establishment of a bank to issue fiat money.

She clearly intended to promulgate a new constitution to replace the one forced upon her predecessor. To preempt such an effort, an Annexation Club was formed. When she made her move on January 14, 1893, a Committee of Safety was organized which proceeded to take control of the government by force of arms three days later, on January 17, 1893. A Provisional Government was set up, headed by Sanford Dole, a son of the mission, and on July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawaii was proclaimed, with Dole as President. Two years later, when the Queen became involved in an attempted royalist counter-revolution, she was forced to abdicate and swear allegiance to the Republic. Annexation by the United States followed in 1898.

What was the role of missionary descendants and Congregationalists in this change of regime? The major movers were:

- Lorrin A. Thurston, a grandson of missionaries, who referred to himself as one of "us missionary boys" and was active in government from the 1860s on. Thurston, the publisher of a major Honolulu newspaper, was clearly the key figure in the revo-

lution and also its most effective publicist, and was an ardent proponent of annexation; and

- W.O. Smith, W.R. Castle, and A.S. Wilcox, all members of the Committee of Safety (making four "missionary" members of a total of thirteen—one of whom was the German consul!)
- Another key player was Sanford B. Dole, a prominent lawyer, judge, and cabinet member under the monarchy. After trying to convince the organizers of the coup to preserve a limited monarchy, he reluctantly agreed to head the Provisional Government, served as first president of the Republic, and, after annexation, became the first Governor of the Territory of Hawaii. Queen Lili'uokalani said that his selection to head the revolutionary government saved bloodshed and was "providential."¹⁰

Arms for the Hawaiian Rifles, involved in the affair of the "Bayonet Constitution of 1887," and for the Committee of Safety, were channeled through firms with missionary antecedents: E. O. Hall & Sons, and Castle S& Cooke.¹¹

Overall, as many as seventy per cent of the key officers in the new government were related to missionaries, including the Minister of Finance, the Attorney General, the Chief Justice, the Minister to

Washington, the head of the Land Survey Office, and the Mayor of Honolulu.¹²

In listing the *dramatis personae* of the overthrow, it is essential to note that the American Minister to the kingdom, John L. Stevens, played a vital and central role in encouraging and protecting the plotters. His actions were approved by the Secretary of State, and presumably by President Harrison. Later President Cleveland repudiated them and tried to restore the Queen. But Congress was not interested, and when McKinley was elected, annexation was a foregone conclusion.

Two Congregationalist editors were prominent in attacking the Queen and preparing for the overthrow. They were Henry N. Castle, son of missionaries, who was editor of the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Thurston's paper, and the Rev. Sereno E. Bishop, a missionary until 1866, who was editor from 1887 to 1902 of *The Friend*, a monthly magazine which was a semi-official publication of the Congregational community and continues today as the newsletter of the Hawaii Conference of the United Church of Christ. In his paper he strongly criticized the Queen for "the caprices and corruptions of a reheathenized Monarchy," by

which he probably meant her sponsorship of the lottery and opium bills, her efforts to Hawaiianize the government, and particularly her emphasis on restoring traditional prerogatives to the Hawaiian monarch.¹³ [See p. 52]

Another prominent Congregationalist was Henry H. Parker, son of the mission and a missionary until he became pastor of the great "first church" in Honolulu, Kawaiahao Church, where he preached for fifty-four years. His sermons voiced strong criticisms of Kalakaua and Lili'uokalani. The Queen had been a devout Christian from her childhood, having been educated in the Chiefs' School founded by missionaries, and was a frequent occupant of her special pew at Kawaiahao Church. After her abdication she joined the Hawaiian congregation at the Anglican Cathedral. Her funeral was jointly conducted by Parker and an Anglican Priest.

Some Congregationalists supported the Queen. Charles T. Gulick, linked with prominent missionary families on both sides, was a steadfast loyalist. On the outer islands nearly all the native pastors accepted the verdict against the Queen, because of the lottery and opium issues, but their congregations generally disagreed and some pastors were

driven out. Some native Congregationalists gathered to pray for restoration, with native priests as their leaders. At Kaumakapili Church in Honolulu, the pastor accepted the revolution, but for weeks the church bell tolled from 4 to 4:30 a.m. to call members to pray for a restoration. In 1895, a group preparing for a counter-revolution to restore the Queen met behind that church.¹⁴

In this matter, as in almost every other, Congregationalists disagreed. But the disagreement was largely along racial lines, with most native Hawaiians remaining loyal to their Queen.

On the mainland, some Congregational journals supported the change of regime in Hawaii. The New York *Independent* carried articles by Sereno Bishop which used extreme language in supporting the "missionary" element in the overthrow. In Boston the *Missionary Herald* of the American Board commented repeatedly upon the momentous changes in Hawaii. In May, 1892, it warned against any unfavorable news purporting to come from Hawaii, and reported the Queen ruling well, with "the approbation of the better class of citizens." But by March, 1893, it found that facts fully justified the action taken in displacing the

Queen and in forming a provisional government.

In April, the *Herald* reported growing sentiment among Hawaiian natives in favor of annexation by the United States, and in May it saw the overturn of the monarch as absolutely necessary to secure property interests and rights of foreign residents. It further reported that the Queen wanted to restore the old social and political system of Hawaii, with "heathen" priests and spirit worship. In July the *Herald* reported that unfortunate animosities were being awakened against native pastors and Christians who favored annexation. By December, the *Herald* appeared astounded by the proposal by President Cleveland's Secretary of State that the Queen be restored, since it believed that she had yielded to corrupting influences, and had pushed for the lottery and opium sales, until the better classes had united to depose her.

Conclusions

It is our hope that the material provided above will provide useful insights into the beliefs and actions of the ABCFM missionaries and their descendants, and a factual basis on which to base UCC actions. □

Notes

¹ *Instructions from the Prudential Committee of the ABCFM to the Members of the Mission to the Sandwich Islands* (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1819), pp. x-xi.

² Caroline Ralston, "Changes in the Lives of Ordinary Women in Early Pre-contact Hawaii," in M. Jolly and M. MacIntyre, *Family and Gender in the Pacific* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 46 f.

³ R. S. Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom, 1778-1854* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1957), pp. 336, 350.

⁴ Documentation can be found in the ABCFM Archives Microfilm, Reel 17, # 69, the Anderson letter reporting the Prudential Committee's policy decision. Also ABCFM *Annual Report*, 1853, pp. 67 ff. An 1861 perspective is found in the *Memorial Volume of the First 50 Years . . .* (Boston: American Board, 1861), pp. 253

ff. See also Albertine Loomis, *To All People*, pp. 389 ff.

⁵ Kuykendall I, Chapter XV.

⁶ ABCFM Microfilms, Reel 17, July 19, 1848.

⁷ Lawrence H. Fuchs, *Hawaii Polo: A Social History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1961), p. 17.

⁸ Frank J. Taylor, Earl M. Welty, and David W. Eyre, *From Land and Sea* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1976), p. 68.

⁹ Kuykendall I, p. 153.

¹⁰ Helena Allen, *The Betrayal of Lili'uokalani* (Honolulu: Mutual Publishers, 1991), p. 291.

¹¹ Kuykendall III, pp. 350, 599.

¹² Fuchs, p. 33.

¹³ Kuykendall III, p. 637.

¹⁴ Albertine Loomis, *An Informal History of the Overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy* (1976), pp. 44, 45, 112.

Excerpts from *The Friend*

(February, 1893, to April, 1893)

From *The Friend*, Vol. 51, No. 2: "A Wonderful Week"

It was that of January, from the 11th to the 19th; a period of strange, startling, impressive experiences. No like period, so important, so exciting, so charged with momentous events, has existed since foreigners resided in Honolulu. It was a history-making epoch, witnessing the unheralded and shameful collapse of the once noble and proud Hawaiian monarchy, and initiating, as we believe, a glorious new era of freedom and honor for Hawaii.

Startling events . . . each eclipsing the one before it came in a wonderfully dramatic way. First, in the midst of political calm and hopefulness, there struck us like a cyclone the shame and consternation of the passage of the Lottery Bill. There followed the shock of the overthrow of our trusted and honored Cabinet, quickly replaced by one formed from the opium and lottery gang at the palace. Next, the Lottery Bill became law in defiance of bitterest protests, just as the protecting *Boston* steamed in with the much-wanted American Minister. The stately ceremony of prorogation followed, deserted by resentful citizens.

Then, least looked for, and most dramatic of the series, came the

tragic self-murder of the monarchy, when, encouraged by *kahunas*, the half-maddened Queen broke her oath, and discarded the Constitution, to the horror of her white partisans, and to the exulting hope of the people she was betraying, who now saw clear the way to cast off the incubus of her caprice and arrogance which they had so wearily and patiently endured. At once sprang forth the wrath and power of the conservative and long-suffering whites. The wise, determined, upright leaders, and the honest, courageous, intelligent rank and file of the thousands of Honolulu's citizens rallied at once to establish their liberties and to overthrow the rotten monarchy.

The Sabbath intervened, a day of ardent, hopeful prayers, and of prudent, yet daring counsels. Monday came, with the Queen's terrified and abject retraction, followed by the mighty but orderly mass meeting of 1300 resolute citizens, who briefly and sternly spoke their endorsement of the Committee of Safety. Then all unexpected, near nightfall, came the sudden rush of the Boston's launches with her 150 men, and their rapid march to their stations, quelling our households' disquiet and fear of night disorders, and suggesting America's friendly care.

Next opened the fateful Tuesday— anxious day of unknown perils and probable battle—when Royalty ceased to be; when rifle companies sprang as from the ground; when our Provisional Government of trusted leaders, moved suddenly to the Government House unattended and in great peril, and there established themselves and seized the reins; when expected bloodshed came not, and our patriotic sons and brothers remained unhurt; and when the Palace and the Station House were tamely surrendered.

On Wednesday came the surrender of the heavily garrisoned Barracks; the recognition of the new Government by all the Foreign Ministers and Consuls; the announcement of the next morning's departure of the *Claudine* with Commissioners to Washington; and everybody's hurried preparation of mails. The last dramatic scene was the sailing of the *Claudine* on Thursday, with the gallant five followed by prayers and tears and ardent hopes, and beyond doubt, by the bitter curses of *kahunas* and lottery pirates.

That was the longest week we ever knew. There was a strange illusion as to lapse of time. One great excitement superseded another daily, each crowding and burdening the mind like a week of lesser

events. The event of two days ago seemed to belong to a distant past. . . . Many persons experienced this peculiar illusion.

It has been a grand thing to pass through all this exciting and exalting experience. It is a peculiar honor to aid in recording these glorious events. Our noble citizens of American and European blood have once more paid homage and devotion to the lofty cause of Liberty and Progress. And our gracious God has once more, with a peculiar care and protection, blessed and smiled upon this young and favored nation of Hawaii.

Native Sentiment

It is doubtless premature to forecast confidently what shape the opinions of native Hawaiians will take, as to the political change now in progress. No doubt the majority of them are now governed by their long existing jealousy of white ascendancy, and are dissatisfied and sullen. We have, however, personal knowledge of some of the best and wisest among them who rejoice in the removal of the terrible incubus of Palace influence, with its debauching and heathenizing effect. These men also enthusiastically welcome the prospect of union with America. We are reliably informed that this feeling is growing and extending among the native people. After the final ar-

rangements have been concluded, and the new form of government has been definitely settled, we anticipate satisfaction among the natives, and their cordial cooperation with the whites in public affairs.

Events Before the Revolution

. . . Rumors on the 9th of an attempt to revive the Lottery bill were received with general derision, which gave place on the 10th to dismay, when the bill was brought in and rushed suddenly through its second reading, nearly one third of the members being absent. The feeling rose to consternation on the 11th, when the bill finally passed, 23 to 20. Only one white man voted for it, the Queen's special agent. Heavy bribes were used. . . .

Minister Stevens, however, seeing the session apparently at an end, and the attempt to displace a satisfactory Cabinet defeated, had relaxed his vigilance and gone with the Cruiser *Boston* for a ten days visit to Hilo. The Queen had promptly seized the opportunity of his absence to consummate the infamy. Her scheme was to profit by the influence of the Lottery to resist annexation tendencies, while enjoying the lottery subsidy of \$500,000 a year.

A foregone conclusion after this was the ousting of the Ministry, by

the same set of members, now thoroughly in line on the side of evil. This was done on Thursday the 12th, two more white men joining the natives, to make the necessary majority of 25. The Queen had her new Cabinet ready, and sent them into the House the next day. Meantime the Chamber of Commerce met and sent the Queen a unanimous and almost violently energetic protest against her signing the Lottery Bill. They had little hope, as her true intentions, hitherto dissembled, were now becoming manifest.

A pall of unbroken gloom occupied the political sky. The next morning, Saturday the 14th, just as the *Boston* was steaming into port with the American Minister, the Queen signed the Lottery Bill and made it law. At noon she proceeded in state to the House, and prorogued the legislative Assembly. Only one more act in the drama remained to the infatuated sovereign, as she returned to the palace, attended by the chief officials, and Diplomatic corps. It was the act which ended the Hawaiian monarchy; which broke the spell, parted the clouds, and let in light upon the darkness of the nation.

We here leave the story to be told by the *Report Of The Committee Of Safety, To the Citizens of Honolulu:*

"On the morning of last Saturday,

the 14th instant, the city was startled by the information that Her Majesty Queen Lili'uokalani had announced her intention to arbitrarily promulgate a new Constitution, and that three of the newly appointed Cabinet Ministers had, or were about to, resign in consequence thereof.

"Immediately upon the prorogation of the legislature, at noon, the Queen accompanied, by the Cabinet, retired to the Palace; the entire military force of the Government was drawn up in line in front of the building, and remained there until dark, and a crowd of several hundred native sympathizers with the new Constitution project gathered in the throne room and about the Palace. The Queen then retired with the Cabinet, informed them that she had a new Constitution ready; that she intended to promulgate it, and proposed to do so then and there, and demanded that they countersign her signature.

"She turned a deaf ear to their statements and protests that the proposed action would inevitably cause the streets of Honolulu to run red with blood, and threatened that unless they complied with her demand she would herself immediately go out upon the steps of the Palace and announce to the assembled crowd that the

reason she did not give them the new Constitution was that her Ministers would not let her. Three of the Ministers fearing mob violence immediately withdrew to the Government building. They were immediately summoned back to the Palace, but refused to go on the ground that there was no guarantee of their personal safety.

"The only forces under the control of the Government are the Household Guards and the Police. The former are nominally under the control of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and actually under the control of . . . Major Nowlein, a personal adherent of the Queen. The Police are under the control of Marshal Wilson. . . . [who] now states that he is opposed to the Queen's proposition, he also states that if the final issue arises between the Queen and the Cabinet and people, he will support the Queen.

"The Cabinet was absolutely powerless and appealed to citizens for support. Later they reluctantly returned to the Palace, by request of the Queen, and for nearly two hours she again endeavored to force them to acquiesce in her desire, and upon their final refusal announced in a public speech in the throne room and again from the upper gallery of the Palace that she desired to issue the Constitution but was prevented from

doing so by Her Ministers, and would issue it in a few days.

"The citizens responded to the appeal of the Cabinet to resist the revolutionary attempt of the Queen, by gathering at the office of William O. Smith. Late in the afternoon it was felt that bloodshed and riot were imminent; that the community could expect no protection from the legal authorities; that on the contrary they would undoubtedly be made the instruments of royal aggression. An impromptu meeting of citizens was held, which was attended by the Attorney General. . . . The meeting unanimously passed a resolution that the public welfare required the appointment of a Committee of Public Safety, of thirteen, to consider the situation and devise ways and means for the maintenance of the public peace and the protection of life and property. Such committee was forthwith appointed, and has followed its instructions.

"The first step which the committee consider necessary is to secure openly, publicly, and peaceably, through the medium of a mass meeting of citizens, a condemnation of the proceedings of the party of revolution and disorder, and a confirmation from such larger meeting of the authority now vested in the committee. For

such purpose the committee hereby recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

" . . . 1. Whereas her Majesty Lili'uokalani, acting in conjunction with certain other persons, has illegally and unconstitutionally and against the advice and consent of the lawful executive officers attempted to abrogate the existing Constitution and proclaim a new one in subversion of the rights of the people;

"2. And Whereas such attempt has been accompanied by threats of violence and bloodshed and a display of armed force; and such attempts and acts and threats are revolutionary and treasonable to character;

"3. And Whereas Her Majesty's Cabinet have informed her that such contemplated action was unlawful

"Now Therefore, We, the Citizen of Honolulu of all nationalities and regardless of political party affiliations, do hereby condemn and denounce the action of the Queen and her supporters;

"And we do hereby ratify the appointment and endorse the action taken and report made by the said Committee of Safety; and we do hereby further empower such committee to further consider the

situation and further devise such ways and means as may be necessary to secure the permanent maintenance of Law and order and the protection of life, liberty, and property in Hawaii."

The large and enthusiastic meeting referred to above, convened at 2 P.M. on January 16th, at the Armory on Beretania street. . . . Volunteers from all classes of citizens quickly formed into companies for such service as might be required. At 5 P.M. an armed force landed from the U.S.S. *Boston* as a precautionary guard.

At 2:30 P.M. of January 17th, the Committee of Safety . . . entered and took possession of Aliiolani Hale without resistance, and from its front entrance H. E. Cooper, Esq., Chairman of the Committee of Public Safety, read the following proclamation. . . .

[The Proclamation refers to the early, peaceful history of Hawaii and stability of the Government, until the reign of Kalakaua, and then continues:] At this time a change was discernible in the spirit animating the chief executive and in the influences surrounding the chief. . . . [Kalakaua began to] extend the royal prerogatives, [resulting in the] popular uprising of

1887 which wrested from the King a large portion of his ill gotten powers. . . . Almost from the date of such . . . promises, up to the time of his death, the history of the Government has been a continual struggle between the King on the one hand and the Cabinet and the legislature on the other, the former constantly endeavoring by every available form of influence and evasion to ignore his promises and agreements and regain his lost powers.

Upon the accession of Her Majesty Lili'uokalani, for a brief period the hope prevailed that a new policy would be adopted. This hope was soon blasted . . . [She has shown] a stubborn determination . . . to follow the tactics of her late brother, and in all possible ways to secure an extension of the royal prerogatives and an abridgment of popular rights. . . . [The last legislative session was] replete with corruption, bribery, and other illegitimate influences. . . .

Her Majesty proceeded on the last day of the session to arbitrarily arrogate to herself the right to promulgate a new Constitution, which proposed among other things to disfranchise [sic] over one-fourth of the voters and the owners of nine tenths of the private property of the Kingdom, to abolish the elected upper House of

the Legislature and to substitute in place thereof an appointive one to be appointed by the Sovereign. . . .

Five uprisings or conspiracies against the Government have occurred within five years and seven months. . . .

In . . . the firm belief that the action hereby taken is and will be for the best personal, political, and property interests of every citizen of the land: We, citizens and residents of the Hawaiian Islands, organized and acting for the public safety and the common good, hereby proclaim as follows:

1. The Hawaiian Monarchical system of Government is hereby abrogated.
2. Provisional Government for the Control and management of public affairs and the protection of the public peace is hereby established, until terms of union with the United States of America have been negotiated and agreed upon. . . .

Following the establishment of the Provisional Government, Messrs. L.A. Thurston, etc. were selected as Commissioners to Washington and empowered to negotiate a treaty of Union with the United States. The steamer *Claudine*, chartered to convey the Commissioners and official dispatches to San Francisco, left on

her important mission on Thursday, January 19th.

Hawaii has in twenty weeks seen five different Cabinets, now succeeded by the Executive Council of the Provisional Government. All this injurious changing has been in consequence of the imperious determination of the Queen to have Ministers who would be subservient to her own ignorant and capricious will, instead of such men as the country had confidence in. The people have at last concluded that they have no farther use for a sovereign whose chief occupation was thus to monkey with public affairs.

[The Lottery law was repealed on January 25th] . . . That evil demon is cast out. . . .

[Commenting that it was in the absence of Minister Stevens that the Queen's party passed the Lottery Bill, Bishop alleges that such a bill would leave Hawaii] . . . Wretchedly laboring on with its evil genius of a rotten monarchy. We feel that a Higher Wisdom that ours has guided events in a marvelous manner. . . . The natives have shown no disposition to resist the new government, although regarding it more or less with disfavor as a government by whites alone. With a very brief interrup-

tion, they have all peaceably resumed their usual avocations. . . .

Dead and Rotten is the Monarchy, beyond chance of resuscitation. It was like a decayed and aged tree, not yet wholly unsightly on the outside, but with a slight shock falling utterly shattered, a mass of rotteness. The court and palace were pervaded with personal and political impurity; saturated with the putrescence of Kalakaua's hulas, and with the leprosy of his incredible idolatries and sorceries. How far his sister secretly cherished these poisonous palace growths, which she inherited with the throne, we will not here say. She certainly did not wholly banish them as we at first hoped. . . . It is certain that the fatal proceedings at the palace on the 14th were in some measure instigated and directed by leading kahunas, by whom the Queen had become seriously entangled. This wretched fact would seem both to mitigate her error, and to enhance her disqualification. It is clear that for a Monarchy so hopelessly fallen into heathen mental and moral vileness, it only remains to be speedily buried out of sight.

The Hawaiian Monarchy has been, in its best days, a noble, stately, and most beneficent institution. We older residents and those of us born here long held it in high

honor and loyal reverence. It was the indispensable center of loyal allegiance to authority for a weak and ignorant population, incapable of uncontrolled self government. Wise, capable, and upright foreigners long led in the King's councils. . . .

[Referring to the five men headed for Washington, Bishop adds] Surely the God and Father who has guided Hawaii so wonderfully, delivered her from so many perils, and exalted her so highly, will not now withhold from those our messengers His inspiring counsel, His controlling guidance, and His strengthening grace, that they may do all things for the best interests of our country.

[Bishop then reports with obvious pride that] . . . A Polyglot Fellowship Meeting was held on Jan 7 at Kaumakapili church, in the use of five languages, without interpreting, by pastors of the Central Union, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, and the two Hawaiian Churches. The hymns "Rock of Ages," "What a friend," "There is a Fountain," and "Old Hundred" were sung in concert, each in his own tongue. As each pastor finished his address, some lay brother offered prayer in the same language. There was a strong and warm sense of fellowship. . . . In what other city on the globe could

such a meeting be held? Honolulu is a meeting place of the nations under the Gospel banner.

*From The Friend, Vol. 51,
March 1893, No. 3*

Just at this time, the enemies of the late revolution and of annexation are sending statement abroad to the effect that the revolution was made by "the missionary party" for selfish ends with total lack of principle, and without scruple as to the means. Central Union Church is generally and very correctly regarded as the great "missionary" church among the whites of Honolulu. Nearly all persons in the city allied to the old mission families by birth or marriage are members of the congregation. Probably nine-tenths of the congregation actively favored the revolution, as did the great majority of the other white people of Honolulu, who are not in any special sympathy with this church. The movement was one supported by the bulk of the white population, but especially so by the "missionary" church people.

Believing the abrogation of the monarchy to have been indispensable to the continued progress of Christian civilization in these islands, we feel justified in so far "mingling religion and politics" as to employ in testimony the show-

ing as to character which is made for our noble Central Union Church by facts set forth.

It stands in beauty, a monument to the lofty and generous character of the Christianity which takes the lead in all that is good in this superb Anglo-American Colony of Hawaii nei. Before this impressive visible testimony let the voice of calumny be dumb.

. . . The successors to the work of the old missionaries, in all their efforts to foster and develop worthy Christian character in the native churches founded by our fathers, found a seemingly hopeless obstacle in the heathenizing efforts of Royalty. From the Palace has, for the past 15 years especially, and for 30 years in all, proceeded an organized and vigorous system of endeavors to corrupt churches as well as the whole of the native people with allied practices of sorcery, idolatry, and the hula. . . . [A] large and better class of Hawaiians are gladly welcoming the American flag as the sign of their deliverance from the hideous bondage in which the late heathenish monarchy has been holding them. . . .

[Bishop quotes from a letter to the *New York Evening Post*, written by Gen. S.C. Armstrong] "As to the Hawaiian dynasty, so far it is the

only heathen dynasty in the history of the world which has survived the transition from barbarism to a decent grade of civilization. This remarkable record has been made possible only by the control of its affairs by white people, mostly Americans. . . . It has been admitted on all sides that the conquest by American missionaries of the Hawaiian Islands for a degree of Christian civilization gives the United States both a claim and obligation in the matter—a claim to be considered first in the final disposition of that country and an obligation to save to decency and civilization that utterly broken down monarchy . . .”

**From *The Friend*, Vol. 51,
April 1893, No. 4:**

. . . The attitude of our Missionary fathers toward the Hawaiian Monarchy is established matter of history. . . . The continued existence of the independent native monarchy of the Kamehamehas, was due, under God, to wholly loyal, wise, and zealous efforts of the American Missionaries. With the greatest labor and patience, they enlightened the chiefs and people, and inspired them with desire and pur-

pose toward a Christian civilization. They persuaded the rulers to grant a liberal Constitution. They helped to train the people heartily to co-operate in sound legislation and administration. As a result, an aboriginal monarchy of the dark race has retained supremacy over a large and wealthy community for 50 years and it is the only instance on the globe of such a thing

That [the sons of the missionaries] . . . have mostly ceased to be thus loyal is due solely to the gross corruption and decadence of the monarchy since the Kamehamehas ceased from the throne, making its continuance incompatible with civilized institutions

We who advocate annexation are doing it not merely as for the general welfare of Hawaii, but because we believe it will be for the highest interests of the native Hawaiians as well. They will be delivered from the heathenizing influence of the Court, which has long been dragging them down and destroying them. They will enjoy and profit by the powerfully elevating influence of American liberty and American citizenship. There is no enemy of Hawaiians so pernicious as he

who would restore the unspeakable native monarchy.

From *The Friend*, May 1893:

We regard the following from an editorial in the *P.C. Advertiser* as correctly expressing the expectation and purpose of the white annexationists, respecting the voting franchises of Hawaiians:

“The fact, however, that the Hawaiians are imperfectly qualified for the arduous work of government, does not mean that they are to be excluded from political privileges, and are to have no further voice in the affairs of their native country. Annexation is not intended as a means of depriving them of their political rights. It will simply put beyond their power to threaten or destroy two things—the stability of the government and the civil liberty of the citizen. . . . The precise form of Hawaii’s government under annexation is a matter for the future to decide. The principles which have shaped American polity for a hundred years will not be abandoned. There will be no class-legislation, and no color line. There will be a franchise and the Hawaiians will be admitted to it.” □

The Columbus Legacy in Hawaii

Charles
McCollough

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The islands of Hawaii bring to mind gorgeous beaches, blue-green oceans, friendly people—an ideal vacation spot for us mainlanders. But native Hawaiians see it another way. They have seen their lives, land, culture, language taken over by Western, mostly American, ways, so that some Hawaiians say they “are strangers in their own land.”

January 17, 1993, is an important addition to the 1492–1992 series of events. It is the centennial of the forced abdication of the Hawaiian Monarchy by a group of Americans who later called themselves “the Provisional Government.” Although 400 years and an ocean separate Columbus’ landing and the 1893 coup, there is a lot in common. In both, a great power took over by force a small land and its native people, with some embarrassing complicity of the church. In 1492 that church was Spanish Catholic; in 1893 that church was American Congregational.

This takeover was not the intent of the missionaries who first arrived in 1820. They sought to preach to

this open and receptive people the gospel of personal salvation, and to offer them a written language and many skills of Western ways.

Over the years, however, many Western influences—as well as new diseases—presumed white superiority, greed for land, imperial expansionism, sugar profiteering, and other oppressive ventures by non-Hawaiians, led to the domination of Hawaiian cultural and political life. Then a few American businessmen, some descended from missionaries, arranged for the armed invasion on January 16, 1893. The next day Queen Lili’uokalani temporarily yielded her rule “until the US shall undo action of its representatives and reinstate me . . .” President Grover Cleveland supported the Queen, and refused the goal of the “Provisional Government,” annexation. On the contrary, Cleveland said that their seizure of power was an “act of war [against] a friendly and confiding people.” However, the next president, McKinley, completed the job, and the control of Hawaii was sealed.

Sealed, that is, until recently. Now many Hawaiians are reclaiming their sovereignty as the centennial of the invasion and abdication approaches.

In addition, the United Church of Christ’s General Synod, like the Hawaii Conference, has recognized the native Hawaiians’ right to self-determination. UCC president Paul Sherry will offer an apology to the Hawaiian people on January 17, 1993, and “begin a process of reconciliation” as called for by the 18th General Synod.

There are various views on how, with hindsight, we can judge the missionaries and our church’s “complicities” in this sad history, and on how we can begin to redress these past wrongs. Two things are clear: the gospel of salvation is more than a personal matter. It has vast cultural and political consequences. And the gospel mission calls us to “go forth” not just to preach but also to *listen* for God’s Word, which may come from any place God chooses. □

Bringing in the Reign of God

Cynthia Nozomi
Ikuta

Secretary for Liberation Ministries
United Church Board
for Homeland Ministries
Cleveland, Ohio

I am embarrassed to admit that I had never heard of "Hawaiian sovereignty" before the 1991 General Synod. Like most U.S. citizens, I had assumed that all was well in "our 50th State." Reading the resolution on Hawaiian Self-Governance, I was taken aback. Did "self-governance" mean secession? How could this take place without a bloodbath? Didn't the Civil War prove that, once a state, always a state? As I learned more about the proposal, I was assured that "Native Hawaiians" were only seeking a limited, nation-within-a-nation status, on a par with that held by Native Americans.

Since then I have become more acquainted with the movement. I learned that it was the Congregational missionaries who persuaded the Hawaiian government to shift from the traditional, shared approach to the land to the Western system of private land ownership. In a real sense, then, it is our church's missionaries who bear most of the responsibility for the policy shift which led to the theft of the land from the "Native Hawaiians," who now own less than 1% of Hawai'i. Thus, the role of the missionaries' descendants in support of the invasion of Hawai'i in 1893, through the "Missionary Party," was only the culmination of generations of Congregational participation in the Euro-Ameri-

can takeover of the land and government of Hawaii. I learned that the territory of Hawai'i was annexed in 1898 by a joint resolution of Congress (requiring a simple majority in each house), in violation of the U.S. Constitution, which requires a treaty ratification by 2/3 of the Senate. And I learned that the indigenous people of Hawaii have formally consented neither to annexation nor statehood.

I have also learned about the diversity of opinion within the state in general among "Native Hawaiians," even within the sovereignty movement. Although the movement is fairly united, for example, in support of *Ka Lahui Hawai'i's* efforts to achieve nation-within-a-nation status like that held by Native Americans, some groups (such as *Ka Pakaukau*) insist that this is only an interim step towards full sovereignty. "Native Hawaiian" UCC members who are pro-sovereignty have asked non-"Native Hawaiians" to support the concept of sovereignty, while respecting their right to work out what political form this sovereignty should take.

Regardless of its eventual political form, I began to understand how the struggle for sovereignty brings freedom even before the goal of sovereignty is achieved. The struggle brings freedom when "Native Hawaiians" enroll their own members, write their own

constitution, and elect their own governor, as did *Ka Lahui Hawai'i*. It brings freedom when "Native Hawaiians" identify themselves as *kanaka maoli*, reclaiming their ancestral self-identification. It brings freedom when some groups ground their appeal in the UN's call for de-colonization, or when *kanaka maoli* insist on the right to worship at their own sacred sites, even if the State of Hawaii says "No Trespassing."

In short, I learned that sovereignty is a process as well as a goal, and that by claiming and seizing those bits and pieces of it which we can, we are helping to bring the vision into reality. Thus the sovereignty discussion has not just taught me about Hawai'i. It has taught me about the reign of God.

Even since my first college religion course, I have been aware of the tension between the "already" beginning of the reign of God in Jesus Christ and the "not yet" of its full arrival. I had understood that Jesus' teaching, healing, crucifixion, and resurrection had set in motion the possibility of new ways of being in the world. But it was the sovereignty movement that gave me a clear example of the ways that the reign of God is brought into being by people of faith who insist on acting as though it has already arrived. □

Resolution X: Recognizing the Right to Self Governance of Native Hawaiians

168th Aha Pae`aina June 13-17,
1990

Resolution X As Adopted: *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 indigenous 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); and

Whereas, the Church as the body of Christ, has a commitment and responsibility to speak for the voiceless, and 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 pledge its support and solidarity, and advocacy of the same, in the name of Christ. □

Members of the "Committee for Public Safety"

The Honolulu *Inquirer* for November 19, 1992, commenting that "Not all of the men who overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy as the Committee of Public Safety were missionary descendants or planters" lists the following members of the 13 man Committee:

The four "missionary boys" were:

William O. Smith, 43, lawyer; Lorrin A. Thurston, 34, member of the Legislature's House of Nobles; William R. Castle, 43, Attorney General; and Albert S. Wilcox, about 50, manager of a sugar plantation. All were born in the Hawai-

ian Islands. After Wilcox left the Committee, he was replaced by John Emmeluth, a planter.

Four others were born in America:

Henry Ernest Cooper, 32 a lawyer; F.W. McChesney, manufacturer; Theodore F. Lansing, 40, accountant; and John A. McCandless, 40, businessman; of these four, only one is known to have been in Hawaii for more than 10 years; Cooper had been there less than 4 years.

The other members (all of them naturalized citizens of Hawaii)

were: Crister Bolte, a German merchant; Henry Waterhouse, trader; and William C. Wilder, steamshipman and legislator.

The Committee's last two members were a Scotsman, Andrew Brown, and H.F. Glade, business man and German Consul to Hawaii. He resigned and was replaced by a clerk from his business, Edward Suhr. None of these men was a citizen of Hawaii.

All of these men had been members of the Annexation Club prior to the overthrow □

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