

BOOK REVIEWS

A Call For Hawaiian Sovereignty: A Hawaiian Nation II
by Michael Kioni Dudley and Keoni Kealoha AgardNa Kane O Ka Malo Press, P.O. Box 970 Waipahu, Hawai'i 96797,
1993, 167 pp., ISBN 1-878751-09-3

The first few Europeans to arrive in the Hawai'ian islands in 1778 found a culture that the "civilizing" efforts of various subsequent invaders have nearly exterminated. In this ancient culture, the modern Western concept of competition was unknown. Surplus goods were shared. "Peddling" was seen not as the humble roots of capitalist glory, but as something antisocial. Certainly we have much to

learn about ourselves from the Hawai'ian culture.

It's easy to see why the islands' wonderful tropical climate and agriculture looked attractive to the new arrivals. Here as elsewhere, the Europeans brought fatal diseases and religious and ethical ideas which have proved harmful to the native way of life. Today, tourism and the myth of the wild tropical getaway continue the destruction begun by the sugar and fruit-growing industries.

The islands are legendary, one of the great jewels of the planet, and they depend on the Hawai'ians to protect them. The story of the overthrow of the ancient Hawai'ian government is 100-years-young.

The colonial nations had long recognized the strategic importance of these islands. In 1872, when Kamehameha V died, the United States saw its chance to move in and sent an admiral to influence the selection of a successor favorable to its interests. By 1892, the non-native population of Hawai'i had acquired most of the land and business. This group was composed mainly of American missionaries' children, the authors assert, who had had considerable influence since 1876, when their revolutionary group (the Committee) forced King Kalakaua to sign the "bayonet constitution" with help from U.S. Minister H.A.P. Carter and Secretary of State Thomas Bayard. In 1876 and 1887, Congress secured control of Pearl Harbor for the U.S. Navy with the Sugar Reciprocity Treaties.

On January 14, 1893, Queen Lili'uokalani tried to strengthen the Hawai'ian constitution in response. When she discovered that the insurgents were waiting for just such a reason to call in U.S. military forces, however, she formally withdrew her plan. The Committee sent their plea for protection to the U.S. minister anyway, and more than 160 marines from the steamer *Boston* landed in Honolulu, occupying the Hawai'ian capital while a newly installed provisional government established itself in power. Minister John L. Stevens "pursuant to prior agreement, recognized this government within an hour after the reading of the proclamation" (p. 37). Stevens had been plotting with the Annexation Club as proved by a letter dated November 20, 1892. On Monday, January 16, the day of the landing, the Committee in a panic betrayed themselves by asking Stevens to forestall the invasion. Obviously they didn't need the "protection."

Nevertheless, the invasion proceeded as planned.

President Grover Cleveland was inaugurated two months after the overthrow of the Hawai'ian monarchy. In his address to Congress, he denounced the action as "lawless" and "an act of war." Upon surrendering, the queen submitted a protest retelling the facts which have never been disputed or disproved. Cleveland admitted, "If [the queen's account is] true, nothing . . . could induce our government to negotiate with the semblance of a government thus created, nor could a treaty resulting from the acts stated in protest have been knowingly deemed worthy of consideration by the Senate."

To his shame, rather than decisively returning the islands to Hawai'ian control, Cleveland's only action was to turn the matter over to Congress which never responded. The surprise ending of this historical perspective is that Hawai'i is not lawfully one of the United States, so the vote "to become a State" was also invalid. In 1895, Queen Lili'uokalani attempted to restore Hawai'ian rule. After about 10 days of skirmishes, the royalists surrendered.

The Hawai'ian story of the forces of corporate profit infringing on people's rights is in some ways typical of every subdued native nation around the world. Today the pattern of imperialism and expansionism is shifting, but the forces of injustice are not off in some distant era or land; they are still at work here at home. Through persistent and dedicated nonviolent action, the Hawai'ian government has gained some small yet significant recognition and territory from the U.S. government. The Hawai'ian nation is working to repair its culture, and its success depends on defending and exercising its right to self-government.

The book is clear, fair and authoritative. Its readability is an unmatched service to native peoples and to people interested in the sovereignty movement everywhere. The authors are duly qualified: Dudley holds a Ph.D. in ancient Hawai'ian philosophy, and Agard is an attorney for the Native Hawai'ian Legal Corporation. They state the facts without a trace of the anger that the reader is likely to feel. With understanding, we can usefully direct our actions toward the sources of injustice.

— Aumear True

As a first step, readers can write to their elected representatives, expressing support for Hawai'ian sovereignty. Readers may also lend their support to the Hawai'ian sovereignty groups by contacting them at: P.O. Box 27478, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827. If you've been dreaming of getting away to some Hawaiian destination, plan your trip in a way that supports the native people and the islands themselves. Tourism can be a particularly damaging brand of consumerism, or it can be a powerful tool for the local people and economy. **The North American Center for Responsible Tourism** can help you plan an ethical vacation wherever you go. Contact: P.O. Box 827, San Anselmo, California 94947; (415) 258-6594.

Native American sovereignty groups and indigenous peoples around the world are gaining strength and recognition. For their sake, we must be aware that our economic actions are just as important as political ones. Our everyday buying choices have an impact on indigenous peoples around the world. For example, buying goods made in China profits the regime which continues to destroy Tibet. Read *Boycott Quarterly*, available from the Center for Economic Development, P.O. Box 64, Olympia, WA 98057; e-mail, boycottguy@aol.com. **Multinational Monitor** also covers related issues: 1530 P St. NW, Washington, DC 20005, 202-387-8030, fax (202) 234-5176; e-mail, monitor@essential.org.