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A Call to Resist Illegitimate Authority

September 1998

Organizing In The Spirit of Aloha

Discussing Hawaiian Sovereignty with Hayden Burgess

HENRY ROSEMONT, JR.

While working in Hawai'i this summer, Resist board member Henry Rosemont, Jr. had the good fortune of interviewing noted Hawaiian sovereignty activist Poka Laenui, also known by his haole name Hayden Burgess. What follows is a distillation of their conversation.

In Honolulu, and around the islands, you are well known as an activist who has long struggled for peace and justice, centering on issues of sovereignty. But many progressives on the mainland may not know who you are, so would you give us a little information about yourself, and how you came to the struggle for Hawaiian sovereignty?

BURGESS: In most of my writings I'm known as Hayden Burgess, but here in Hawai'i I'm also known as Poka Laenui. I am by racial

extraction Native Hawaiian, as well as Chinese and Caucasian. As far as background is concerned, I've been involved in the struggle for human rights for a long time, and human rights as I see them are best understood in Hawai'i in terms of Hawai-

ian sovereignty. Some people have seen me as one of the modern originators of the Hawaiian sovereignty movement, having brought the issue before the public conscience in 1977. After being sworn-in and licensed as an attorney, I represented a person who was the reputed underworld leader of Hawai'i. In that particular case, we refused to dignify the court by even entering a plea. Instead we challenged the

to the courts before, or to the Hawaiian public. As an example, I read into the record President Cleveland's address to the United States Congress, dated December 18, 1893. The judge in the circuit court case stopped me after I read a portion of the record. He said, "This is a most fantastic story. I have been in Hawai'i for many years, I have been a legislator with both the Territorial and the State Legislature.

I'm married to a Hawaiian woman, and I have never heard this story." Which is an indication of the mindset of many people, less than 30 years ago.

Is the mindset better now?

BURGESS: There has been tremendous movement in the islands. Not sufficient yet, but over the last 30 years, the change has been outstanding. For example, now they are actually teaching the details and illegalities of the overthrow in the high schools and at the University of Hawai'i. When I

graduated from the University in 1968, I knew nothing of these events. It was after I was in the United States Air Force that I read Liliuokalani's story, entitled *The Queen's Story, Hawaii's Story*, describing

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Hayden Burgess, with the microphone, joins others to call for the decolonization of Hawaii at the grounds of Iolani Palace.

court's jurisdiction, asking for the basis of the court's authority to try the case. We also said at that we were not American citizens; we were Hawaiian citizens.

At that point we introduced a lot of historical evidence that was never presented

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these events. Thereafter I made a commitment never to salute the American flag. I was court martialed, and so I went through that process. Later on we can talk about what I call the five stages of decolonization, the first being a recovery and rediscovery stage, and the second being the mourning phase. I went through those phases back in 1970-76; In fact,—well, I think I digress from the overall story. . . .

That's fine; there's much overlap between the personal and the political.

BURGESS: Well, I told myself that I was going to go out and do violence on Americans, blow up federal buildings, because I was outraged at the fraud that had been committed against myself and many of our people. But I was fortunate. I had options. I had the ability to learn Western ways. So I said that rather than attacking the system from the outside, I would infiltrate it by going to law school, get a degree, get licensed in the courts, and then attack the system from the inside—not through weapons of arms, but weapons of truth and justice, and aloha, and history.

Returning to your earlier question, I do think the system has changed. I'm not saying that it was simply because of what we did 30 years ago, but that action did initiate a lot of others. We learned that we could not control the media on our own. We also recognized we could not control the educational system, and we similarly recognized that the attack was consistently coming against us as Native Hawaiians. So we decided to use the force that was coming at us through the court system, turn it around, and make the court become an educational system. The life and times of the reputed underworld leader sold a lot of newspapers, and so we used the attention that was being placed on him to reverse the question and ask these historical and international legal questions. After that particular case was over, we then built one case after another, again using the court system, so that the issues that we raised—and the fact that the media could not ignore these issues—led to changes in the public understanding of what had happened 100 years or so ago.

Unlike the indigenous peoples of America, Hawai'i was a sovereign nation with treaties with other nations before annexation,

It's not the business of North America to tell us how to run our island nation. That is the essence of sovereignty.

so the situation is not parallel to that of Native American tribes. Does that make it easier or harder to fight legal battles concerning sovereignty issues here?

BURGESS: It makes it easier in one sense in that we claim that we cannot be fashioned by merely a U.S. Congressional determination of what rights we should have. This is an international matter. Hawai'i had been recognized as a member of the international community. It's like what my wife once said, "How can you ask a thief to sit in judgment of himself?" You cannot petition the U.S. Congress or the U.S. court system to determine whether or not it is guilty of illegalities, and to what extent it needs to make reparations. Our current problem is this: As a result of the continuing socialization that the Americans have had in Hawai'i over the last 100 years, many of our own people have been "educated" within the Western system, and thus have seen themselves as Native Americans, equivalent to the American Indians. So that, for example, you have Hawaiian organizations which call themselves sovereignty organizations, and yet are attempting to equate the solution as on a par with American Indians. This confusion is a very important aspect of the struggle of decolonization. How do we clarify within our own minds exactly what this issue is? Many of our people resist the question, because they have not fully accepted that we are a colonial state. They see colonies as being somewhere else. They don't see it as being us.

There are several different sovereignty groups here in Hawai'i; are the different ways they address this question what distinguishes each of them from the others?

BURGESS: This is a very key issue. Regarding the question of self-determination, international law, and laws dealing with decolonization state that the people basically have three choices: integration, free association, or independence. Here in Hawai'i many groups are still largely working within the integration concept, mainly


because of the educational system to which we have all been exposed, and by the analogies all too often drawn between ourselves and the indigenous people of the Americas.

After integration, where does most of the support lie: for free association, or for independence?

BURGESS: Well, actually support has been shifting. Let's go back 30 years again. There was virtually no support for anything beyond a nation within a nation, i.e., integration. There was actually, if I could count them, three people who wanted something more: my client, myself, and my wife. Today, the majority of the Hawaiian public supports Hawaiian sovereignty. But what exactly they support is not clear. On the historical side, we've come a long way in Hawai'i. Even the State Legislature admits

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an illegal act occurred in 1893, and something should be done about it. The U.S. Congress in 1993 confessed to the illegality of the U.S. participation in the overthrow of the government, but the range of remedies has still not been settled, and you find that support keeps shifting from a nation within a nation to independence.

Many people get into the subject of Hawaiian sovereignty who do not want to be disloyal. Many of us have gone through wars, have been members of the U.S. military, or if not, are at least patriotic American citizens, as I had been when I was young. And many of them hope that they don't need to go too far away from this patriotism they were brought up with in redressing the grievances. Thus, a nation within a nation is a safe and acceptable outcome, based on what the American legal system already allows for in theory, based on the American Indian experience. But as they enter into that house of sovereignty through the integration door, over a period of time, as they do more studying, many Hawaiians come out of that house more as supporters of independence.

It is easy to understand why native Hawaiians might strongly support independence. But as you well know, the vast majority of the peoples who now call Hawai'i their home are hyphenated Americans: European, Japanese, Chinese, Samoan, Philippine; how much support do the several sovereignty groups get from these people?

BURGESS: It's true that these peoples make up the vast majority of the population here. If you define the population by race, then the Native Hawaiians would number between 17 to 20% of the population.

That's a very high figure. I had understood that Native Hawaiian peoples were only about 2% of Hawaii's population now.

BURGESS: If you mean full-blooded Hawaiians the figure is probably less than 1%, between 3,000-4,000 people out of a population of roughly one million. But if you define the Hawaiian population strictly by race, you generate another stumbling block in the discussion of Hawaiian sovereignty. Hawaiian sovereignty has to be seen against the larger issue of self-determination. We've already talked about one half of the issue, determination—the three choices of integration, free as-

sociation, and independence. But the first part of that term, the *self*, generates another question: who then is self?

From an American perspective, the self is normally seen through the race of the people, which leads to the question that you ask and the consequent population breakdown answer. But that is taking a particular historical and cultural approach—the American approach—so that when you see people, you see them by their race. I have



Hawaiian royalty leave the old government building in an observance of the anniversary of events prior to the US troops overthrow of the monarchy.

argued quite often that it is not the appropriate way of seeing the Hawaiian population. Let me give you some historical and cultural bases for my argument. Before 1893, under the Hawaiian nation, being Hawaiian was a definition of a person's nationality, not a person's race. A Hawaiian was a citizen or a subject of the nation of Hawai'i, and he or she could be of any race, and there were many different races, not necessarily only the Native Hawaiians. When the Americans invaded Hawai'i in 1893, and then set up a puppet government, the peoples who lost their human rights to determine their future were not only the Native Hawaiians, but included every citizen of Hawai'i, so that today when we deal with the issue of self-determination in terms of Hawaiian sovereignty, we cannot classify people merely by race.

Some sovereignty groups speak of a simpler life, a life wherein many Native Hawaiians would like to go back to fishing and farming, rejecting the consumer culture of the mainland. As a Luddite, I

have some sympathy for that, but I see many automobiles here, hotels, fast food chains, and much else that is definitive of contemporary U.S. consumptive culture.

BURGESS: Hawaiian sovereignty is not necessarily one of marching backward into time, which is what a lot of those who are not familiar with the arguments of Hawaiian sovereignty would normally assume. First let me go back again to a philosophical foundation. The Hawaiian people have always believed that one of the divine elements that controls the universe is the element of time. Now, with regards to that element, you did not have a Chinese yin-yang approach. There was only one direction that time travels. You can still have sort of a circular relationship, a repetition, but time moves along, and you cannot pretend that some things never happened. You find that the Hawaiian people, once contacting Westerners, adopted a technology of Western cultures quickly, more quickly than any other society.

For example, Western contact in 1778 began with Captain Cook. By 1821, missionaries arrived and began to write the Hawaiian language, and by 1840 Hawai'i was the most literate nation in the world. The technology of writing was immediately grasped by the Hawaiians. The technology of weaponry was similarly grasped quickly by the Hawaiian leadership. A lot of the wars to unite the islands were fought with guns. The technologies of the telephone and electricity were installed in our Iolani Palace before the White House.

What I'm saying is that the Hawaiian people recognize that as life progresses, changes come about, and so we're always ready to make changes. But it should be for us to decide what changes are to be made, and when. That is the essence of Hawaiian sovereignty. Whether or not we do want to go back to taro patches or drive to McDonald's is really an option that we should have. And all we're saying is, let's allow our people to decide, rather than having the Americans dictate to us that this is the economic system we must follow. It's not the business of North America to tell us how to run our island nation. That is the essence of sovereignty.

Do many of the sovereignty groups also work in coalition with gay and lesbian groups, environmentalists, tenant right

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groups, poverty groups, or other progressive organizations?

BURGESS: There has been some connection with some of those groups. The strongest connections are with environmental groups and the antinuclear movement.

I understand why environmentalists and anti-nuclear organizations might be their closest allies, struggling against the mammoth presence of the U.S. military on the islands. But if the military leaves tomorrow, wouldn't it be devastating to the islands? Doesn't Hawai'i need the U.S. military to remain economically viable?

BURGESS: No. First of all, let me make clear that although I personally am against nuclear weapons, I am not saying that Hawaiian sovereignty will bring about a nuclear-free Hawai'i. What I am saying is Hawaiian sovereignty should allow the people of Hawai'i to determine whether or not we want to have nuclear weapons on our soil. My bet is that we will decide not to, because it makes no sense to continue to stockpile nuclear weapons in Hawai'i, because we have no real enemies except perhaps the United States of America.

But to the real point of your question, at the present time the U.S. military controls 25% of the land mass of Oahu; and I don't know the full percentage for all of Hawai'i. They take the best lands, they take the best oceanfronts, they take the best harbors, and they pay almost nothing for these lands. They claim that they bring in a large amount of dollars to Hawai'i, and they do employ some of our people in the civil service, but it is a *quid pro quo*. They get services from our personnel for the money they pay, and if they weren't occupying these lands and taking up our harbors, then we could probably find employment through other, more productive ways of work.

Pearl Harbor is an example. Pearl Harbor could be the site of a world-class oceanographic institute. It should be such, rather than a military installation that is constantly being poisoned by the radiation that they continually put out, and continually deny. The military personnel in Hawai'i are also counted as part of the income that comes into Hawai'i. But no one asks why it is that they do not pay sales tax to the state of Hawai'i every time they shop at military commissaries. Why is it that they have spe-

cial privileges that others do not have? The economic cycle within the military does not enter into Hawai'i as the military public relations office would tell us it does.

Nor does it anywhere else.

BURGESS: True. They will say, but we pay \$500 per child for each military dependent to your education system. My response to that is that it costs us \$5,000 per child to be educated in Hawai'i. I've asked economists from both of the major banks in Hawai'i: to what extent do we contribute to the federal government in terms of taxes and in terms of all of our contributions to the federal government, and to what extent do we enjoy returns therefrom? How does it measure out? Their response



Hayden Burgess holds a Hawaiian flag outside of his law office.

to me is that we gain more than we lose. I say, OK, what are those items that you factor in to reach your conclusion? Do you throw in the cost of the land that they don't pay for? Oh, no, we don't factor that in. Do you throw in the fact that many of the monies that are paid do not actually get into our economy? Oh, no, we don't factor that in. Do you factor in the degradation to our environment, so that we have a number of our bases listed as among the most polluted bases in America? Oh, no, they say once more, we don't factor those things in.

As a consequence, most people believe the bases are a big boost for the economy.

BURGESS: Correct. The optimistic conclusions that are oftentimes reached, and then publicized in the newspapers, are without foundation when you start digging a little deeper and finding out what the real cost of the military is.

How much of an asset or liability is the OHA (Office of Hawaiian Affairs) to the sovereignty movement?

BURGESS: Assets and liabilities change over time. Overall I think OHA has been an asset to the sovereignty consciousness. In 1978, when it was just formed out of the constitutional convention, the Hawaiian sovereignty movement was really not well known. As I said, it was only three years earlier that we first challenged the jurisdiction of the American courts. So the Office of Hawaiian Affairs was able to raise and coalesce at least a consciousness among Native Hawaiians, that there were certain rights of which they were deprived, and that as indigenous people they have certain indigenous rights in their own homeland. To the extent that the indigenous movement is seen only as an elevation of indigenous peoples within a colonial society, that can be a drawback. To the extent that it awoke that consciousness and moved it beyond that to the concept of decolonization, that was an asset. OHA is still in this area and even they themselves are uncertain as to how now to address the decolonization issue.

Do you think the several sovereignty movements here will come together and form another political party? Or are there other ways of struggling to further your goals?

BURGESS: Let me go back and give you my five stages of decolonization, and then I can address your question. The first stage is a stage of recovery and rediscovery, a point in time in which the people who have been colonized start learning about their history, their culture, and they rediscover who they really are. Out of that stage of recovery and rediscovery, you enter into what I call the mourning phase: the anger, the bitterness, the hatred, and all of those negative things, as I did myself, wanting to go out and blow up buildings and those things. This second stage, while natural, really doesn't move you very far ahead. It doesn't make changes in the society. It just means you lash out. We need to move into

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the third phase, which I call the dreaming stage. In this dreaming you start being more analytical, and you recognize that the future of our society cannot be based merely on historical justice. It has to be built on a sense of a new relationship, a new sense of humanity, developing new values, new systems, so you can really push ahead rather than just saying: Okay, we are right and we are going to be the leaders of a decolonized nation. If you do that you leave colonial institutions in place, and merely elevate one over the other.

What you're saying is that a vision is needed if the future is going to be different from the past.

BURGESS: Yes, and that's why the dreaming is so important. The dreaming takes a lot of time, but you can't move directly from mourning to action; you need the stages in between.

And the fourth stage is . . . ?

BURGESS: Commitment, or a consensus. After a people have been dreaming for a while, they generally come to a consensus, a sense of where we must move. If you don't have those two important stages, especially the dreaming, then you get warfare, you get ethnic strife, you get people killing one another because they have not had the opportunity to really ask themselves where they should be going. Hawai'i has the opportunity to engage in the dreaming, and in engaging in the dreaming we have overcome some of the hurdles that we ourselves place before us. One is a racism that is still contained in our movement. Oftentimes we see it only as an indigenous rights' movement, rather than as a sovereignty movement, that only Native Hawaiians have special rights, and others don't have them. The right to be citizens of the nation, for example. So, we need to start decolonizing our minds of those concepts.

After that, we need to look at what I call deep culture. How do we relate to one another that is going to be any different from what the Americans have brought to Hawai'i? To understand deep culture we need to look as deeply as we can within our own society, and we haven't done that yet, or not sufficiently enough. We have a deep culture that controls the formal systems in Hawai'i: our judicial system, our economic system, our education system,

The future of our society cannot be based merely on historical justice. It has to be built on a . . . new sense of humanity, developing new values.

our media system, the military, the security system. That deep culture is based on domination, individualism and exclusion. I developed the acronym DIE.

On the other hand, in our informal systems in Hawai'i, instead of domination, people work together, as neighbors, as friends, as lovers, as family; it's what we call in the Hawaiian language Oku Oku compatibility. We try to work together so that we remain friends although we disagree. Instead of individualism the informal systems are about protecting the group, the family, the neighborhood, trying not to elevate the individual. Instead of exclusion, it's always inclusion, but inclusion with a sense of humanity, with a sense of Aloha. That's what you find always operating in the informal system, so what you find in Hawai'i is really a schizophrenic society.

What we need to do first is recognize that we do have this deep culture that flows through the system, and then ask ourselves, why is it that we cannot take what I call the O for Oku Oku, L for Lokahi, and A for Aloha, or the OLA system? In the Hawaiian language "Ola" means life, it means health. Why can't we take this Ola culture and integrate it and bring it in so that it is what runs our formal systems, our economic systems, for example, as well as all these other systems. Is it so impossible? Are we so wedded to a Western-defined sense of what economics is supposed to be that we cannot try to regain the values that our ancestors had in Hawai'i? We didn't have GNP as an equation to work with before, but we were very healthy, happy people. We had other values, such as "In sharing there is always enough," and yet in sharing there is also a responsibility for caring for the limited resources. Hawai'i, during the dreaming, during the process of decolonization, should go through these processes to really examine where we are going. If it is merely to leave the deep individualist culture in place, leave the institutions in place, then why decolonize? If we are simply playing the

same American game of trying to elevate ourselves as somehow better than another people, based on that type of philosophy, it really doesn't move the humanity within Hawai'i forward.

Well, if you can eliminate the DIE culture and replace it with an OLA one, it sounds like what you're struggling for is a kind of humane socialism with Hawaiian characteristics.

BURGESS: I think so. And you have in Hawaiian society a sufficient amount of that old culture which remains so that we can start the changes. We may not win over the strongest DIE advocates who come to Hawai'i, but when they have kids raised in Hawai'i, we've got them! Because it's unavoidable—they become part of that society. You find a lot of that, in terms of missionaries and oftentimes sons and daughters of missionaries who become very strong advocates for the Hawaiian way of life.

Is this dreaming going on cooperatively, or is each group doing its own dreaming?

BURGESS: It's haphazard. I think the major thing that stops the groups from getting together is not philosophical differences, it's the personal egos, its emotionalism.

Other than the OLA informal culture, what is so special to you about these islands? What is it you want most to preserve here?

BURGESS: What I want to preserve is simply the right of the people who come from these islands to unfold their future based on their own hopes and dreams and aspirations.

Henry Rosemont, Jr., teaches at Saint Mary's College of Maryland. Readers wishing additional information about the sovereignty movement in Hawai'i, and/or materials dealing with the illegalities of annexation may write to Hayden Burgess at 86-126 Farrington Hwy, Wai'anae, HI 96792.

Advocacy and Resistance in Hawai'i

MILILANI TRASK

On August 12, 1998, Hawaiian Sovereignty groups gathered at Iolani Palace to mark the 100th anniversary of the annexation of Hawai'i by the United States. This event gave us reason to reflect upon the history of resistance which Hawaiian peoples have undergone since the US overthrew the lawful Kingdom of Hawai'i in 1893. It is most fitting that the motto which brought us together at this critical time was "From Resistance to Affirmation."

In 1898 Hawaiians reacted to the impending annexation of the Hawaiian archipelago through a massive organizing effort aimed at voicing the opposition of *Kanaka Maoli* (indigenous Hawaiians) to the purported Treaty of Annexation. In a period of a few weeks, the signatures of more than 30,000 Hawaiians had been gathered. This petition was taken to Washington and filed with the US Senate. It was evidence of the will of the people to remain free of US control. Because of the petition, the US Congress was unable to muster the two-thirds vote needed to pass the Treaty of Annexation in the Senate.

Acts of Resistance

Today, as in times past, the Hawaiian people, and *Ka Lahui Hawai'i*, the sovereign nation, continue the legacy of resistance which we have inherited from our *Kupuna* (elders). Our national struggle takes many forms.

In the political arena, the sovereignty organization *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* maintains a

three-pronged program of advocacy in the local, national and international arenas. In Hawai'i, we are pursuing a campaign to involve Hawaiians in legislative measures which impact them and a Hawaiian vote registration drive aimed at educating and organizing Hawaiian voters.

On the national level, *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* has been involved in seeking the passage of legislation for federal funds for low-income housing as well as consultations with the US on the internal policy of wardship which relegates Hawaiians to second class citizenship. *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* has also been instrumental in 1998 in obtaining a review of the Hawaiian situation by the Hawai'i Advisory Committee to the US Commission on Civil Rights.

In the international arena, *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* continues to participate in the effort to pass the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is evident that the colonial behavior towards indigenous peoples is continued in the present position of the UN member states. It is apparent in protocol and agendas of UN meetings as well as in the various ways state governments avoid addressing the real issue of self-determination, which is not a charity or something that colonial powers can grant or deny their colonies. Self-determination is an inherent right "to govern ourselves in a manner we choose, without interference," as Hawaiian sovereignty activist Kawaipuna Prejean stated in 1991.

As a direct result of our efforts in this area, Senator Dan Akaka is sponsoring leg-

islation to create an Indigenous Advisory Committee to the US State Department.

Health remains a primary sovereignty issue. Many *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* Health Committee members attended the recent Health Summit. Our national initiative for a Hawaiian HMO was presented and discussed there. In addition, the nation continues to work collectively with others to sponsor a breast cancer hearing in Hawai'i with the Women's Economic and Development Organization (WEDO) of New York. Hawaiian women have the highest mortality rate of breast cancer in the world.

Because of the beneficial impact which the native diet has had on diabetes, heart and high blood pressure, *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* is working to have the native diet incorporated into clinical settings in Hawai'i.

The past few years have seen an increasing number of arrests due to state and federal efforts to evict Hawaiians from their traditional lands. *Ka Lahui Hawai'i* has been actively involved in the *Pai Ohana* issue and in resisting arrest of the homeless on Oahu and Hawai'i Islands.

These are but a few of the areas involving Hawaiian resistance to political and social injustice in which the nation is currently involved. We continue to live by the words of our beloved Queen Lili'uokalani: "Onipa'a"—"standing steadfast."

Mililani Trask is an indigenous Hawaiian attorney, elected Kia'aina for Ka Lahui Hawai'i (Governor for the Nation of Hawai'i), and a strong advocate for indigenous rights.

Exploring Hawaiian Women's Voices

KAREN KAHN

Women in Hawai'i: Sites, Identities & Voices. Social Process in Hawai'i, Volume 38. Edited by Joyce N. Chinen, Kathleen O. Kane, and Ida M. Yoshinaga. Department of Sociology, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 1997. University of Hawai'i Press.

In 1898, the United States became an imperial power, annexing territory beyond its continental borders for the first time.

Though for many Americans living on the continent, the story of the Spanish-American War and the annexation of Puerto Rico and the Philippines is familiar, few realize that it was in the same year that Hawai'i was officially proclaimed a U.S. territory. Mention Hawai'i, and most people will conjure a tropical resort: white sand beaches, Waikiki hotels, hula girls, mai tais, surfboards, and palm trees. Some are lured by this image, others repelled, but few are aware of the history, culture, and present-

day realities of this once-sovereign nation.

For readers interested in learning about these realities and their impact on the lives of women, *Women in Hawai'i: Sites, Identities, and Voices* is indispensable. Volume 38 of *Social Process in Hawai'i*, this edited collection explores the complex issues of colonization and resistance through historical essays, sociological analyses, personal narrative, and poetry. The mix of personal and academic writing, along with the

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innovative design of the text, in which all the contributors introduce their essays with short personal commentaries, makes the anthology more accessible than a typical sociological journal.

Poems from Native Hawaiian scholar and activist Haunani-Kay Trask frame the collection, introducing us to the power of Hawai'i's female goddesses—

*From the red rising mist
of Kahiki, the Woman of the Pit:*

*Pele, Pele 'aihonua,
travelling the uplands*

*devouring the foreigner
("Namakaokaha'i," p.1)*

—and to the grief and destruction brought by colonization from the West and the East:

*Out of the east
a damp stench of money
burning at the edges.*

*Out of the west
the din of divine
violence, triumphal destruction.*

*At home, the bladed
reverberations of empire.
("The Broken Gourd," p. 93)*

Noenoe K. Silva explores these same themes in a fascinating historical essay, "Ku'e! Hawaiian Women's Resistance to Annexation." Through Hawaiian language newspapers, petitions, and personal papers, Silva has recovered evidence of mass resistance to the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and annexation by the United States. Women formed their own organizations, and sent petitions with over 10,000 signatures (Native population at this time has been estimated at 40,000) to President McKinley protesting their loss of independence. Of particular interest is Silva's analysis of the ways in which Native Hawaiian women resisted the "domestication" of the missionaries. She writes:

Native literary and oral traditions in the mother tongue which represented women as strong, independent, intelligent, resourceful, and unruly, were at the very least an inspiration and a relief from the tensions and demands associated with trying to live an alien and restrictive lifestyle. They provided a way for Kanaka Maoli

women to reaffirm their alternative (Native) identity. . . . This identity was also reinforced in practicing the dance, speaking the Native language, and in creating and recreating relationships with each other and with Kanaka Maoli men. (p. 13)

Native identity today is reinforced by a growing movement for sovereignty for Hawai'i's indigenous people. That movement is, at times, threatening to Hawai'i's many Asian immigrants, most of whom came to work on the sugar plantations in the nineteenth century, and local and mainland haoles (whites). Candace Fujikane addresses this tension, suggesting that "locals who claim Hawai'i as home often do not understand Native Hawaiians who claim Hawai'i as homeland." She argues that "opposition to 'development' forms common ground upon which non-Hawaiians can support Hawaiian struggles for self-determination." Fujikane points out that Hawai'i's multicultural society, the product of imperialist expansion and the imposition of a plantation economy, is not without its tensions. Though "local" identity is shared by those who are born and raised in the Islands, institutional racism and individual prejudice reinforce racial, ethnic, and gender hierarchies.

This divisiveness is most apparent in Susan Hippensteele's analysis of ethnoviolence on the University of Hawai'i campus. Hippensteele found in her campus survey that 38 percent of Pacific Islanders and 36 percent of Filipinos were personally subject to derogatory references or jokes on the UH campus as opposed to 10 percent of Japanese, 18 percent of Caucasians and 19 percent of Hawaiian students. Even these figures hide significant differences in power and privilege. Though Hippensteele doesn't delve into the subject, one can assume that the Caucasian students at an institution in which most of the administration and faculty are also Caucasian (though most of the students are of color) interpret experiences of harassment differently from those of Hawaiian students.

Racial and gender hierarchies are at the heart of several personal/political essays that make *Women in Hawai'i* such a unique volume. In "Trying Fo' Do Anykine to Donna: Fragments of a Prose Work," Donna Tanigawa explores what it means to be Donna, a local fourth-generation Japanese lesbian who experienced child sexual abuse. Using fragments of memory, lan-

guage, and the body, Tanigawa pieces together her *yosegire*, a Japanese crazy quilt, in prose. Having been denied her language (Pidgin English/Hawaiian Creole), her body, and even the physical landscape of her youth, which has been transformed through development, Tanigawa is in search of her authentic self.

While Tanigawa explores multiple layers of oppression, Judy Rohrer focuses on privilege, analyzing the meaning of being *haole*. Having grown up in Hawai'i, Rohrer writes, "I have struggled with my *haole* identity, mostly trying to figure out how to minimize, disguise, or get rid of it altogether." Ready to come to terms with her "haole-ness," Rohrer uses contemporary race theory, history, and feminist analysis to interpret her personal experience. This is a fine essay, exploring the dynamics of white privilege in a colonized society, in which white people often feel marginalized and defensive because of their minority status. Understanding the ongoing nature of colonization and the power inherent in white skin privilege, Rohrer lets neither herself, nor other haoles, off the hook. For anyone interested in recent explorations of "whiteness," "Haole Girl: Identity and White Privilege in Hawai'i" is a must read.

Though many wish to see Hawai'i as the great "melting pot" success story, the reality is much more complex. The forces of imperialism have shaped a multicultural society that shares a history, a language, and cultural practices that cross ethnic boundaries, but there are also deep divisions spawned by institutionalized race, class, and gender privilege. For those unfamiliar with Hawai'i's history and culture, *Women in Hawai'i* provides a window into a society that is often only seen through the slick advertisements of the tourism industry; for those more familiar with this colonized land, the volume's focus on women and gendered analyses will provide new perspectives for understanding Hawai'i's many struggles for social and economic justice.

Karen Kahn, editor of Frontline Feminism: Essays from Sojourner's First Twenty Years, recently returned from a year of living and working in Honolulu, Hawai'i. One of her many jobs included editing the newsletter for the Hale Ku'ai Cooperative, a consumer cooperative of Native Hawaiian artists and artisans.

GRANTS

Resist awards grants eight times a year to groups throughout the United States engaged in activism for social and economic justice. In each issue of the *Newsletter* we list a few recent grant recipients. In this issue, we include grantees from our August allocation cycle. For more information, contact the groups at the addresses below.

Coalition for Prisoners' Rights

P.O. Box 1911
Santa Fe, NM 87504-1911

The Coalition for Prisoners' Rights began in the summer of 1976 as an outgrowth of what was then called the Women's Prison Project (now the Prison Project of Santa Fe). At that time, the Coalition began publishing a national monthly newsletter. During the Santa Fe prison uprising in 1980, interest in prison conditions and programs in New Mexico was temporarily heightened. As a result, the Coalition began developing resource and referral lists in response to prisoner requests for information. The Newsletter also engaged in a wide-ranging analysis of prison conditions and criminal justice issues, seeking to build bridges between prisoners, their families and those seek-

ing to change the current focus of the prison industrial complex.

A \$2,000 grant from Resist will support printing, copying and distribution costs for the newsletter. This grant was a Mike Reigel Tribute award.

South Carolina Progressive Network

P.O. Box 8325
Columbia, SC 29202

The South Carolina Progressive Network formed in 1995 in response to the political rise of the Contract with America. Alarmed at the rollbacks in gains that took generations to secure, progressive-minded community leaders and grassroots activists formed a coalition to support each others' work and to build a "new majority" in South Carolina. Currently the Network includes 50 organizations and hundreds of individuals. The Network seeks to promote human, civil, and workers' rights, environmental protection and government reform through both education and action.

A \$2,000 grant from Resist will help fund a grassroots campaign to restructure the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control by severing

its environmental protection/public health role from its conflicting charge to promote local industry.

Oyate Center

2430 Gnugnuska Street
Rapid City, SD 57701-0870

Founded in 1997, Oyate Center seeks to respond to instances of racism and police brutality against Native Americans in Rapid City, which has been dubbed by some "the Mississippi of the North," based upon the extraordinarily high number of racist attacks in the community. Oyate Center seeks to bring together the local Native American community to respond to these attacks by speaking out, organizing protest marches, and providing resources for community members who believe that their human rights have been violated.

A \$2,000 grant from Resist will provide general support for the Oyate Center.

Urban Retrievers

1315 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

In January of 1995, a group of high school students came together in order to have a larger voice in how the public schools were being run. A project of the Urban Retrievers, the Philadelphia Student Union met weekly for six months, running workshops and hosting guest speakers. During May of 1996, the Student Union organized a walk-out and rally of nearly 2,000 students in support of a bill to restore funding for teachers who were laid off and programs which were cut. As a result, \$15 million was restored to the budget. During the past year, student chapters at several local high schools have helped train and develop youth leadership in the community and assisted young people to become one of the driving forces behind school reform and social change in Philadelphia.

A \$2,000 grant from Resist will provide general support for upcoming Philadelphia Student Union campaigns and leadership development programs.

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We'd like you to consider becoming a Resist Pledge.

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Yes! I'll become a RESIST Pledge.

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Address _____

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