

———. 2002. Political Review of French Polynesia. *The Contemporary Pacific* 14:213–219.

HAWAIIAN ISSUES

On 7 September 2003, Native Hawaiians and supporters from all walks of life flooded Waikīkī, Hawai‘i’s tourism Mecca, with a sea of red shirts symbolizing the red ‘āweoweo (a school of small red fish seen as predicting a big change). Clad in t-shirts that read “Kū i ka Pono!” (Stand for Justice), an estimated 8,000 people marched in support of native rights and institutions and in protest against efforts to dismantle them (Bernardo 2003). The primary sponsors, ‘Īlio‘ulaokalani (a coalition of kumu hula [hula masters]) and the Kamehameha Schools, were able to rally often-disparate voices within the Hawaiian community. Students, teachers, community leaders, representatives from several ali‘i (chiefly, royal) trusts, state offices, and civic clubs stood together as one to face a common threat. Other notables participating in the march were Governor Linda Lingle and Lieutenant Governor Duke Aiona, who delivered a speech from atop a makeshift podium. Even University of Hawai‘i President Evan Dobbelle, UH Mānoa Chancellor Peter Englert, and other supportive university administrators made the trek down the tourist-lined streets.

The 2003 Kū i Ka Pono march was organized in response to the numerous lawsuits challenging the existence of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, as well as

the Hawaiian-preference admissions policy of the Kamehameha Schools—in particular, the *Arakaki v Lingle*, *Mohica-Cummings v Kamehameha Schools*, and *Doe v Kamehameha* cases. Since the march, the *Mohica-Cummings* case has been settled out of court, allowing the student in question to stay at the school provided he remain in good standing. The Kamehameha Schools prevailed in the *Doe* case. In *Arakaki v Lingle*, the courts ruled that the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands, a US federal agency, could not be included in the litigation; the case is still pending.

‘Īlio‘ulaokalani was planning another Kū i Ka Pono march for 6 September 2004, the one-year anniversary of the original march. But this time, one man would be noticeably absent from the ranks of marchers. As a result of a controversial decision by the University of Hawai‘i Board of Regents, Evan Dobbelle was unceremoniously fired from his position as the university’s president.

Evan Dobbelle came to Hawai‘i with a substantial reputation for enacting change and reinvigorating stagnating institutions. Born in Washington, Dobbelle earned his bachelor’s, master’s, and PhD degrees from the University of Massachusetts and an additional master’s in public administration from Harvard. He went on to occupy such positions as mayor of Pittsfield, Massachusetts; chief of protocol for the White House; assistant secretary of state during the Carter administration; chief financial officer of the Democratic National Committee; president of Middlesex Commu-

nity College; chancellor and president of the City College System of San Francisco; and president of Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut.

While at Trinity College, Dobelle was credited as the driving force behind the revitalization of surrounding neighborhoods, previously overrun with drug dealers and plagued by crime. The new “Learning Corridor,” which includes a Montessori elementary school, a middle school, a high school, a job-training center, and a police substation, rejuvenated the area surrounding the college. On campus, a performing arts center, a studio arts building, and an expanding library made the struggling college more appealing. As a result, the number of applications to the school increased 34 percent in the following years (Wolfe 1998).

Meanwhile, the University of Hawai‘i was beset with sliding national rankings, significant budget cutbacks, and a faculty strike in April of 2001. Someone of Dobelle’s background was just what the university was looking for to energize and revitalize the institution. His accomplishments stood out among the seventy other applicants to fill former President Kenneth Mortimer’s shoes. On 1 July 2001, President Dobelle took the reins, with an annual salary of \$442,000 and a seven-year contract (Gima 2004).

Immediately on taking office, Dobelle began remodeling the university by replacing the old community college system with one in which the various regional campuses were components of one cohesive system. He sought to model the University of Hawai‘i after the successful University

of California system by streamlining administration, unifying all ten campuses, and turning the community colleges into four-year baccalaureate schools. In his first-year evaluation as president, Dobelle was praised by the UH Board of Regents and credited with inspiring “a change in attitude” throughout the system (Creamer and Depledge 2004). However, faculty, junior administrators, and the powerful board of regents soon grew dissatisfied with the systematic upheaval of the ongoing reorganization.

Perhaps his greatest misstep, and indeed the turning point in Dobelle’s career in Hawai‘i, was his endorsement of Democratic Lieutenant Governor Mazie Hirono in the 2002 gubernatorial race. After Hirono was defeated by Republican Linda Lingle, the new governor shared with the press her disappointment in Dobelle’s endorsement.

In addition, the grand promises Dobelle made on his installation had yet to show tangible results. In a scathing essay called “Dangerous Equations,” Amy Agbayani, Director of Student Equity, Excellence and Diversity, along with Dr Ralph Moberly, Senator Donna Mercado Kim, and Representative Mark Takai, wrote that, after two years of Dobelle’s administration, they saw “an institution where student tuition is being raised while administrative salaries are boosted by more than \$4 million, where substance and services take a back seat to marketing and public relations, and where a globe-trotting President fails to bring home the money he promised.” The authors concluded that “our beloved University is in turmoil—from highly paid

administrators who have not proven their worth to concerns about cronyism, from constituencies who have been ignored and million-dollar logo and marketing plans to questionable expenditures of research funds, from inattention to administrative arrogance and deception” (Agbayani and others 2003). Meanwhile, Governor Lingle appointed four new members to the university’s board of regents. Ultimately, she would appoint eight of the twelve-member board. Supporters of Dobelle decried the mounting criticism as arising from political retribution for his endorsement of a defeated gubernatorial candidate, and as cheap shots based in political patronage (Rees 2004).

By April 2004, rumors of the dysfunctional relationship between Dobelle and the board of regents were circulating rapidly and seemed to be confirmed by an unfavorable second-year evaluation of Dobelle by the board. Dobelle was highly criticized for having politicized the university when he endorsed a gubernatorial candidate the year before; hiring former contacts as consultants and top administrators; and spending too lavishly on travel (Gima 2004).

However, Dobelle was able to earn a few allies at the university. One of his first acts as president had been to grant an unprecedented \$1.5 million for Native Hawaiian programs at the university. In addition, acknowledging that the university itself sits on land formerly belonging to the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, he committed to creating a “Hawaiian place of learning.” By this, he earned the loyalty of the Kualii Council (the Mānoa division of Pūko‘a, the Native Hawaiian

advisory council to the UH system), as he was the first president to acknowledge the needs of Native Hawaiian students and the positive impact of incorporating Hawaiian ideals at the university level. When the board of regents announced their decision to fire Dobelle as president in June of 2004, members of the council were quick to deliver their objections to the board.

The board’s decision to fire Dobelle came as a surprise to most, including Dobelle, who was away on the US continent visiting colleges with his son at the time. While the tension between Dobelle and the board was well known, their decision to fire him and announce it to the media before informing Dobelle was perceived as political retribution. Former Governor Benjamin Cayetano characterized their actions as “no class, that is absolutely no class” (Creamer and Depledge 2004). In addition, the board said that Dobelle was being terminated “for cause,” which was defined in his contract as one of the following: conviction for a felony offense; mental instability or other inability to perform the duties of the office; or conduct that “(a) constitutes moral turpitude, (b) brings public disrespect and contempt or ridicule upon the university, and (c) proven in a court of law, would constitute grounds for criminal conviction of the president or civil liability of the university” (Daysog 2004). In the event of a “for cause” termination, Dobelle would be ineligible for his \$2.2 million severance package.

In the weeks following the announcement, the exact “cause” was not revealed, but members of

the board hinted at financial inaccuracies in Dobelle's expense accounts. Inevitably, Dobelle challenged the firing and was able to win back most of his original severance package, after he was absolved of wrongdoing and the board admitted that there was no "cause" to fire Dobelle in the first place. Dobelle has been given a two-year research appointment with the UH Urban and Regional Planning Department.

In a related political issue, Hawai'i's congressional delegation put forth a new version of the bill for the federal recognition of Native Hawaiians as indigenous peoples of America. Previously referred to as the "Akaka Bill" (after Hawai'i's Senator Daniel Akaka who introduced the original bill in 1999), the bill has been officially renamed the "Native Hawaiian Government Reorganization Act." In the new version, the bill stipulates a twenty-year statute of limitations on claims against the United States after passage of the bill and provides more detailed procedures for the defining and registration of "Native Hawaiians." The bill continues to incite controversy both within and outside the Native Hawaiian community. On the US side, however, it seems that federal recognition is preferred, at least compared to any other kind of self-determination initiatives. In January 2004, the US Congress passed legislation creating the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations under the jurisdiction of the US Department of Interior, parallel to the existing Bureau of Indian Affairs. [For more on the "Akaka Bill," see the article by J Kēhaulani Kauanui, this issue, pages 1-27; and the interview with Mililani

Trask by Noe Noe Wong-Wilson, this issue, pages 142-156.]

Another controversial issue is the fragile relationship between the Bishop Museum and the Native Hawaiian community. This time, the controversy centers on the handling of burial artifacts. For centuries, native peoples all over the world have had bones and other sacred objects exhumed and put on display in museums and in other private collections. In 1990, descendants of these stolen ancestors—at least those in the United States—found relief in the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). The act was designed to provide a process for repatriating human remains, associated funerary objects, objects of cultural patrimony, and sacred objects to Native American and Native Hawaiian descendants. As a result, bones and other funerary items formerly held by museums and in private collections have been reclaimed by their descendants.

But the situation in Hawai'i is considerably more complex. The characteristics of a "Native Hawaiian organization" are less stringent than those of Native American groups, leaving room for multiple interpretations. Hawai'i's own Bishop Museum seeks to be recognized as such an institution.

In the museum's Interim and proposed Final Guidance of NAGPRA statement, they argue that "Bishop Museum" was "conceived and made real by the ali'i (chiefs) and other people of the Hawaiian Kingdom" and that the museum has a "dual role as a steward of Native Hawaiian culture as well as a museum with

repatriation responsibilities.” The museum recognizes itself as a “Native Hawaiian Organization” (NHO) for three reasons. First, “no NHO is culturally affiliated with NAGPRA cultural items from Hawai‘i [as a result of] the breaking of the kapu system in 1819 and the rapid metamorphosis of the traditional forms of Hawaiian governance that were maintained through the kapu system into Westernized forms of government and religion.” Therefore, “it is difficult to conclude that any existing NHO can be traced back to a specific ‘identifiable earlier group,’ other than all Hawaiians existing before traditional practices were discontinued in 1819.”

However, if we view the idea of “shared group identity” from a broader perspective, then all groups, including the museum, “meeting the NHO requirement of purpose, function and expertise in respect to Native Hawaiians has a relationship of shared group identity to the Native Hawaiian people of old.” Anyone engaged in the perpetuation of the Native Hawaiian culture qualifies.

Third, the Bishop Museum became the stewards of the objects formerly held by the Hawaiian National Museum established during the Hawaiian Kingdom after the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. Because the museum has continued its role as repository and steward of the objects to the present, it is a direct descendant of the national repository. This is portrayed as establishing the Museum’s “close cultural affiliation to cultural items in the collections.” (Bishop Museum 2004).

Besides funerary objects, NAGPRA also sets up policies for the repatria-

tion of objects of “cultural patrimony” and “sacred objects.” “Cultural patrimony” refers to objects that have an “ongoing historical, traditional, or cultural importance” and “cannot be alienated, appropriated, or conveyed by any individual” (NAGPRA, 2[3][d]). “Sacred objects” are those “specific ceremonial objects” which are needed by “their present day adherents” (2 NAGPRA, [3][c]). However, the museum does not recognize that it has in its possession any objects that meet either of these definitions. In addition, the museum declares that it has “right of possession” of unassociated funerary objects by virtue of “voluntary consent of an individual or group that had authority of alienation.” In other words, the items were not stolen, as was common with Native American objects.

Opponents object to the museum’s claim for three general reasons. First, it is a direct conflict of interest that “the Bishop Museum would be able to claim cultural items from its own collection while at the same time hold responsibility for repatriation of such items under NAGPRA” (Ayau 2004). The museum could obstruct the repatriation of objects to other Native Hawaiian Organizations in favor of their own claims. Second, opponents also argue that the museum’s claim runs contrary to the intent of the law that seeks redress for harms committed when Native people’s remains and other objects were taken and put on display in museums. Third, it “undermines the ability of Native Hawaiians to provide proper care” by obstructing claims and opening new wounds instead of healing old ones, thereby canceling out NAGPRA objectives

(Ayau 2004). Twenty-three cultural practitioners signed a letter asserting these arguments and further characterized the proposed policy as “insulting, paternalistic and colonial” (Ayau 2004). Hawai‘i’s Senator Daniel Inouye, contributing author of NAGPRA, also opposes the Bishop Museum’s claim: “It is not a Hawaiian organization, it’s a museum” (Viotti 2004).

In November 2003, the ongoing tug-of-war over land in Hawai‘i reached two milestones: the return of Kaho‘olawe to the State of Hawai‘i, and a historic sail to the Northwest Hawaiian Islands to promote awareness of environmental concern. For over a century, land in Hawai‘i has been under the control of the federal and state governments. Following the 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor, Kaho‘olawe was seized by the US Navy for use in target practice. Sixty-two years later, in November 2003, the US military returned the devastated island to the State of Hawai‘i to be held in trust for Native Hawaiians. As auspicious as the long-awaited event was, there are mixed feelings about the transfer of management from the federal to state governments. The decade-long clean-up effort by the US military has only cleared a small portion of the island. In fact, when the navy officially left the island on 12 March 2004, only about 71 percent of the surface and 9 percent of the subsurface cleanup was estimated to have been completed (Boyd 2003). In the minds of many involved in the transition, as well as cultural practitioners poised to access the island, is the question of whether or not the navy will continue its clean-up efforts now that control of the island

has left their hands (Boyd 2003). During the period of transition, access remains guarded, as both the land and surrounding reefs continue to be dangerous.

Many people think of the Hawaiian Islands as extending only as far as the northernmost inhabited island of Ni‘ihau. However, the archipelago includes ten additional islands stretching 1,200 miles, with reefs covering approximately 9,000 square kilometers. The Northwestern Hawaiian Islands are a haven for the most pristine reef ecosystem in the world, with nearly 7,000 species, one-quarter of which are endemic to the area. The reserve protecting the area was established in December 2000 by federal executive order. In May 2004, a crew on the legendary double-hulled voyaging canoe *Hōkūle‘a* visited these islands, piloting the multiagency effort, “Navigating Change,” designed to raise awareness of the environmental decline of the main Hawaiian Islands and encourage people to care for and protect remaining natural resources. (For more information, please consult the web sites of the Polynesian Voyaging Society and the “Navigating Change” project: <http://www.pvs-hawaii.com/voyages/voyaging_03_nwhi.php> and <<http://www.navigatingchange.org>>).

TRACIE KU‘UIPO
CUMMINGS LOSCH

References

- Agbayani, Amy, Donna Mercado Kim, Ralph Moberly, and Mark Takai. 2003. *Dangerous Equations: University of Hawaii’s Money Crisis*. *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, 6 July. <<http://www.dangerousequations.com/>>

Ayau, Edward Halealoha. 2004. Museum Policy Further Threatens Artifacts. *Honolulu Advertiser*, 8 August (a letter signed by 23 supporters from the Hawaiian community).

Bernardo, Rosemarie. 2003. Rights March Unifies Groups. *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, 8 September.

Bishop Museum. 2004. Interim and Proposed Final Guidance Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. 30 June. <<http://www.bishopmuseum.org/NAGPRAGuidelines.html>>

Boyd, Robynne. 2003. Mālama 'Āina, Kaho'olawe: Back in Hawaiian Hands. *Honolulu Weekly*, 5 November.

Creamer, Beverly, and Derick Depledge. 2004. Regents Fire Dobelle. *Honolulu Advertiser*, 16 June.

Daysog, Rick. 2004. The Dobelle Papers. *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, 5 August.

Gima, Craig. 2004. Dobelle Fired. *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 16 June.

Rees, Robert. 2004. The Meanings of the Dobelle Incident. *Honolulu Advertiser*, 8 August.

Viotti, Vicki. 2004. Inouye Against Museum Claim. *Honolulu Advertiser*, 14 August.

Wolfe, Faye S. 1998. Making Sense of the Relationship Between Trinity College and Hartford: The Man to Do It. *University of Massachusetts Magazine* (Winter). <http://www.umass.edu/umassmag/archives/1998/winter_98/wint98_f_trinity.html>

MĀORI ISSUES

2003–2004 has been a year of massive upheaval for Māori. In June 2003 the New Zealand government announced its intention to legislate the confiscation of the country's fore-

shore and seabed from Māori. At the time there was a furious and uncharacteristically united outcry from Māori. The level of anger among Māori against the government on this issue has increased over the past year as the government has refused not only to back down but also to enter into any meaningful consultation or dialogue with those who will be directly affected, the numerous coastal whānau (extended families) and hapū (groupings of extended families), many of whom have had rights to their own particular areas of the coast for many hundreds of years.

Māori have organized their opposition with unprecedented levels of cooperation, while the government has tried desperately to undermine them. Both the policy and the legislation have come under sustained attack as Māori have used every forum, strategy, and mechanism they could identify to try to have it removed. This included mounting the biggest protest march ever seen in the country. They also attacked the male Māori members of the Labour government caucus, including the minister of Māori affairs, labeling them as traitors when they ended up supporting the legislation and ignoring the clear and unequivocal instructions of their constituents. Two Māori women members of government who opposed the legislation drew huge support from Māori. When one of them, Tariana Turia, resigned from Parliament, forcing a by-election, voter turnout was unusually high, even though none of the main political parties offered any candidates. After setting up and then co-leading the new Māori Party, Turia took 92 percent of the vote,