

# Overthrow is part of history

By Lloyd Quinn

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I am not a native Hawaiian, but I am a part of the legitimate modern culture of Hawaii and the issue of sovereignty for people of Hawaiian ancestry concerns me greatly.

When Hawaii was illegally annexed over 100 years ago, it was tragically tolerated. This crime against Hawaiians has now become a part of history. No one living today had anything to do with that injustice, just as no one living today had anything to do with the brutal injustice of King Kamehameha's annexation of the Hawaiian Islands. The fact that I might benefit from these historical injustices does not mean that I owe any debt.

The history of the world is that of an almost continuous series of injustices of one people against another (or themselves). No society, no group of people, is immune from ancestral guilt.

Do not be quick to make the argument for sovereignty based on the example of American Indian nations. The present circumstances of the na-



tive Hawaiians are not comparable to those of Native American Indians. Though it may be difficult to accept by some, the fact is that the native people of Hawaii have been largely assimilated into a new and different culture, through the circumstances of history, in a way that did not occur to the individual tribes of the American Indians when their sovereignty was recognized.

What percentage of today's people claiming to be "Native Hawaiian" can speak the Hawaiian language fluently? What percentage of today's Hawaiians follow a social structure and belief system that is based on a common native Hawaiian sociology? What percentage of today's Hawaiians is more than 75 percent Hawai-

ian by blood? The appeal for sovereignty to many native Hawaiians is the basic appeal of empowerment of one group of people over another.

In addition to native Hawaiians, many other citizens of today's Hawaii have a "birth right" to this land. The "non-native" citizens of Hawaii have become an inseparable and legitimate part of a dynamic culture of the modern day Hawaii that continues to evolve and change.

At some point in time we need to say that history is history, and that passage of many years (perhaps 100?) can make a historical injustice a present day fact of life. We need to progress forward as a new family of brothers and sisters. I feel that granting sovereignty in today's society, as it is envisioned by many, will be an equally tragic injustice against the culture of today's Hawaii. We need to learn from the past, and move on to a new cultural maturity.

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