

# HAWAI'I

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## Natives Hawaiians Mark Centenary of US Takeover

On January 17, 1993 12,000 Native Hawaiians and supporters marched from the Aloha Tower to Iolani Palace in Honolulu to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of the overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani. It was the largest public political demonstration seen on the islands in recent history, and it marks a qualitative shift in the consciousness of the Native islanders.

Queen Lili'uokalani, the last queen of the Kanaka Maoli nation, was overthrown by the United States Marines on January 17, 1893. She had attempted to protect the sovereignty of Hawai'i by changing the constitution and cabinet. But that didn't sit well with a group of mostly wealthy American merchants and sugar planters who belonged to the Annexation Club.

These *haoles*, or whites - men with names like Castle, as in Castle and Cooke, and Dole, as in Dole Pineapple - wanted to be part of the United States to avoid high import tariffs. So with the help of 162 U.S. Marines, the haoles overthrew the queen, tried her for treason and stripped her of her royal lands (see Queen's statement, box this page).

Former U.S. President Grover Cleveland wrote in 1893, upon hearing of Hawai'i's annexation to the United States: "Hawai'i is ours. As I look back upon the first steps in this miserable business and as I contemplate the means used to complete the outrage, I am ashamed of the whole affair."

Native Hawaiians make up only about 20 percent of the population of the islands today. Their land is covered with golf courses and sugar plantations, overrun by tourists and bombarded by the U.S. military.

Recently the movement for Hawaiian sovereignty has been growing and most native Hawaiians now support some kind of sovereignty. One organization, the Pro-Hawaiian Sovereignty Working Group, is putting the U.S. government on trial.

They write: "Our primary charge against the United States government is its illegal invasion of our country in 1893, and the 1898 illegal annexation and continued occupation and plunder of our homeland. These acts flowed from a long-standing U.S. policy - since 1789 - of exploiting the Kanaka Maoli nation and its resources to serve U.S. interests."

### Queen's Protest

I, Lili'uokalani, Queen by the grace of God and under the constitution of the Hawaiian kingdom, do hereby solemnly protest against any and all acts done against myself and the constitutional government of the Hawaiian kingdom by certain persons claiming to have established a Provisional Government of and for this kingdom.

That I yield to the superior force of the United States of America, whose Minister Plenipotentiary, His Excellency John L. Stevens, has caused United States troops to be landed at Honolulu, and declared that he would support the said Provisional government.

Now, to avoid any collision of armed forces, and perhaps the loss of life, I do, under this protest and impelled by said forces, yield my authority until such time as the Government of the United States shall, upon the facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representative, and reinstate me in the authority which I claim as the constitutional sovereign of the Hawaiian Islands.

Done at Honolulu this seventeenth day of January, 1893.

For more information contact:  
Pro-Hawaiian Sovereignty Working Group  
3333 Ka'ohinani Drive, Honolulu, HI 96817  
Phone: (808) 595-6691  
Fax: (808) 595-0303

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