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DONNA LEE GRAIN
1750 Kalakaua Ave., Ste. 3220
Honolulu, HI 96825

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Mr. John Berry
Assistant Secretary,
Dept. of the Interior
Document Management Unit
1649 C St., NW
Mail Stop 7229
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Berry:

I am writing to voice my opposition to any "reconciliation" regarding the people of Hawaii.

I was born in Hawaii and have lived here all of my life except for a couple of years when I was away at school. I have great love for these islands and ALL of the people who reside here. I also feel that things have been blown way out of proportion and that history is being rewritten at a fantastic rate these days.

Culturally speaking, some of the most vocal Hawaiian women would literally have been put to death in the past, in the culture they glorify as being so perfect, because they are "commoners" and also because they are women. They couldn't even sit down and eat meals with their men, nor eat certain foods without the death penalty. For men, women and children, there was the death penalty if their shadow crossed the path of an ali's (chief/royalty) shadow. Gee, what an idyllic life they had, eh?

Furthermore, nobody owned land back then. All these folks are squawking about "their" land being stolen, and how they want it back—well, the truth is, they never had any to begin with! Life in Hawaii was a feifdom, and the only ownership was in the hands of the ali. To hear the average Hawaiian person tell it, he/she is "descended from royalty"... well come on, SOMEBODY had to be a commoner, but you'll never hear anyone admit to being such!

Basically, they were slaves, and the royalty took the spoils, so to speak, in terms of the land and what was grown on it.

You'll also never hear any of the Hawaiians admit that there was an aboriginal people **ALREADY HERE** when the Hawaiians migrated to these islands. The Hawaiians promptly captured and enslaved them, and they were known as the "kaua". They were slaves, they were never allowed to mingle or intermarry with

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regular Hawaiians, and when a human sacrifice was needed and no captured prisoners of war were available, a kaula was selected to be sacrificed. They were so looked down upon that you rarely hear them mentioned. It's bad enough that no Hawaiian admits to being anything but "royalty", but you'll never hear one admit to being "kaula", either.

Speaking of prisoners of war, King Kamehameha is glorified as being the one who "united" the islands. Well, think about this for a minute. He "united" them and ended the fighting, sure enough, but only because he got to be THE ruler. It was ruthless and bloody, and he just happened to be the guy who won. Sure, it was "peaceful" after that, but only because Kamehameha got to be in charge. It was not a peaceful, loving society as you've been led to believe.

The royalty/monarchs who succeeded him sold as well as gave away much of the land themselves, so to say it was all "stolen" by the U.S. is absurd and a convenient way to instigate fervor among the more radical and outspoken Hawaiians. Certain Hawaiian monarchs were so busy consuming alcohol (sure, it was brought in from outside, but the Hawaiians already had their own alcoholic beverage of choice (called "okolehao"), made from their own ti plants, that many official duties went ignored while they frolicked and flew kites (*literally* flew kites). The reason we have no sandalwood left in these islands is that one of the kings made his own subjects cut every tree they could find in the native forests to ship off to the Orient in exchange for money and material goods. The stripping of the forests was not done by the vilified white man, it was done by Hawaiians.

The Hawaiians are NOT a perfect people. They are guilty of many of their own tragic mistakes and behaviors, but are choosing instead to lay full blame on anyone else, especially the United States. It is a benefit of free speech afforded them by U.S. citizenship which allows them to verbalize their hatred of America, when in their own culture less than two centuries ago they could have been killed for talking in this manner.

One man told me on the phone this week how much he hates "the white man" and in the same conversation was telling me how much he gets each year from Social Security (an American federal program) because of the disability he was born with. What would he have done if he'd been born with these same severe disabilities a couple of hundred years ago???

Speaking of health matters—another subject the militants like to dump on the United States—in the "old days" here in Hawaii, "large was beautiful", and thinness wasn't as desired as obesity, to put it plainly. There are prints made by early exploration illustrators, even depicting the queen, at the time, and she was not what you'd call "petite"! We all know that obesity is a severe health problem.

early exploration illustrators, even depicting the queen, at the time, and she was not what you'd call "petite"! We all know that obesity is a severe health problem leading to many complications, but this was the case even before the U.S. was in Hawaii. As to health matters these days, there is information on health available for free in the libraries (paid for by our—and my—taxes); as well as in schools,

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community centers, clinics. This information is on television, radio and in newspapers. Is it really "the white man's" fault that even with all of this information out there, individuals and families still choose to drink their soda and beer, eat chips, fry their food and basically eat junk? Nobody is forcing them to do that. Anyone here can eat a traditional Hawaiian diet; there's plenty of rice, fish, vegetables, fruit and poi to go around. The Hawaiians are just as guilty of succumbing to a junk food diet as are any "typical" American families who choose convenience over sensible choices. Heck, even I eat "poi"-- I was raised on it by my "American" parents, and love it like it's a pudding dessert, but I know Hawaiians who hate it and won't touch the stuff, or who don't like to eat fish!

Sadly, most Hawaiians do NOT agree with the militant ones who can get the money together to go to DC. These militants embarrass the others with their actions and their rhetoric. Many of the older Hawaiians as well as younger ones simply do not agree regarding reparations, reconciliation or anything else. They fully realize the benefits of U.S. citizenship, Social Security, the freedoms they have, and how much better Hawaii is as part of the U.S. than it would be under any other country. Truly, if the U.S. did not have Hawaii in its family, some other country would have claimed it by now (Japan in WWII, or perhaps the Spanish before that, Russia, Britain, etc.). Hawaii would never have been left to itself, and the results of a relationship with any other country could have been much, much "worse" than the traumas the militants are claiming under the American flag.

There were people who tried to give testimony in December, and they were shouted down or not allowed time to speak. Some of them weren't shown on television, although the militants certainly were. I know several Hawaiian families who are embarrassed and angered at the behavior of the militant Hawaiians. They recognize and fully appreciate the benefits and conveniences and better lifestyle they have due to American ingenuity and influence (everything from Coca Cola to paved roads, cars, Levi's, T-shirts, television, radios and computers—to kidney transplants which save lives!

I feel "reparations" are racist and violate the Civil Rights of the rest of the residents of these islands. I feel that even the Office of Hawaiian Affairs is illegal in its existence, for the same reason. I also intend to ask for an OHA ballot in our upcoming election, because as a U.S. citizen and as a lifelong resident of Hawaii, I feel I have the right to vote on matters which affect Hawaii. I know many others who also intend to request an OHA ballot for the same reasons, even though they are non-Hawaiian.

As a lifelong resident in Hawaii (I was born here when Hawaii was still a "territory") and as a U.S. citizen, and because my taxes are affected by your decision, I emphatically state that I am against reconciliation, reparations or any other such concession to these militant Hawaiians who are rewriting history and who are violating my civil rights in their racist efforts.

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There is Osage Indian blood in my family, and I can tell you that the Osage truly suffered in ways the Hawaiians cannot even imagine. The Hawaiians have never starved to death on the plains, frozen to death on barren land in winters, had children forcibly removed from families or any of the other true injustices suffered in the past. It angers me and angers my mainland Osage relatives when the Hawaiians conveniently compare themselves to the American Indians. Hey, the Hawaiians had it so much better in comparison, that it's infuriating for them to want to latch onto the Indians' coattails. It's time for the Hawaiians to get off the "poor me" train, leave the "pity party" they've been throwing for themselves for years, and be glad they're who they are, where they are. (They could be in Bosnia or Sierra Leone, now *that's* modern day suffering, for you!).

I urge you to consider that this is a racial and biased and historically rewritten situation which threatens the civil rights of the majority of the population in Hawaii. I am including newspaper articles and letters to show you that there are many people who are urging the same thing: that you not violate OUR civil rights, common sense and REAL historic facts to pamper the radical minority.

Sincerely,

Donna Lee Grain

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Encl: news articles/editorial letters

Cc: Hawaii Delegation to DC: Inouye/Akaka/Abercrombie/Mink