

December 23, 1999

To: Assistant Secretary John Berry  
Policy, Management, and Budget  
Department of the Interior

Director Mark Van Norman  
Office of Tribal Justice  
Department of Justice

From: Deldrene Nohealani Herron

Subject: Reconciliation Process for Native Hawaiians

My name is Deldrene Nohealani Herron. I am a resident of Punalu'u, O'ahu, Hawai'i, U.S.A. I am not a native Hawaiian as defined by the Hawaiian Homestead Act of 1920. Nevertheless, I am part Hawaiian. My genealogy of Hawaiian ancestry is documented to the beginning of written history in these islands and is linked to Hawaiian oral tradition. My Chinese and Portuguese ancestry dates back to the 14th Century. My Caucasian ancestry is recorded back to the infamous Hull House where the Reverend Herron presided over flocks of new immigrants arriving in America from Europe, France and elsewhere. My Cherokee ancestry dates back to the time that President Taft, and his wife Mary Herron, resided in the White House. My father, the late James Herron, was a highly decorated amputee of WWII.

As I see it, the situation that has led us to this reconciliation is long overdue. Over a hundred years ago Britain, France and America divided the Pacific into their own "management zones." Perhaps by the throw of darts on a chart, America got the Northern Hemisphere, France the Southern and Britain most everything west of the International Dateline, including Australia. However, it was never predicted that Hawai'i would some day become a great Metropolis of the Pacific. The Americans still needed Hawai'i for strategic purposes but then something went wrong. The historic truths came out of an ugly unholy alliance of trespassers on an innocent, ignorant race of people called Hawaiians (Kanakas a.k.a. Kanaka Maoli). The economic scales and greed tilted against a people who more familiar with a bartering cargo society.

Who are these Hawaiians of today for whom reconciliation is now sought? Are we the great- and great-great-grandchildren of a once industrious, seafaring, self-reliant people? NO! We are now Americanized, industrious, educated, veterans of foreign wars, and downtrodden political bodies. We are native people not unlike those Indian tribes, who have been degraded by foreign pestilence and plagues and cultural and economic ruin; disenfranchised from our homelands; and separated by the political categories and whims of Congress.

On the other hand, I think it is great that America has addressed Hawaiians with an apology and seeks reconciliation. But should we not also expect reparations?" In any culture when a wrong is committed by an individual or a community upon others, reconciliation is certainly expected. In Hawai'i we call the process Ho'oponopono and it is always followed by

restitution. I can imagine how non-Hawaiians would balk at any monetary restitution to us, but if you will not give our lands back, give us a means to buy it back. We have suffered as divided people by your overthrow and the Homestead Act of 1920. In America, where one drop of black is black, why is it that Hawaiians need to be 50% Hawaiian to be Hawaiians? Why don't you just cut the B.S. debating and backroom deals and get the dirty business over with and settle it?

When I ran as an OHA candidate several years ago the late OHA Trustee Billie Beamer asked me why I was running for the office. I told her that I wanted to see the Office of Hawaiian Affairs negotiate a settlement with the United States of America for the illegal overthrow of our Kingdom. The following is the scenario I presented to her.

ARTICLE 1. By an act of Congress, endorsed by the President of the United States, all Hawaiians of any blood quantum born on or before the date of passage of Act #\_\_\_, herein known as "The Hawaiian Act of 2000," shall be issued a tax exempt State and Federal government note in the amount of \$50,000 (fifty thousand dollars) as reparation for the overthrow of their kingdom in January 1893. (Mrs. Beamer thought \$25,000 would be a fair amount as it was for Japanese internee reparation.) Any person claiming to be Hawaiian, in whole or in part, whose ancestry dates back to the overthrow, must submit the following within three years from the passage of "The Hawaiian Act of 2000:

- a. A standard Certificate of Birth registered with the State of Hawai'i Department of Health that shows a Native born ancestry or
- b. A native Hawaiian testimony of birth by two or more blood relatives, verified by the State of Hawai'i Department of Health, if no birth certificate is on file for a claimant or
- c. Certified registered proof of Hawaiian ancestry if an adopted or hanai person is filing or
- d. Any of the above must be presented by an adult for a minor who qualifies under the Hawaiian Act of 2000.

ARTICLE 2. The United States of America shall with the passage of Act #\_\_\_ eliminate the Department of Hawaiian Homeland Act of 1920 and henceforth management of the DHHL be assigned to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs until such time when and if a new native Hawaiian entity is formed by the will of the Hawaiian people.

ARTICLE 3. Any bank or lending company insured by the Federal Reserve of the United States of America shall, as its top priority, grant to any adult Hawaiian who qualifies for a home loan an exclusive guaranteed mortgage at a fixed rate not to exceed 3% simple interest. The home buyer shall pay escrow, closing costs and not less than 20% toward the purchase of a home mortgage.

ARTICLE 4. Any awardee owing State or Federal taxes, college loans, or other debts to the government shall forfeit the amounts and the balance, if any, of the \$50,000 shall be awarded to that person.

ARTICLE 5. Any person who qualifies under Act #\_\_\_ and is physically or mentally unable to manage their award and who is a ward of the Court, residing in an institution, or cared for in a home by a legal representative/care giver recognized by the Court shall forfeit their award of \$50,000 to the institution or legal representative/care giver recognized by the Court.

ARTICLE 6. Any person who qualifies under Act #\_\_\_\_ who is in a State for Federal penal institution shall receive an award upon release from such institution or if serving a life sentence without parole, may assign payment to a beneficiary, a charitable organization or educational institution.

ARTICLE 7. No minor shall receive their \$50,000 award before their 18th birthday, except for

- a. Use for higher education or
- b. Minor comes in part or in whole, under a registered family trust or
- c. Use for medical expenses not covered by a primary insurer or medicaid or
- d. Use towards the joint purchase of land and a home with life interest or until the minor becomes an adult and the parties of the joint interest agree to sell.

ARTICLE 8. A disclaimer to any future reparations by any Hawaiian qualified under Act #\_\_\_\_, herein known as the Hawaiian Act of 2000, shall be signed by all awardees and/or their legal representative.

(END OF SCENARIO)

Now, is that not a simple solution to healing the frustration and pain of the truth? Most non-Hawaiian taxpayers would be disturbed by the proposal of financial restitution to Hawaiians, but I see it as a drop-in-the-bucket settlement. It would be a mere estimated 12 billion, 500 million dollars. That is about the cost of dropping six bombs on Sadham's head or building one space shuttle for four 747s. For a Hawaiian family of four it would mean \$200,000 as an investment toward the purchase of land and a decent roof over their heads. Or they could form a hui (investment group), get out of debt, pay for medical expenses, move their family back to Hawai'i, or any other choices of action.

Of course, our trusts would remain intact. Rice v. the State of Hawai'i would still be a controversy. The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands would be a mute entity. OHA would still remain until the Hawaiian community decides to pursue sovereignty or transform OHA into a Native Hawaiian non-profit corporation. We are finally moving forward. Let us not go backwards. Let the reconciliation begin and move on to restitution

Thank you, America for even considering reconciliation.

Mahalo and Aloha,

*Deldrene Nohealani Herron*  
Deldrene Nohealani Herron

*Hauohi Makahiki Hoo*  
*(Happy New Year)*

cc: President Bill Clinton  
Attorney General Janet Reno  
Senator Daniel K. Inouye  
Senator Daniel K. Akaka  
Representative Patsy T. Mink  
Representative Neil Abercrombie