

Reconciliation Testimony - December 11, 1999
Testifier: Joseph Moses Keaweheulu Keohokalole

E nā Kupuna: mahalo no kō 'oukou mana iane' i!

E nā Hawai'i:

Eia la kākou nā mamo o ke aupuni i hala

Eia la kākou ka lāhui Hawai'i

E kū a'e no kō kākou lāhui!

E ho'olohe i nā leo kūpuna a lākou e hui pū ai me kākou!

To the Honorable John Berry and the Honorable Mark Van Norman, Welcome!
E nā Hawai'i, aloha mai no kākou pākahi ā pau!

I am Joseph Moses Keaweheulu Keohokalole. I am three-fourths Hawaiian ancestry and my lineage takes me back to the last ruling monarch of these islands, our last Queen, our Mō'i Wahine, Queen Lili'uokalani, whose mother's name is the same as my surname, Keohokalole.

My grandparents on both sides of my family were citizens of the Hawaiian Kingdom and were among the 17,000+ Hawaiians who protested the annexation of Hawai'i to the United States and signed their names to that protest document.

When Hawaiians were displaced and forced off their lands, their spirit was broken and their lifestyle and lifeline to the land, the 'āina, was cut off. To the Hawaiian, land is significant because the word for land, 'āina is derived from 'ai which means "food" and the suffix na, which means "that which feeds". To the Hawaiian, the land was its "feeder". When the United States government took away the "feeder" from the native Hawaiian by taking his land, the United States government began a long history of starving Hawaiians. Beyond the physical realm, though, the Hawaiian believed that all land came from the gods and was managed by his chiefs. The taking of his land also began a decimation of his spiritual well-being.

Hawaiian land and natural resources made Hawaiians rich and satisfied. The word for wealth and rich in Hawaiian is the word "waiwai." The word "wai" means fresh water. A reduplication of the word "wai" to "waiwai" meant the native Hawaiian had lots of fresh water (for the feeding of his land) in his mind was rich. The Hawaiian concept of wealth meant he had unlimited use of water for his 'āina, unlimited use of this natural resource, unlimited use of the ocean - another provider of his sustenance

These three components - the 'āina the water, and the kai or the ocean were basic to his daily existence. To separate these natural resources from the native Hawaiian is to literally kill him.

When Hawaiian land was taken by an outside government by eminent domain for use as military bases and other governmental purpose, where were Hawaiians to go? When the United States government at statehood turned over all ceded lands to the State government, where were Hawaiians to go? To this very day, Hawaiians are still displaced from their lands. However, construction continues for R&R facilities for military officers and their families at DeRussey, the Marine Corps Base-Hawai'i at Kane'ōhe and Bellows Air Force Base, prime pieces of real estate taken by the U.S. government.

Reconciliation means making a relationship whole again. The assumption is that a wrong has been committed between two parties. These hearings have been set up to begin

NOV 21 1999 11:08 AM HAWAIIAN ARCHIVES
888+2394499 P. 84

Reconciliation Testimony - December 11, 1999

Testifier: Joseph Moses Keaweheulu Keohokalole

dialogue with us Hawaiians to be a salve on the conscience of the U.S. government. We thank you for doing this. This is the first step in the right direction. It's the only way to make right an injury you have made to our once-thriving nation.

Sovereignty is something we lost - a national right. Models of sovereignty will be presented to you. Lands will once more be transferred to entities who will be vying to establish their form of sovereignty, should this be the result of these hearings.

As a descendant of the family of Queen Lili'uokalani, I publicly, on behalf of my family, make claim to any and all lands belonging to High Chiefess Ane Keohokalole, as my bargaining chip of reconciliation. If federal or state government is sitting on these lands, then as a reconciliatory gesture, you must negotiate with us to give back what you took from us. Do the right thing for this nation of Hawaiian people. It is your moral duty to restore to us the spiritual and physical "hanu" or breath you stole from us. May God give you the testicular fortitude to do it. Mahalo.