

A LUSCIOUS FRUIT:  
AMERICA'S ANNEXATION OF HAWAII

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation argues that the annexation of Hawaii was not the result of an aggressive move by the United States to gain coaling stations or foreign markets, nor was it a means of preempting other foreign nations from acquiring the island or mending a psychic wound in the United States. Rather, the acquisition was the result of a seventy-year relationship brokered by Americans living on the islands and entered into by two nations attempting to find their place in the international system. Foreign policy decisions by both nations led to an increasingly dependent relationship linking Hawaii's stability to the U.S. economy and the United States' world power status to its access to Hawaiian ports.

Analysis of this seventy-year relationship changed over time as the two nations evolved within the world system. In an attempt to maintain independence, the Hawaiian monarchy had introduced a westernized political and economic system to the islands to gain international recognition as a nation-state. This new system created a highly partisan atmosphere between natives and foreign residents who overthrew the monarchy to preserve their personal status against a rising native political challenge. These men then applied for annexation to the United States, forcing Washington to confront the final obstacle in its rise to first-tier status: its own reluctance to assume the burdens and responsibilities of an imperial policy abroad. Ultimately, the formal step of annexation was a reaction to events in the periphery, not an aggressive move by the United States minister or in response to the Spanish-American War.

DEDICATION

For

My Family

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## Introduction

On a stage built at the steps of Iolani Palace draped with red, white, and blue bunting and small American flags, and surrounded by a well-dressed crowd of Honolulu's most prominent white citizens, U.S. minister Harold M. Sewall opened the ceremony transferring the sovereignty of the Hawaiian Islands to the United States. The Hawaiian National Guard had already escorted American naval forces from the *Philadelphia* and *Mohican*, parading them through the streets of Honolulu to where they now stood guard in the driveway, flanked by the Hawaiian Citizens Guard and police force of Honolulu. The minister began with a prayer before reading the joint resolution of annexation passed by Congress in Washington and signed by President William McKinley a month earlier on July 7, 1898.

Sanford B. Dole, President of the Hawaiian Republic, accepted the copy and "with full confidence in the honor, justice, and friendship of the American people," he yielded the sovereignty of the islands to the government of the United States. Then, with a wave of his hand, the Hawaiian National Guard fired a salute to the Hawaiian flag, joined by naval personnel on the U.S. ships in the harbor, while the Hawaiian National Band played "Hawaii Pono." At that moment, the trade winds over Honolulu died down leaving the native flag symbolically lifeless on the pole just before "Taps" sounded to signal its lowering. Minister Sewall graciously accepted the transfer and the U.S. naval officers slowly raised the American flag while the band played the "Star Spangled Banner." At fifteen seconds past twelve o'clock, the trade winds

picked up, giving new life to the Stars and Stripes as it reached the top of the pole, thus officially ending the existence of an independent Hawaii.<sup>1</sup>

This short ceremony, attended by very few native Hawaiians, marked an important event in the history of both the United States and Hawaii, but also took on much greater significance to contemporaries and historians alike. At face value, it formalized a change in the governance of the islands, making a once sovereign nation a territory of another. For the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, it symbolized the last breaths of the independent Hawaii at the hands of an aggressive United States. For historians, it finalized the United States' rise to world power status by becoming an imperial nation. For contemporaries, such as Minister Sewall, it was the "inevitable consummation of the national policies and the natural relations between the two countries now formally and indissolubly united."<sup>2</sup> To an extent, these are all correct.

The annexation of Hawaii was the culmination of a century long relationship between two nations, which was created and impacted by each state's own struggle to find and sustain its place in the world system. One started as a colonial possession with enormous potential to rise quickly in the international hierarchy. The other began as an independent nation hoping to sustain its sovereignty while lacking the resources to compete against the world powers. Both needed each other at different points in their evolutions, and both worried about the potential problems their relationship could bring. The annexation symbolizes the completion in this evolutionary process, with the United States taking the final step into its first-tier status as the Hawaiian Islands lost its struggle to retain independent sovereignty.

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<sup>1</sup> Sewall to Day, August 15, 1898, Vol. 31, FM T30, Roll 31, Dispatches from the United States Minister to Hawaii, 1843-1900, Records Group 59, Microscopy Number T-30, General Records of the United States Department of State, National Archives. (hereafter cited as Dispatches, NA) Descriptions of the trade winds dying down just at the flag began to lower are found in editorials from the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, August 13, 1898, found as attachments in Sewall's dispatch.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Much has been written about the motivations behind the annexation of Hawaii, with many scholars arguing over what prompted the United States to suddenly embark on an imperial foreign policy in 1898. The most prominent school of thought suggests that economic factors of the 1890s led Washington on a quest for more markets and investment opportunities. Historian William Appleman Williams contends that the expansionist tendency of the ante-bellum period did not end with the Civil War, but rather evolved into a “new imperialism” in which the acquisition and control of foreign market and trade took precedent over territorial aggrandizement. This economic expansion provided an external solution to the internal problem of overproduction and social unrest prominent during the Gilded Age. To accomplish this, the United States used its influence, and occasionally the threat of military intervention, to build or maintain stable governments capable of promoting private capitalist enterprise, international access to raw materials, and open market for trade.<sup>3</sup>

Other historians have stressed economic forces driven by businessmen who controlled the country and who desired new markets. They argue that these capitalists, in partnership with the federal government, turned to the idea of colonies and spheres of influence to counter European’s implementation of protective tariffs.<sup>4</sup> Other historians insist that the drive to open the Orient, especially the fabled China market, led to the annexation of Hawaii for control of its ports.<sup>5</sup>

An important facet in Williams’ argument was the continuity of expansionism in U.S. policy. Another historian who saw continuity, Frederick Merk, suggests that the imperialism of

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<sup>3</sup> William Appleman Williams, *Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1972).

<sup>4</sup> Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963); Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 7-13.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas J. McCormick, *Empire Can Wait: American Opposition to Hawaiian Annexation, 1893-1898* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1981), 122-163.

the 1890s marked a reemergence of the expansionism of Manifest Destiny. He asserts that during the ante-bellum period there were two lines of thought, the first advocating territorial expansion to gain wealth and power, the other proclaiming that the United States had a mission to spread democracy and individual liberty. The imperialists of the 1890s inherited the former, seeing expansion as a “restorative” for the ills of the Gilded Age, while the anti-imperialists inherited the latter.<sup>6</sup>

While Merk saw continuity in American expansion, most historians view the 1890s as a departure from traditional foreign policy, with the United States becoming an imperialist nation suddenly in 1898. Those scholars who perceive change disagree on what prompted this alteration and why it happened during this decade. Julius Pratt observes a shift toward imperialism in public sentiment, which embraced expansion on Social Darwinist and religious grounds. The works of Alfred Thayer Mahan, Josiah Strong, and John Fiske, among others, gave a distressed nation the motivation and a rationale for a new surge in expansion.<sup>7</sup> Other historians theorize that the U.S. imperial impulse was a continuation of the progressive movement and humanitarian efforts toward lesser developed regions, by engaging in interventionist policies and by annexing areas in need of guidance.<sup>8</sup>

Another group of scholars searching for a non-economic answer found that dramatic changes in the Gilded Age prompted this sudden shift in U.S. policy. Richard Hofstadter detected a “psychic crisis” during the Gilded Age that led to this imperial thrust. The combination of urbanization, industrialization, and the closing of the frontier caused alarm and

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<sup>6</sup> Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 228-260.

<sup>7</sup> Julius Pratt, *Expansion of 1898: The Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands* (New York: Peter Smith, 1951), 1-24. Other historians who found public opinion were Ernest May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961).

<sup>8</sup> Whitney T. Perkins, *Denial of Empire: The United States and Its Dependencies* (Leyden: A. W. Sythoff, 1962); Howard E. Gillette Jr., “The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1899-1902,” *American Quarterly*, vol. 25, 1973.

confusion in the United States and war with Spain and annexation of Hawaii gave the people an escape from reality.<sup>9</sup> Other historians credit a crisis of masculinity and jingoism with unleashing a desire for expansion.<sup>10</sup>

Several historians have looked externally to explain this perceived shift in foreign policy. Many argue that to compete with the European powers, the United States needed to engage in an imperial policy to ensure its standing in the world. Historians such as David Healy observe a revival brought on by certain expansionist minded men like Elihu Root, Charles Denby, and Theodore Roosevelt, who recognized that engaging in imperialism was both the only path to first-tier status and the responsibility of westernized nations.<sup>11</sup> Other historians have cited the need for coaling stations and naval bases in the Pacific for the imperial move, believing the desire to develop Pearl River, and the need to deny access to other nations, became the focus of U.S. policy.<sup>12</sup>

There are several problems with the arguments that the 1890s signaled something new or different brought on by a “psychic crisis” or a sudden need for new markets or harbors. These historians view domestic troubles of the Gilded Age or internal political developments as causing an impulsive shift toward an imperial policy. By doing this, the annexation of Hawaii becomes an impromptu move by Washington in response to the Spanish-American War, the threat of

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<sup>9</sup> Ernest May, *American Imperialism: A Speculative Essay* (New York: Atheneum, 1968), 11-16.

<sup>10</sup> Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood: How Gender Provoked the Spanish-American and Philippine-American Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Eric T. L. Love, *Race over Empire: Racism and U.S. Imperialism, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

<sup>11</sup> David Healy, *U.S. Expansionism: The Imperialist Urge in the 1890s* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 36, 48-49; William Jennings Bryan, *Speeches of William Jennings Bryan*, vol. 2 (New York: Funk & Wagnall, 1913), 26. Bryan’s speeches reflect argument over contemporary definitions of imperialism and expansionism by arguing that “forcible annexation of territory” different from the acquisition of land for settlement, which is what he believed was the American tradition established by Jefferson.

<sup>12</sup> LaFeber, *The New Empire*; William Michael Morgan, *Pacific Gibraltar: U.S.-Japanese Rivalry Over the Annexation of Hawaii, 1885-1898* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 19.

foreign aggression, or the need for Asian markets. This narrow time frame and U.S.-centric focus places American policy in a vacuum and argues against the idea of continuity prior to the 1890s.

Within this context, several historians have focused specifically on the annexation of Hawaii and found similar motivations in the actions of the United States. The most noted scholars, Ralph S. Kuykendall and William Russ, argue that a small cadre of planters and merchants overthrew the queen with the assistance of an imperialistic American minister John L. Stevens who brought U.S. marines ashore. This group of individuals was comprised of the propertied class of largely American and Hawaiian-born Americans, who were heavily involved in the complicated partisan political system that formed during the reign of King Kalakaua and who controlled most of the economic investments of the islands, including the plantations, when Liliuokalani succeeded her brother. They removed the queen when she attempted to illegally overthrow the existing constitution. These men then applied for annexation with a receptive lame duck president Benjamin Harrison, only to be thwarted by the incoming anti-imperialist administration of Grover Cleveland. Annexation came only when the imperialist minded William McKinley entered the White House and engaged in the Spanish-American War.<sup>13</sup>

Again, this analysis relies heavily on a U.S. centric and somewhat isolated view of the events, leaving Americans in the position of aggressor and Washington as the actor. But the internal political struggles in Hawaii and the relationship between the United States and the islands were far more complex than these arguments suggest and the events occurred in relation to a larger environment than Washington or Honolulu. To remedy this problem, historians must

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<sup>13</sup> Ralph S. Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom, vol. III: 1864-1893 Kalakaua Dynasty* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967); William Adam Russ, *The Hawaiian Revolution, 1893-1894* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1959), 100-119; Merze Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom: A Political History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965).

examine the American annexation of Hawaii within a global context and over a much larger period of time to fully understand the evolution of the U.S.-Hawaiian relationship.

A few scholars have attempted to expand their analysis into an international context. Frank Ninkovich compares U.S. actions in 1898 with European imperialism and finds a definite shift toward an imperial foreign policy. He identifies two stages of colonial expansion. The early form—including the settlement of the United States, Australia, and Canada—involved what he refers to as “settler colonies.” The second was the more militant form of the late nineteenth century denoted by the partitioning of Africa and Asia. He places American imperialism of the 1890s into the later style, because of its distinct projection of power and technical superiority over lesser developed nations, and views the acquisition of Hawaii, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines as part of this exertion of U.S. technical supremacy.<sup>14</sup> Ninkovich’s analysis exposes another common flaw in the historiography by placing the Hawaiian annexation in parity with the possessions taken after the Spanish-American War without examining the long standing relationship between the two nations prior to the events of the 1890s.

To fully understand the annexation, and its distinctiveness from the other imperial acquisitions, it is important not only to place it within a global context, but to place the United States and Hawaii individually within the international imperial hierarchy to explore their changing status and roles throughout the course of the nineteenth century. The evolution of both as individual nations in juxtaposition to the European first-tier powers affected their developing and changing relationship throughout the nineteenth century. The annexation was the culmination of both nations’ development within that international power structure, as well as the result of their evolving relationship created by that environment. To appreciate this requires an

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<sup>14</sup> Frank Ninkovich, *The United States and Imperialism* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 9-12.

understanding of the international politics of development and imperialism in the nineteenth century.

First, an explanation of the international hierarchy and a definition of imperialism is necessary. Organized on the basis of labor and technology, there were three tiers denoting the status of a nation within the world system. The first-tier—also known as first-tier or metropole nations—held control of technology and high-profit economic development and used this advantage to subjugate those in the third-tier. The third-tier nations were the providers of predominantly agricultural products and raw materials who were controlled by the first-tier through formal or informal means. In the middle was the second-tier, who were in the process of independent development by establishing manufacturing and initiating the use of technology, while still at a less profitable and more vulnerable basis than the first-tier.<sup>15</sup>

Within this hierarchical structure, there are two forms of imperialism most often employed by the first-tier. The first is formal imperialism, in which a stronger first-tier nation-state employs military, political, and economic means against a weaker, third-tier nation with the intent to impose alliances and gain economic profit or strategic advantage. This occurs through annexation, protectorates, or military invasion by the larger nations. In the informal form, usually non-state actors, such as missionaries and businessmen from the stronger state, instigate changes beneficial to themselves through economic persuasion, cultural and political influence, or implied military threat. In this form, the periphery relies heavily upon protection and trade

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<sup>15</sup> For an in-depth discussion of the division of the international hierarchy in the World Systems theory see Thomas D. Schoonover, *The United States in Central America, 1860-1911: Episodes of Social Imperialism and Imperial rivalry in the World System* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991); Thomas J. McCormick, "World Systems," in *The Journal of American History*, vol. 77, no 1, June 1990, 125-126.

agreements to develop internally, becoming dependent without falling under direct control by the metropole.<sup>16</sup>

The difference between employing the earlier over the later form of imperialism depends on the periphery. Political stability, economic potential, and the degree of collaboration within the weaker state effects the cost-benefit ratio for the stronger nation, thus determining the degree of control exerted by the metropole. In the formal model, the native population and government are less willing to participate in the relationship, thus requiring a greater amount of coercion in the form of military force and governmental control by the larger nation. In informal imperialism, there is a greater degree of collaboration by some individuals in the periphery, who benefit, although unequally, from the relationship and who became dependent on foreign trade and capital to sustain their position. The first-tier nation uses these collaborators and the existing native governmental entities to control the internal policies of the periphery while encouraging changes to the political and economic system, which bring it into the international system. The byproduct of this is the westernization of the periphery—including democratization and the introduction of capitalist free trade—which enabled the collaborative process to work. It is this latter form that the United States most often employed.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the use of these two forms of imperialism shifted over time, resulting in three stages of European imperial strategy. The first phase can be termed “settler colony” imperialism, which is most readily identifiable with British, French, Spanish, and Dutch establishment of colonies in the Americas and Caribbean.

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<sup>16</sup> Joseph A. Fry, “Imperialism, American style, 1890-1916,” *American Foreign Relations Reconsidered 1890-1993*, ed. Gordon Martel (London: Routledge, 1994), 53; Ronald Robinson, “The Excentric Idea of Imperialism, with or without Empire,” *Imperialism and After: Continuities and Discontinuities*, eds. Wolfgang J. Mommsen & Jürgen Osterhammel (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), 267.

<sup>17</sup> Robinson, “The Excentric Idea of Imperialism,” 267-73.

Following the age of revolution, the European model began to shift toward an informal policy of collaboration and unequal trade and protection agreements to control the periphery. This stage became most popular in the early and mid-nineteenth century and especially so in the settlement of the Pacific region. The informal process was maintained as long as internal politics in the periphery allowed for the collaborationist elites to maintain control and continue the collaborative process. Only when these peripheral nations became unstable or threatened the imperial relationship did the metropole formalize the relationship through military interventions, annexation, or proclamation of a protectorate.

The final stage of European imperialism, most identifiable with the partitioning of Africa and Asia, resulted from difficulties in maintaining an informal relationship with the periphery. Because of cultural differences, lack of collaborationist elites, and a non-westernized political and economic system in these areas, European imperialists could not maintain informal control beneficial to themselves without a high cost. As historian Ronald Robinson argues, “in these polymorphic societies, the institutional barriers to Europeanization proved intractable.”<sup>18</sup> Thus, they were forced to exert a formal control through military occupation in the late 1800s.

Current historiography places the annexation of Hawaii in this third form, but when examining the development of the relationship between the United States and the archipelago, and both nations’ transition through the international structure of the nineteenth century, it becomes difficult to agree with this assessment. The United States and Hawaii had different but intertwined experiences within this imperial hierarchy. In the first half of the nineteenth century, when the formal relationship between the United States and Hawaii began, the United States was still a second-tier nation and Hawaii a third-tier.

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 277.

This standing in the world system created a unique situation for both nations to assert themselves within the hierarchy while benefiting from a relationship with each other. When the New England missionaries arrived in Honolulu, they were able to establish a strong rapport with the Hawaiian ruling elites, which then opened the door for the creation of a collaborative and mutually exploitative relationship between the United States and Hawaii. Because both Hawaii and the United States were not first-tier nations at the beginning of their relationship, there was a much larger degree of collaboration, which eventually changed over time as their international status shifted. Washington provided both security to Honolulu against European aggression and trade agreements more favorable to the archipelago than itself, in exchange for access to the islands ports and influence in its foreign relations. This arrangement granted Hawaii protection from the formal imperial intrusions made by England and France in the Pacific while providing the monetary resources to develop its position in the international capitalist system. The United States, in return, was able to establish a standing in the Pacific region to ensure future access without endangering its development by taking on the imperial responsibility and expense too soon. As the United States' position in the world system improved, and Hawaii's weakened, the islands' relationship with Washington became more dependent.

It is this seventy-year relationship that explains the annexation of Hawaii. Originally a point of interest economically for whalers, Hawaii had been the site of American immigration since 1820 when New England Protestant missionaries arrived to Christianize the native Hawaiians. Following shortly behind were speculators and failing businessmen looking for lucrative new investments which they found in plantation farming. By the late 1840s, their influence, along with the British and French, inspired changes in the economy, land tenure system, and form of government on the islands, sparking greater interests from foreign powers.

These American settlers became increasingly more influential over the monarchy and economy and urged the native government to accept a stronger relationship with Washington. These men, who came to the islands on their own and were not directly connected to Washington, worked closely with or in some instances became the collaborators in the informal imperial relationship and began to push the United States to take an interest in the future of the islands.

Under this persuasion from these Americans on the periphery, Washington began its involvement in Hawaii to keep from being left out of the Pacific imperial impulse and to ensure American interests on the islands against European imperialism. In 1842, President John Tyler and Secretary of State Daniel Webster extended recognition of independence to the islands accompanied by the protection of the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>19</sup> American foreign policy toward Hawaiian thereafter consisted of a belief that the archipelago was important to America's future in the Pacific and should remain sovereign but largely under U.S. influence. Because missionary and business interests increased on the island, some Americans, however, saw Hawaii as a virtual colony of the United States and insisted that the islands would inevitably become part of the United States. In a way, the United States reserved its right to Hawaii by extending recognition and offering protection to the islands until it was in a position to compete with the first-tier nations for this imperial possession. It was not until after the Civil War, the full industrialization of the North, and an American mastery of the tools of empire, that the United States was able to enter into its first-tier status and embark on an imperial path abroad.

During these same decades, Hawaii attempted to enter the international political arena and make its way up from the third-tier while maintaining its independence. Unfortunately,

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<sup>19</sup> Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth Century America* (New York: Hill and Wand, 2011). The Monroe Doctrine can be seen as an articulated policy by the United States reserving the western hemisphere for itself while working toward its first nation capabilities. This argument can even explain why Washington held so tightly to the non-entangling alliance policy to avoid placing itself in a position of possible dependency or subjugation before building its own strength.

whereas the United States had the manpower and natural resources to move from a colony to a first-tier nation in a little over a century, Hawaii did not. When the first Europeans arrived in the archipelago, the native leaders embraced the technology and ideas brought by their visitors and were able to maintain their sovereignty. However, as increasing numbers of foreigners arrived and settled, native authority weakened in comparison to foreign military and economic power. Combined with a decreasing population of natives due to diseases and a lack of natural resources necessary to industrialize and militarize, the Hawaiian government's authority could not completely maintain its autonomy. In an attempt to postpone or even avert a loss of independence, King Kamehameha III negotiated protection agreements with most of the European nations and the United States, using these agreements to counterbalance the foreign nations. Once international autonomy was tenuously guaranteed, Hawaii was able to focus on its economic growth. From 1850 to 1893, developing the economy became the priority for the majority of the native and foreign elites on the islands.

Many non-native (*haole*)<sup>20</sup> residents and several members of the native ruling class of Hawaii began to work with Washington to accomplish this growth by establishing a strong economic and security dependence on the United States. They controlled most of the agricultural production of Hawaii and were instrumental in negotiating trade agreements with the United States that ensured the connection between the nations. By the late 1880s, Hawaii had become a virtual dependency of the United States, which was happy to maintain this informal control, which provided access to markets and harbors while leaving the difficulties of governance to the native monarchy.

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<sup>20</sup> *Haole* is the native Hawaiian term for foreigner and was used in reference to all non-Pacific Islanders living on the Islands. Because this dissertation discusses foreigners from several countries, I will use the term *haole* when referring to the American and European foreigners as a collective group. They will be differentiated by their country of origin when necessary.

So what changed in the 1890s to lead to the overthrow and annexation? The internal political and economic development in Hawaii led to instability in the latter half of the nineteenth century, which threatened the control of the *haole* elites and their influence over the native collaborators on the islands. In the 1840s, King Kamehameha III created a constitutional monarchy, which introduced democracy to the island natives. In the beginning, the Hawaiians were unfamiliar with participatory government, having only known absolute monarchy, and were therefore, not active in government. This provided an opening for foreign men to take an active role in government and ingrain themselves into the islands ruling elite. They were then able to encourage and manipulate the Hawaiian government into a closer relationship with the United States. By the late 1880s, however, the natives had gained a thorough understanding of the political system and strong political parties formed to challenge the control of the collaborationist *haole*. Hawaii had also become sufficiently dependent on U.S. trade to sustain its economic growth, which made it vulnerable to the whims and inconsistency of the American economy. When Liliuokalani ascended to the throne, she inherited a highly partisan legislature, an economy foundering under the McKinley Tariff, and a native constituency unhappy with the constitutional system her brother had acquiesced to under pressure from the collaborationists. After two years of heavy partisan fighting, the queen gave in to native pressure and announced her intention to promulgate a new constitution.

Between the partisan political infighting, which stalled governmental effectiveness, and the reassertion of power by the native queen, the economic elites on the islands became threatened and reacted. They weighed their options to determine the best course of action to sustain their control over the islands, thus securing their wealth and status. Ultimately, they concluded that formal annexation to the United States would solidify their position against native

and non-white foreign challenges, while guaranteeing the economic stability of the islands, and thus their investments. It was this group of individuals — comprised mainly of naturalized immigrants from America, Britain, and Germany and first and second generation Hawaiian-born whites —who overthrew the queen and applied for annexation, forcing the United States to decide whether it was ready to take on a formal imperial possession beyond the North American continent.

When placed in the international context described above, a more nuanced understanding of the Hawaiian annexation emerges which challenges many of the accepted interpretations of the coup. First, the cadre of individuals who overthrew Liliuokalani was not just a group of Americans who dethroned the queen in an aggressive American move. Rather, these men were attempting to preserve their informal control over the islands against an increasingly antagonistic native and foreign population during a highly partisan internal struggle for power. The queen's attempt to bring about a new constitution became the symbolic expression of the threat to the elites, which in their eyes warranted action.

Second, while Minister Stevens did bring troops ashore during the coup, he was actually following established precedent used several times in Hawaii's history by both the American and British navies. This policy to ensure the safety and property of American and British citizens in times of rebellion or riot in Honolulu derived from the original offers of protection established in the 1840s. In fact, by the 1890s, Washington had been engaging in an increasingly interventionist foreign policy in Latin America and the Pacific under the Monroe Doctrine, by suppressing the political or social disorder which threatened the stability of native governments and thus U.S. trade.<sup>21</sup> The minister's actions did play a psychological role that favored the

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<sup>21</sup> Michael H. Hunt, *Ideologies of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 105-106.

conspirators, who implied to the queen that the troops stood in favor of their actions, but upon investigation of the statements, these marines had no intentions of assisting either side.

Finally, by examining the overthrow of the monarchy from this perspective, Washington's decision to annex Hawaii becomes less aggressive and more reactionary. When the members of the Committee of Thirteen<sup>22</sup> arrived in San Francisco with news of their coup and a proposal of annexation, they forced open a debate in the United States. These men engaged in a five-year propaganda campaign, meeting with any willing government official and plotting with pro-annexationist Americans, to gain the needed numbers in the Senate to formalize the treaty.

Thus, the Hawaiian annexation question was not the result of a psychic crisis, but greatly contributed to it as debates in Congress over the treaty reflected a confusion over national identity and the interpretation of America's own past.<sup>23</sup> Physical aggrandizement of land had remained relatively dormant since the Civil War—with the exception of Secretary of State William H. Seward's purchase of Alaska, which was labeled a “folly.” The discussion over the Hawaiian proposal forced the public and the politicians to readdress the idea of expansion, which contributed so greatly to the near destruction of the nation. This also led to a debate over the problems of governing over other peoples, which forced Americans to rethink the way they looked at themselves and their past.

Consequently, the annexation of Hawaii was not the result of an aggressive move by the United States to gain coaling stations or foreign markets, nor was it a means of mending a

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<sup>22</sup> The Committee of Thirteen was a group of men, actually comprised of about nineteen men, who secretly agreed to take action to overthrow the queen and apply for annexation. A more thorough explanation can be found in chapter four.

<sup>23</sup> For a discussion on the concepts of identity formation between the periphery and metropole see: Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Peter van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001). While both deal with British imperialism in India, their theoretical analysis of the transnational interactions and influences are useful in understanding the process of national identity formation in an imperial context.

psychic wound. Rather, the acquisition was the result of seventy years of foreign policy decisions by two nations attempting to find their place in the international system. Those decisions led to an increasingly dependent relationship linking Hawaii's stability to the U.S. economy and the United States' world power status to its access to Hawaiian ports. Finally, the formal step of annexation was a reaction to events in the periphery brought on by a small group of elites attempting to preserve their personal status. These men forced Washington to confront the final obstacle in the United States' rise to first-tier status, its own reluctance to take on the burdens and responsibilities of an imperial policy abroad.

## Chapter 1

### The “Big Fish” and the “All-Sided Men,” The Foundation of American Interests in Hawaii

“If a big wave comes in,” warned Hawaiian scholar David Malo, “large and unfamiliar fishes will come from the dark ocean and when they see the small fishes of the shallows they will eat them up.” As he observed the large tidal wave of “white man’s ships” arriving with “clever men from the big countries” who “know our people are few in number and our country is small,” Malo prophesied that, “they will devour us.”<sup>1</sup> Educated by American Protestant missionaries on the islands, Malo understood firsthand the overwhelming dominance western nations could inflict on small islands. He had witnessed escalating numbers of American and European merchants and speculators entering Hawaiian shores and grew increasingly concerned about the future of his native people. Reading of the repeated annexations of the Pacific nations — for example, New Zealand, Tahiti, and the Marquesas Islands — he believed it a matter of time before his homeland would be swallowed up like Jonah in the whale.

The big fish Malo feared the most were Great Britain, France, and the United States. Since the British Naval Captain James Cook first came to the islands in 1778, the non-native population of Hawaii had increased sharply, profoundly affecting its development as a nation and its security as a sovereign state. British merchants and naval officers were the first to infiltrate the islands and the government, and up to the 1840s, were the most influential power over the

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<sup>1</sup>Malo to Kaahumanu II and Mathew, Aug. 18, 1837, cited in Gavin Daws, *Shoal of Time: A History of the Hawaiian Islands* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1968), 106.

Kamehamehas. That situation slowly began to change after 1820 when American missionaries arrived at the archipelago. First engaging in Christianizing efforts, they began investing in the burgeoning mercantilist economy and encouraging the monarchy to welcome American investments in agricultural development. The French joined in on the missionary activities by the 1830s, challenging the Protestants. This growing foreign resident population, known as *haole*, continually fought with each other for influence over the monarchy while challenging the autonomous rule of the kings and chiefs over the non-native population.

In the beginning, Hawaii was one of the locations targeted by European imperialism, but it did not fall under the control of any one nation because of the unique circumstances in the Islands. By the early nineteenth century, and following the revolutions in North and South America, European imperialism began to shift into an informal mode. First-tier nations England and France began to use their economic and military superiority to subjugate much of the Pacific islands through informal means. Hawaii was one of those locations.

Hawaii's importance to these larger powers began with its location and participation in both the Pacific mercantilist trade and the whaling industry, which placed the islands in a position of interest. As more British, French, and American private citizens immigrated and invested in the islands, each nation's involvement in and interference with the political evolution of the monarchy increased. Because each brought its own conceptions of proper government and economy, struggles among these foreigners over legal, moral, and economic issues sparked repeated controversies. These individuals hoped to assert influence and partial control over the islands by using the existing native government to their advantage through extra-legal privileges, but the native government and the other foreign powers resisted, often resulting in naval officers and official foreign representatives brandishing threats of occupation.

The Hawaiian monarchs were not hapless victims in all of this and embraced many of the foreigners and their ideas, even while sharing Malo's fears of the big fish. Starting with Kamehameha I, the native rulers welcomed these men and women who introduced new technologies in ship building and warfare, as well as wealth to the islands through trade and whaling. The king knew that employing these advances would greatly improve his chances of succeeding in his ultimate goal of unifying the Pacific islands. Conversely, his successors recognized that, while these foreigners were valuable in developing Hawaii, they also posed a danger to the independence of the monarchy by demanding special privileges and threatening violence.

When constant struggle between American, French, and British settlers on the islands exposed the need for changes to the existing economic and political system to secure Hawaiian autonomy, the monarchy took steps toward change. Kamehameha III grasped the importance of gaining recognition as an independent nation-state to secure Hawaii's place in the international arena. He conceded the need to rely on foreign residents for advice and education on westernized theories of economics and politics to ensure that Hawaii could engage these foreign nations on a more equal footing. At the same time, he also recognized that incorporating these individuals into his government opened the door to increasing interference from their home countries, which he did not have the military capabilities to repel.

As a result, establishing Hawaii's independence became the focal point of Kamehameha III's reign by collaborating with the western powers while instituting internal changes to guarantee international security. He introduced constitutional monarchy and a capitalist economic system to the islands in an effort to gain nation-state status. Secondly, he endeavored to gain a tri-partite agreement guaranteeing the physical sovereignty of the archipelago from

European and American aggression. Finally, he proposed formal trade agreements more beneficial to the archipelago and engaged foreign investors in business ventures that challenged the traditional Hawaiian culture, all to increase the development of the island's economy.

These changes, and the unique circumstances of the development of the island nation, helped to prolong Hawaii's independence. First, because foreign interest in the islands began with private citizens from Great Britain, the United States, and France, by the time their governments followed, all were heavily invested in the islands and none were willing to risk war with the other to subjugate the archipelago. Thus, Hawaii was able to maintain its autonomy by gaining protection agreements from England, France, and the United States.

Second, Native Hawaiian property rights were somewhat recognized by the foreign residents, a practice rarely observed by imperialist powers. This is one of the most unique aspects of Hawaiian history. The native population was a farming and fishing based society and was already utilizing the land when the Europeans arrived. Because westernized conceptions of land ownership were heavily connected to cultivation, most of the European and American settlers were inclined to recognize Hawaiian rights to the land, where they had not been in areas inhabited by nomadic tribes.<sup>2</sup> Most of the disputes between the monarch and foreign residents were related to his land tenure policy. It was not until the missionaries introduced Kamehameha III to the possibilities in plantation farming with large investment capital that the king opened land ownership to foreigners.

Third, in a formal imperial relationship, the developed nation uses the periphery for profit, extracting surplus wealth back to the metropole and leaving the former under-developed.

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<sup>2</sup>For an interesting discussion of the unique circumstances of the recognition of Hawaiian land ownership in contrast to the disregard for the Native American and the Australian Aborigine see Stuart Banner, "Preparing to Be Colonized: Land Tenure and Legal Strategy in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii," *Law & Society Review*, vol. 39, no. 2 (June, 2005), 273-314.

In Hawaii, while most of the surplus wealth was not in the hands of the native Hawaiians, it stayed in the islands and was reinvested in agricultural production. This arrangement created several generations of *haole* citizens with strong connections to the islands, and strong devotion to its survival.<sup>3</sup>

Finally, the ruling *Aliʻi* class of the islands willingly collaborated with the European and American visitors in exchange for advances in technology and economics. When the first British ships landed on the shores of Hawaii, they found a set of non-integrated islands run by feuding chiefs. These natives embraced the weapons and sailing technologies introduced by the foreigners as a means of improving their warring abilities. Among the most inquisitive of these rulers was a young Kamehameha, who would later use these new military techniques to unite the archipelago under his rule.<sup>4</sup>

Within these special circumstances, Americans arrived on the islands and began to play a significant role in Kamehameha III's efforts. Manley Hopkins, an Englishman traveling in Hawaii, called these Americans "all-sided men."<sup>5</sup> They took on multiple roles in their new surroundings, often operating as representatives of the United States while also serving their self-interests in business ventures, speculation, and missionary work. They often came to the archipelago on specific business, but branched out as opportunity presented itself. The most important among them were the missionaries who encouraged the monarch to resist the imperial

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<sup>3</sup>For a discussion on Under-development and World System theories see Paul Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1957); A. G. Frank, *Capitalism and Under-development in Latin American* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969).

<sup>4</sup>Ralph S. Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom, vol. 1, Foundation and Transformation* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1938), 1-51.

<sup>5</sup>Hopkins was an English gentleman sojourner in Hawaii in the early 1840s who observed and wrote about the political and social changes in the Islands. He referred to Peter Brinsmade as "one of those rapid, intelligent, all-sided men which the social hot-bed of the United States produces so quickly and in such numbers- a man who, if his practice as a surgeon fell off, would turn merchant; if he failed in that, would become an editor..." Manley Hopkins, *Hawaii: The Past, Present and Future of its Island-Kingdom*, 2 ed. (New York: E. Appleton and Co., Grand Street, 1869), 281.

efforts of the European settlers. They created a public education system, in which Kamehameha III was a student. Many of them became his closest advisors, writing the first constitution for the kingdom and serving as translators for his international negotiations. American merchants and businessmen also played a significant role in diversifying the economy and encouraging foreign investments.

This group of Americans became the collaborators in the informal imperial relationship with the United States, but they also played a significant role in creating that relationship in the first place. Prior to the 1840s, Washington's involvement with Hawaii remained minimal and largely reactionary, but when England and France began threatening the sovereignty of the islands, and subsequently the all-sided men's influence and economic investments, they began to push Washington to take a more pronounced stance in this relationship. They urged the native government to move closer to the United States while soliciting the U.S. government to take an active role in protecting the archipelago from European aggression. Many Americans sent petitions to Washington while encouraging the monarchy to make direct appeals; many often served as representatives of the monarchy in negotiating and establishing formal treaty relations.

These actions by the all-sided men, coupled with increasing imperial efforts of the European powers in the Polynesian islands, made Washington take notice and become concerned that without ensuring Hawaiian sovereignty, the United States would be completely excluded from the Pacific Rim. Still a middle-tier nation with many internal and international concerns of its own, however, the United States was not in a position to engage in formal imperialism in the Pacific. As a result, President John Tyler and Secretary of State Daniel Webster instituted the first official U.S. policy in 1842 by extending the protections of the Monroe Doctrine to include the Hawaiian Islands, thus hoping to stave off European acquisition until Washington was in a

better position to compete. Hawaii's evolving relationship with the United States at this stage remained friendly and protective throughout the 1840s, and was largely the result of both nations responding to threats from foreign powers and their standing in the international hierarchy.

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International interest in Hawaii originated in the late eighteenth century with the whaling and fishing industry, and transitioned into a lucrative sandalwood trade by the 1820s. These industries drew many European and New England vessels, which resulted in the increasing integration of the islands into the global mercantilist system as a major commercial and supply port on the trade and fishing route between the North, Central and South American coasts and East Asia. This new status sparked international interest in Hawaii and threatened the autonomy of the island nation, while also affecting significant changes in its culture, economy, and government.<sup>6</sup>

The first Americans to arrive on the islands were part of this economic burst. Six-sevenths of the world's whaling business occurred in the north Pacific and most of these vessels visited Hawaii for re-provisioning. Of the 1,700 whaling ships to visit Honolulu between 1824 and 1843, 1,400 were from New England while only 300 were British.<sup>7</sup> Since England had been the primary external influence over monarchical decisions before 1820, these numbers reflected the shifting Hawaiian reliance on the United States. This phenomenon also led to an increased encouragement of immoral behavior, which caused great consternation for the second group of Americans who landed in Hawaii.

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<sup>6</sup>For an in-depth account of Hawaii's economic status see, Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1: 82-100. See also Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1-4; Sally Engle Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i: The Cultural Power of Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 21-22.

<sup>7</sup>Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3.

The turning point for United States came in 1820 when the *Thaddeus* arrived from Boston carrying missionaries from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). These individuals did not purposely set out to bring the islands under the control of the United States. They were motivated by the goal of Christianizing and civilizing the natives and were armed with their cultural, political, and religious beliefs steeped in New England Protestant democratic ideology. Their goals began altruistically, attempting to assist the Hawaiians in resisting the imperial intrusion of the Europeans, but their solutions to the problems led Hawaii into a closer relationship with Washington.<sup>8</sup>

The Reverends Hiram Bingham and Asa Thurston, as well as William Richards, Dr. Gerritt P. Judd, and other fellow missionaries, influenced many domestic policy changes in the Islands. First, their success in Christianizing the more influential members of the Kamehameha line led to the implementation of a legal code greatly influenced by Protestant morality. Next, their efforts in creating schools for the royals met with success, placing them in a position to influence the younger generations of leaders. Finally, they generated a written form of the Hawaiian language for the purpose of translating the Bible for natives, and by the mid-1840s, started the first native language newspaper to disseminate important political and legal information. As a result, the missionaries had a profound effect on the future of Hawaii, becoming a powerful source of information and advice for the natives. This relationship grew in importance to the monarchy as increasing interaction with the west began to threaten the archipelago's independence.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>“Memorial of the Hawaiian Mission,” July 1836, cited in Hiram Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands: or the Civil, Religious, and Political History of Those Islands*, 2 ed. (New York: Sherman Converse, 1848), 490-95.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, 152- 173; Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 32-33; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:105.

Another influential American, Peter Allen Brinsmade, was a business partner of the firm Ladd & Company who arrived in 1833 to set up a trade house in Honolulu. A graduate of the Andover Theological Seminary, Brinsmade was an acquaintance of many ABCFM missionaries on the islands. After touring Kauai with Hiram Bingham, Brinsmade became concerned that the missionaries were focusing too much on spreading theology while ignoring the secular Christian lifestyle. Looking through the lens of the Protestant work ethic, he believed that the “feudal system” in Hawaii undermined the natives’ incentive to work and severely hindered the civilizing process. This was an idea employed by the missionary’s predecessors who set up plantations in Ireland and New England for the purpose of civilizing and Christianizing through example.<sup>10</sup> As a result, Ladd and Company convinced King Kamehameha III to grant them a large tract of land on Kauai to create the first sugar plantation.<sup>11</sup>

This plantation became an experiment in altering the political economy of Hawaii by challenging the traditional land system and by introducing free labor capitalism. The original system, which some historians have labeled feudalism, more closely resembled the Native American relationship to the earth. While there were chiefs who governed the lands and received tribute from natives in the form of labor, this was not a relationship designed to accumulate wealth. Each native was required to work the land, fish, or do repairs on designated days based on his or her station, but it was the chief’s responsibility to protect and provide for the people while managing the resources and setting restrictions to protect the land and ocean. The chief did not own the land, but he was responsible for its care; if he failed, he was deposed. The natives

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<sup>10</sup>For a larger discussion of the significance of plantation settlements to cultural imperialism see Nicholas Canny, “Great Britain,” *The Imperial Moment*, ed. Kimberly Kagan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 67-69.

<sup>11</sup>Paul T. Burlin, *Imperial Maine and Hawaii* (Lanham: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), 23-29.

shared the responsibilities equally and lived on the resources of the land semi-communally.<sup>12</sup> European and American settlers had difficulty understanding and accepting this land system, still prizing private property as the foundation of a civilized society. This cultural difference in conceptions of ownership led to repeated disagreements between foreign governments and the Hawaiian monarchy.

Brinsmade proposed a change in this tradition that would satisfy the western desire to cultivate the land, while offering a means of releasing the natives from their subordinate station. Kamehameha III allowed the firm to hire natives to work for wages and exempted those employees from their feudal obligations to the local chiefs. The missionaries supported Brinsmade's plan, hoping to create a native yeomanry who would remain in the countryside, away from the corrupting influence of whaler and merchant marines in the port cities.<sup>13</sup> It also proved to be the foundation of what would become an agricultural plantation economy by the 1890s.

The success of the venture proved to the missionaries that they needed to shift their agenda to include education in politics and economics. Bingham believed that such an education would give the natives knowledge required to be more productive members of both society and the economy. The missionaries proposed the idea to the ABCFM through a memorial delivered to Boston by one of the most influential members, William Richards, who a few years later resigned from the ABCFM to become a close advisor to Kamehameha III.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 40; William DeWitt Alexander, "A Brief History of Land Titles in the Hawaiian Kingdom," *Hawaiian Almanac and Annual for 1891* (Honolulu: Press Publishing Co., 1890), 105; Moses N. Nakuina, *The Wind Gourd of La'amaomao*, translated by Esther T. Mookini and Sarah Nākoa (Honolulu: Kalamakū Press, 2005), 14-37.

<sup>13</sup>James Jackson Jarves, *Scenes and Scenery in the Sandwich Islands, and a Trip Through Central America: Being Observations from My Notebook During the Years 1837-1842* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1843), 100-102.

<sup>14</sup>Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-One Years*, 492-94.

This was the beginning of a transformation in Hawaii that would lead to American ascendancy on the islands. These individuals inspired the creation of an education system heavily steeped in American ideology, which subsequently instructed most of the Hawaiians from 1840 to their annexation in 1898. They also introduced plantation farming, which ultimately became the base of the archipelago's economy by the 1860s. Furthermore, these men, and many more like them, became prominent members of society and influential participants in government. Their intent was not to subjugate the islands, but they inadvertently laid the foundation of American interests on the islands upon which their offspring would gain control.

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As the monarchy embraced these changes inspired by the missionaries, the secular foreign interests on the island continued to threaten the archipelago's autonomy. American and European merchants began criticizing the original monarchical system for its arbitrary rule over Hawaiian natives and foreign residents. These *haole* repeatedly challenged the chiefs and king, often violating the island's sovereignty. Problems with unpaid debts and an unstable land lease system caused a series of altercations with Americans and Europeans, leading to foreign vessels entering Honolulu harbor to push the merchants' claims against the king's purse. As a third-tier nation, Kamehameha III lacked military power so he and his regents gave in to foreign demands, resulting in repeated treaties granting special legal privileges to British, French, and American residents and greatly depleting the royal authority and leading the nation into an informal imperial relationship with all three nations.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 35-36.

There are several examples of this development in the early 1800s. For instance, the king accumulated large debts to American and British merchants on the islands on which he repeatedly deferred payment. As early as 1826, American and English warships periodically arrived, usually by threatening occupation, but failed to change the king's perceptions of debt and repayment. Then, in the 1830s, as the Hawaiian legal system began to develop, naval captains also began to press for special legal treatment of their fellow countrymen, including trial by jury of their foreign peers. In 1836, British Consul Richard Charlton argued with the monarchy over private property rights, culminating several times in a British warship threatening "to blow down the fort unless the chiefs will give up their right of soil."<sup>16</sup>

Three years later, in 1839, French captain Cyrille Laplace of the *Artemise* arrived in Honolulu with several demands protecting French missionaries and liquor. He used the threat of violence to pressure the Hawaiian government to guarantee freedom of religion for Catholics missionaries and to ensure the importation of brandy and wine by the church. Believing the prohibition on both to be the result of American missionary influence, he threatened to treat them as belligerents along with the Hawaiian government. The French goal was to protect their own citizens abroad, but these demands forced the monarchy to overturn prohibition laws passed to safeguard the natives from alcoholism.<sup>17</sup> In all these cases, the Hawaiian monarch gave in to the demands of the more powerful foreign navies to assure the safety of the citizens of Honolulu.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Rev. J. S. Green to Rev. Rufus Anderson, Nov. 21, 1836, quoted in footnote, Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:148.

<sup>17</sup>"Report Upon the Official Relations of the United States with the Hawaiian Islands from the First Appointment of a Consular Officer There by this Government," *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1894 Appendix II: Affairs in Hawaii* (1895), 9. (hereafter cited *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*); Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 35-36; Laura Fish Judd, *Honolulu: Sketches of Life: Social, Political, and Religious in the Hawaiian Islands* (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co., 1880), 107. Fish quotes a letter written by Dr. Judd describing the evening when King Kamehameha announced he intended to quit drinking along with his immediate family, including Haalilio who, only months later, accompanied Richards on a diplomatic mission to the U.S. and England.

<sup>18</sup>Harold Whitman Bradley, *The American frontier in Hawaii: the pioneers, 1789-1843* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1942), 315.

In response to these increasing disputes with foreign naval officers, and under the influence of missionaries and businessmen, the king's advisors encouraged the creation of a government embracing the rule of law, replete with a codified and clearly defined legal system and private land ownership. They also urged him to construct a government that conformed to westernized concepts of a nation-state, with a bureaucracy that could assist the monarchy in dealing with international affairs, economic growth, and legal problems arising from foreign settlement. Such a government could then secure Hawaii's independence from European countries through negotiated treaties.

Kamehameha III followed their advice by implementing three important changes. First, he created a cabinet consisting of a Minister of Interior, Minister of Finance, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and an Attorney General. Several of the missionaries agreed to resign their posts with the ABCFM and take positions in this new royal government.<sup>19</sup> In 1839, the king voluntarily proclaimed the Hawaiian Declaration of Rights, similar to the Magna Carta, which granted the natives fishing privileges, property ownership and inheritance, and a regulated tax system. Another significant change curtailed the autonomous rule of the local chiefs by denying the right to promulgate laws without the consent of the national government.<sup>20</sup> The following year, the king and his cabinet signed into law the first Constitution of Hawaii. The new government had three branches, with a representative bicameral advisory legislature allowing natives to participate in the government for the first time.<sup>21</sup>

As the island's government, economy, and culture changed to accommodate the visitors and immigrants from the west and to facilitate easier trade and international relations, the Hawaiian leaders found themselves in a predicament. Each step made to meet foreign demands

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<sup>19</sup>Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:154; Chamberlain, Journal, Aug. 3, 18, 1837, MS, HMCS Library.

<sup>20</sup>Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:160-1; Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i*, 78.

<sup>21</sup>Bradley, *The American frontier in Hawaii*, 168-200.

pushed the Hawaiian government farther from the traditional rules established by Kamehameha I prior to the missionaries' arrival, and led to increasing confusion and apprehension by native Hawaiians. The chiefs and many native subjects resisted the dilution of centralized power, which contradicted traditional native cultural relationships between the people and the earthly representatives of the gods: the chiefs.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, many of the laws associated with this new constitutional government rested on the religious tenets of the missionaries. As natives resisted adherence to these laws, *haole* residents misinterpreted their defiance as evidence of their inability to participate in proper government.

Kamehameha III recognized the need to enact changes to interact with foreign countries on an equal footing and to minimize altercations with these residents, but he knew that his native subjects lacked the education to run the new institutions. He had to rely on foreigners. This arrangement was to be temporary, until native Hawaiians obtained the knowledge necessary to fulfill these roles. *Haoles* were required to take an oath of loyalty to the king to gain naturalization, and many signed a creed declaring their intent to preserve the monarchy from white domination.<sup>23</sup> Many missionaries filled these positions, including William Richards, Dr. Gerrit P. Judd, Richard Armstrong, and Lorrin Andrews. They hoped to bring to the islands the ideas of the enlightenment, with the enumeration of citizenship rights, representative government, and restrictions on absolute monarchy, and they managed to influence the creation of a new Constitution, a judicial system, land reform, and a public school system.

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<sup>22</sup>Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 39-41.

<sup>23</sup>*Representatives of Minister of Foreign Relations*, 1855, Appendix, pp. 118-123, Archives of Hawaii (hereafter AH)

In doing these things, the king faced great resistance from the people who either did not understand the changes or feared the repercussions.<sup>24</sup> By the mid 1840s, native Hawaiians began showing disapproval of the influx of naturalized foreigners holding offices, including the four cabinet positions, by protesting through prayer meetings, letters to the native language newspapers, and petitions to the king and legislature.<sup>25</sup> David Malo was one of the more vocal natives, petitioning the king to dismiss all foreigners from his government, disallow any more whites from taking the oath of loyalty, and return the islands to the form of government established by his father Kamehameha I. The king was forced to respond with a letter to the petitioners explaining that to accommodate the new circumstances of Hawaii's position, he had to appoint these foreigners to office "as a means of finding out all the advantages that exist in the great Governments," because the natives "do not understand fully the principles of action which exist in the great countries to whose family we have been admitted."<sup>26</sup> Thus, as constitutionalism took hold of the islands as a means of securing native autonomy, American and English immigrants began filling the bureaucratic roles in place of Hawaiians they deemed incapable of governance. By 1851, forty-eight foreigners held governmental positions.<sup>27</sup>

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Even with these changes, British and French naval officers and consuls continued to threaten the autonomy of the archipelago and Americans living on the islands grew increasingly irritated with European interference and the lack of assistance from Washington. They began

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<sup>24</sup>Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:259-262; Report of Attorney General Ricord, printed in *Polynesian*, June 14, 1854.

<sup>25</sup>Jonathan Kay kamakawiwo'ole Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui: A History of the Hawaiian Nation to 1887* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 24-31; Brown to Buchannan, Aug. 23, 1845, No. 36, vol. 3, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>26</sup> Kamehameha III to the Petitioners as Lahaina, reprinted in Judd, *Honolulu: Sketches of Life*, 145-6.

<sup>27</sup>Merry, *Colonizing Hawai'i*, 82-84; Gerrit P. Judd IV, *Hawaii: an Informal History* (London: Collier-MacMillan Ltd., 1961), 71-73.

urging Washington to establish a Pacific policy. The missionaries in Honolulu wrote a memorial to the U.S. Congress, protesting the discriminatory practices of Captain LaPlace and requesting protection from the French. Presented to New Jersey Representative, and member of the ABCFM, Peter Dumont Vroom, the document was referred to the state department, which laid it aside.<sup>28</sup>

With the lack of response to their petition, these Americans in Honolulu then engaged in lobbyist activities in Washington and prompted national propaganda campaigns to increase support in the United States.<sup>29</sup> Usually encouraged by members of the ABCFM, American merchants and speculators wrote news articles and letters to the editors repeatedly calling for U.S. involvement and protection. Many of the stories circulating in the United States were reprints coming from two Hawaiian newspapers, the *Hawaiian Spectator* and the *Polynesian*. The Sandwich Island Institute published the *Spectator* as a means to promote intellectual endeavors on the archipelago. Its editor was Peter Brinsmade, a principal partner in the Ladd and Company land speculation firm from Kauai mentioned earlier. *The Polynesian* was published by James Jackson Jarves, a failed businessman who came to Hawaii for health reasons and emerged as an important figure in Hawaiian foreign affairs, serving as a special commissioner to the United States. Contributors to these two publications wrote extensively about the repeated offenses of the British and French against the independence of Hawaii and highlighted a looming threat to American interests on the islands.<sup>30</sup>

American newspapers picked up these stories and often gave their interpretations of the events and Washington's need to respond. The *Vermont Chronicle* questioned how long

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<sup>28</sup>Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii*, 315.

<sup>29</sup>For an in-depth discussion on nationalizing currents in American expansion, see Arrell Morgan Gibson, *Yankees in Paradise: The Pacific Basin Frontier* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993), 347-77.

<sup>30</sup>Bradley, *The American Frontier in Hawaii*, 262-65.

Washington would tolerate French mistreatment of American missionaries on the islands before acting. “They are American citizens,” claimed the paper, “and no power on earth can rightfully disfranchise them or deny their claims to equal protection with other American citizens.”<sup>31</sup> When the French repeatedly accused the Protestant missionaries of exerting too much influence over the crown and held them responsible for the prohibitions on alcohol and Catholic schools in Hawaii,<sup>32</sup> the *North American and Daily Advertiser* commented, “A more atrocious outrage than that recorded below, has never disgraced an enlightened nation.”<sup>33</sup>

The greatest offense discussed in the newspapers seemed to be the action of French captain LaPlace in threatening American missionaries along with the Hawaiian government while offering protection to British residents.<sup>34</sup> A concerned Pennsylvanian felt that it was an “unparalleled outrage” against the “Sandwich islanders and on the American Missionaries... [and] must be looked upon with the greatest horror and detestation by every friend to the government and the people.”<sup>35</sup> The *Ohio Observer* called on U.S. government officials to “show, by their action in this case, that a class of citizens of the U. States, who do more for the Honor and commercial prosperity of the country abroad than any other, are not the last to experience its protecting care.”<sup>36</sup> A Vermont editor complained that, “Although American citizenship was especially outraged, this affair seems to attract earlier notice in London than at Washington.”<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>“Sandwich Islands,” *Vermont Chronicle*, (Bellows Falls, VT) Wed., Jan. 29, 1840; p. 18; Issue 5; col C.

<sup>32</sup>Emile Perrin to Wyllie, March 20, 1851, No. 20, enclosure in Luther Severance to Daniel Webster, March 31, 1851, No. 8, confidential, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA..

<sup>33</sup>“We are now enabled to present a full and authentic account of the outrage committed by a French vessel at the Sandwich Islands in July last” (Editorial), *The North American and Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia, PA) Wed., Jan. 29, 1840; Issue 264; col A.

<sup>34</sup>LaPlace to American Consul, reprinted in “We are now ...,” Wednesday, Jan. 29, 1840; *House Journal*, May 18, 1840, 26 Cong., 1 Sess., 944.

<sup>35</sup>A Subscriber, “The Sandwich Islands,” *The North American and Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia, PA), Feb. 24, 1840; Issue 286; col F.

<sup>36</sup>C.L., “Sandwich Islands,” *The Ohio Observer*, (Hudson, OH) Thurs., Apr. 23, 1840; Issue 46; col E.

<sup>37</sup>“The French at the Sandwich Islands,” *Vermont Chronicle* (Bellows Falls, VT), Wed., May 6, 1840, 75; Issue 19; col B.

The *Mississippi Free Trader* believed, “The people of this country would sustain Mr. [John]Tyler in any remonstrance which he might make against this outrageous act.”<sup>38</sup>

While American newspapers debated Washington’s lack of response to European offenses against American citizens, the Hawaiian rulers began to realize that a declaration of rights and a new constitution were still not enough to safeguard Hawaiian independence from increasing European interest. Furthermore, the king and many influential American and British entrepreneurs wanted to improve the economic viability of the islands by seeking foreign investment capital. Before private financiers would agree to invest, they needed assurances that their assets would be secure against foreign seizure. Thus, Hawaii needed official international recognition as an independent nation-state as well as a formal assurance of protection from all powers. The king decided to send representatives to each western power to negotiate such agreements.

American missionaries living in Hawaii had already made several attempts to garner attention from the United States, but Washington continued to show little interest. First, the ABCFM sent Congress the memorial signed by thirty-eight missionaries in Hawaii, protesting French aggression and asking for legislation protecting American interests in the future.<sup>39</sup> The commission then sent its most prominent Hawaiian missionary, Hiram Bingham, to urge the president to protect the fledgling nation from French colonial aggression while it continued to make progress toward civilization. He met with President Tyler and Secretary of State Daniel Webster. As Bingham observed, the Hawaiian nation “is but a youth taken from the filth and rags of heathenism, washed and trimmed, supplied with clothes and books, and endowed with a healthy and manly constitution,” but he judged it “unable to form a mature, symmetrical, and

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<sup>38</sup>“If any act of daring robbery and piratical baseness,” *Mississippi Free Trader and Natchez Daily Gazette* (Natchez, MS), May 27, 1843; Issue 124; col A.

<sup>39</sup>Bradley, *The American frontier in Hawaii*, 315; *House Journal*, May 18, 1840, 26 Cong., 1 Sess., 944.

efficient character, without the influence of good society.” The islands needed “the correct example and counsels of the older and more mature nations of the earth,” and those nations “ought, in their wisdom, to be willing to give it, while its true foster parent... still watches over its progress.”<sup>40</sup> Bingham’s interviews had no immediate impact on U.S. policy.

A year later, in March 1842, Peter Brinsmade, as acting U.S. commercial agent, attempted to influence Washington toward a closer relationship with Hawaii. On a business trip to the United States and Europe, he delivered a letter from Kamehameha III requesting the United States join Great Britain and France in a treaty guaranteeing Hawaiian independence. After failing to garner an interview with the president, meeting with an undersecretary instead, Brinsmade wrote a letter to Webster introducing the magnitude of an independent Hawaii to the United States. He told the secretary of state of the growing preponderance of American residents on the islands and explained the importance of an independent government to the stability and security of their property. Claiming that most of the improvements in Hawaii were the direct result of American efforts, he argued that U.S. prosperity and influence would continue indefinitely “should the Government not pass into other hand.” Brinsmade also highlighted the geopolitical significance of the archipelago, especially because “political changes are almost certain to occur soon in the territory of California.” He insisted that the future of the west coast was directly connected to Hawaii. He then discussed the value of the islands in opening Asia, where preserving Hawaiian sovereignty would ensure American access to ports and communications lines.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Bingham, *Residence of Twenty-One Years*, 579.

<sup>41</sup>Edward Everett to Daniel Webster, July 1, 1842, No. 16, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 108; Brinsmade to Tyler, Apr. 8, 1842, in Kenneth E. Shewmaker, ed., *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Diplomatic Papers*, vol. 1, ser. 3 (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1983), 858-65.

Brinsmade's letter stressed the importance of the islands to the United States, but his goal was not altogether altruistic. While he served as commercial agent to the islands, his main objective was to guarantee the independence of the nation and thus private property on the islands, which would enable him to secure foreign investments for his plantation scheme. He had actively sought appointment as American consul to replace John Coffin Jones, who had lost the favor of the majority of the islanders, missionaries, and Pacific fleet officers. Three years earlier, Brinsmade's firm of Ladd and Company devised a scheme that led to a secret agreement with the king to create a joint stock company to cultivate all unoccupied lands in Kauai. To raise the income needed to build the plantations, the king allowed foreign investors to buy into the project. The revenues would be divided equally among Ladd and Company, investors, and the Kingdom.<sup>42</sup> To facilitate greater access to the islands' economic and political leadership, Brinsmade used the assistance of his missionary friends to wrangle the consular position. With Washington's assurance of protection, he and other Americans could then pursue business enterprises with the guarantee that, if any other nation threatened their investments, the United States Navy would protect their interests.

While Brinsmade's efforts accomplished little, failing to even gain a meeting with the secretary of state, another American resident of Hawaii, Henry A. Peirce, made a bigger impact. Peirce had been a resident of the Sandwich Islands since 1826, when he took a position as a clerk for an influential merchant named James Hunnewell. The young apprentice rose to partner before Hunnewell's retirement, then struck out on his own and created one of the most lucrative trading firms on the islands. Well respected by the Hawaiian population, and well-connected in the Massachusetts merchant community, this self-made businessman was able to gain an interview

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<sup>42</sup>Bradley, *The American frontier in Hawaii*, 301-2, 408-10.

with Webster because he did not officially represent any nation. In his meeting with the secretary, he discussed the positive advances in Hawaii and focused on the promise of California to American trade. His extensive travels to Asia and the American coastlines gave him vast knowledge that Webster found useful to the development of U.S. policy in the region. Peirce urged the secretary to consider the future of both California and Hawaii in terms of security, commerce, and European aggression.<sup>43</sup>

All three of these overtures requested the United States government take a more active role in ensuring the sovereignty of the islands from European aggression, but did not necessarily propose a more formal relationship in the form of annexation or official protectorate. The missionaries, in fact, opposed the idea of annexation, hoping to use the threat of American intervention to help the native government maintain its independence. For Brinsmade and Peirce, the main goal was to secure American trade and investments with an independent nation open to international trade.

Commerce played an important role in Webster's decisions regarding Hawaiian policy. Caught in a partisan political fight with the Henry Clay faction in his own Whig party, Webster could not risk completely disregarding Peirce's overture. He needed the support of the Massachusetts based Whigs for political salvation and recognized that ignoring even a minor merchant interest could harm his standing in the party. During the antebellum period, New England merchants had become economic expansionists heavily integrated into the international mercantilist system which was increasingly turning to the Pacific and Asia as the newest source

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<sup>43</sup>Josephine Sullivan, *A History of C. Brewer and Company, Limited: One Hundred Years in the Hawaiian Islands, 1826-1926* (Boston: Walton Advertising and Printing Company, 1926), 24-71.

of commerce. Hawaii was an important link in that trade route and an enticing incentive to the Massachusetts merchant and missionary voters.<sup>44</sup>

The president was equally interested in preserving American commercial interests in the Pacific. A Jeffersonian Democrat who ran on the Whig ticket with William Henry Harrison, Tyler believed in an American destiny to extend its territories. Known for being “Pacific Minded,” he hoped to annex Texas and obtain ports on the west coast of Oregon and California. His goal was to expand commerce, and he believed China and the Pacific Rim provided a good option.<sup>45</sup>

These two men agreed that commercial trade in the Pacific was important to the growth of U.S. trade, but differed on how to secure American interests there. Tyler saw the acquisition of land across the continent as a means of opening ports on the west coast, including the port in San Francisco. Webster was mainly concerned with opening and securing important commercial ports along the American west coast and in the Pacific for New England merchants and whalers.<sup>46</sup> Their difference in conceptions of expansion reflect a larger divergence in the United States, as Webster represented the New Englanders interested in acquiring important trade locations, while Tyler represented the advocates of continental land acquisitions which benefited farming and plantation economies.

Regardless of their beliefs, both recognized Hawaii’s importance, but could not take immediate action on the question because Webster was engaged in negotiating a settlement of a broad range of American and British differences with a special emissary from London, Lord

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<sup>44</sup>Ian Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective Since 1789* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 22-23.

<sup>45</sup>Edward P. Crapol, “John Tyler and the Pursuit of National Destiny,” *Journal of the Early Republic*, vol. 17, no. 3 (Autumn, 1997), 467-491; Norma Lois Peterson, *The Presidencies of William Henry Harrison and John Tyler* (Lawrence: University Press of Kentucky, 1989), 133-43.

<sup>46</sup>Norman Graebner, *Empire on the Pacific: A study in American Continental Expansion* (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1955), 129-31.

Ashburton, and could not risk complications by introducing Hawaii into the discussion. By mid 1842, with pressure mounting within the Whig party for him to resign his position under Tyler, Webster decided to focus on his foreign policy agenda by successfully completing negotiations with Ashburton. The negotiations centered on a number of Anglo-American differences, including the border dispute between Maine and Canada.<sup>47</sup> With many influential Maine leaders interested in Hawaii, including the investor of Ladd and Company, Webster's Hawaiian policy could either facilitate or hinder the state's willingness to accept a negotiated border.

On an international scale, events unfolding in the Pacific also had an impact on the policy decisions regarding Hawaii. A new surge of European imperialism in the Pacific began threatening American possessions and investments in the Polynesian islands, closing ports to the United States. The French managed to annex both the Marquesas Islands and Tahiti in 1842 and 1843 respectively. English actions were more threatening to U.S. interests. In 1840, Great Britain formally annexed New Zealand and instituted a land policy under the guise of protecting Māori property rights by forcing foreign land owners to prove the legitimacy of their holdings. The process made it virtually impossible to prove the legality of land purchases, resulting in many American investors, both legitimate and corrupt, losing their property to the British government.<sup>48</sup> Honolulu residents feared that a similar policy could be instituted in the Hawaiian Islands if the British forcibly annexed the archipelago.

Events in China also caused great concern and interest in Washington. By the 1840s, American merchants traded almost \$2 million in cotton and fur with China through the ports in

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<sup>47</sup>Sidney Nathans, *Daniel Webster and Jacksonian Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 194-203; for an in-depth discussion of the Webster-Ashburton negotiations see Howard Jones, *The Webster-Ashburton Treaty: A Study in Anglo-American Relations, 1783-1843* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1977).

<sup>48</sup>John Alden Greenlee, "The Webster Land Claims in New Zealand," *The Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1934, 416-432.

Canton and without any formal trade agreement with Washington. This private business arrangement, however, was threatened in 1839 when the British engaged China in the first Opium War over the latter's seizure of opium bound for its markets. The resultant Nanjing Treaty of 1842 opened five Chinese ports to British trade and granted the creation of a consular position for England in each port. British actions, and its subsequent trade advantage, provoked increased lobbying in Washington urging the U.S. government to take a more official stance in protecting American trade in China against British domination.<sup>49</sup>

Later that same year, Lieutenant Charles Wilkes' four-year Exploring Expedition in the Pacific returned to Washington with a forty-four page report and a ship full of specimens and artifacts. The Tyler administration withheld Wilkes' report meant for public consumption from the media, which the captain took as a personal affront, assuming the president wanted to minimize the importance of a voyage initiated by Democrat Martin Van Buren. In actuality, Tyler and Webster chose to suppress the report for fear it could jeopardize Webster's talks with Ashburton because it called for American possession of the Pacific Northwest, specifically the occupation of Oregon up to 54° 40' and the Hawaiian Islands. Webster's main concern was a successful negotiation which he was unwilling to compromise with this onslaught of American interest in the Pacific. His plan was to delay any formal decisions until completion of the treaty.<sup>50</sup>

In July 1842, in the midst of this European imperial surge and political wrangling in the United States, Kamehameha III, still driven to gain international recognition, decided his interests could best served by sending an official delegation to pursue his treaty. He dispatched a

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<sup>49</sup> Macabe Keliher, "Anglo-American Rivalry and the Origins of U.S. China Policy," *Diplomatic History*, vol. 31, Issue 2 (April 2007), 241- 247.

<sup>50</sup>Edward P. Crapol, *John Tyler: the Accidental President* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2006), 144-148. Lieutenant Charles Wilkes headed an Exploring Expedition of the west coast and Pacific that completed its fact finding mission the previous summer. The traveling exhibit arrived in Washington just days before the Hawaiian envoy, receiving much media attention and official notice. The findings of this expedition were heavily anti-British and pro-American annexation of the west coast and Pacific islands.

three man commission to the United States, England, and France to “secure the acknowledgment by those governments of the independence of this nation.”<sup>51</sup> The commissioners were Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson Bay Company in North American; William Richards, a former missionary turned political advisor to the king; and Timoteo Haalilio, a young native chief being groomed for service as Kamehameha’s private secretary and a member of the treasury board. Richards and Haalilio first headed to the United States to attempt to open negotiations of a treaty of recognition and possibly protection.

They arrived in the capital in December, just as Congress began a new session and the Wilkes expedition reached the height of its popularity. An exhibit of the specimens and cultural objects brought back by the explorers were placed on display at the National Gallery of the Patent Office, becoming a great attraction. Members of the expedition enjoyed the Washington social season as national folk heroes, regaling their journey and stirring up excitement about the Pacific. The Hawaiian envoys were able to use this excitement to their advantage. Haalilio became popular within the Washington party circle as a novelty guest to the wealthy and affluent— receiving much attention from the young female socialites.<sup>52</sup> Richard took advantage of these social events and used his personal contacts with senators and congressmen to gain access to the secretary of state.

Richards and Haalilio’s initial meeting proved frustrating, as the secretary remained aloof and non-committal, even avoiding acknowledgement of Brinsmade’s visit and the letter Kamehameha III sent to Tyler. Webster encouraged the duo to proceed to London and approach the British for recognition first.<sup>53</sup> With the Webster-Ashburton Treaty under heavy debate in

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<sup>51</sup>Kamehameha III to Sir George Simpson and Rev. William Richards, Apr. 8, 1842, Foreign Office and Executive Files, Archives of Hawaii. (hereafter cited as FO & EX, AH).

<sup>52</sup>Crapol, *John Tyler*, 144-148.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 147-49.

London, it is possible that the secretary wished to avoid added controversy by placing the Hawaiian issue in the hands of the British before making a decision in Washington.<sup>54</sup>

After this unproductive encounter, the pair met with former president turned congressman John Quincy Adams, who warned them against leaving for London without a commitment from Webster. He believed that the Tyler administration's apprehension on the issue was due to racial prejudice.<sup>55</sup> While Richards and Haalilio took Adams' advice to remain in Washington, they hesitated to agree with his racial assessment. Based on impressions of their meetings with Webster, and following several discussions with many influential Washington leaders, including Senators John C. Calhoun and Thomas Hart Benton and Congressmen Caleb Cushing and Thomas Williams, the Hawaiian envoys believed the administration wanted to avoid a loss of freedom in future policy toward California, Texas, and Oregon.<sup>56</sup> By engaging in a prohibitive entangling alliance with France and England to protect the independence of Hawaii, Tyler would constrain himself on expansion west.

The next meeting with the secretary of state seemed more productive, with Webster requesting that Richards write him an official letter outlining the purpose of the diplomatic mission. Richards complied, writing a lengthy document requesting official recognition from the United States. He described Hawaii's progress toward civilization and constitutionalism and the value of the islands to American trade, and then stressed the importance of the monarchy establishing international recognition to protect those increasing American interests on the islands from European interference.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Jones, *The Webster-Ashburton Treaty*, 169-180.

<sup>55</sup>John Q. Adams, Dec. 8, 1842, *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams: His Diary from 1795 to 1848*, 12 vols., ed. Charles Francis Adams (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1876), 11: 274-75.

<sup>56</sup>Crapol, *John Tyler*, 144-154.

<sup>57</sup>Haalilio and Richards to Webster, Dec. 14, 1842, in *Sen. Ex. Docs*, 52 Cong., 2 sess., No. 77, 37-40.

When this letter received no reply from Webster, Richards privately informed Congressman Williams that he intended to place Hawaii under a British protectorate if he did not receive recognition from the United States. He also passed this same information to the recently returned explorer Richard Waldron, who was scheduled to dine with Webster later that day.<sup>58</sup> The combination of his meetings and the release of “private” information regarding England finally effected a change in Washington’s policy.

On December 19, Richards received a letter from Webster declaring that the president “is of [the] opinion that the interests of all the commercial nations require that this Government [Hawaii] should not be interfered with by foreign powers.” Because the United States had a greater interest in Hawaii than any other nation, “no power ought either to take possession of the islands as a conquest, or for the purpose of colonization.” Webster closed the letter by explaining that even though Tyler intended to ensure Hawaiian independence, he saw no need for a formal tripartite treaty agreement.<sup>59</sup> The Tyler administration was not willing to break with the U.S. tradition of non-entangling alliances, especially when looking forward to possible annexation of Texas or California nor was the president willing to grant a formal offer of protection knowing that such an agreement could jeopardize the United States’ position and security in the international community.

On December 30, President Tyler told Congress that, because of the proximity to America and the vast amount of commercial association with the United States, he would make “a decided remonstrance against” any European nation attempting to take “possession of the islands, colonize them, and subvert the native Government.” He then asked the House of

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<sup>58</sup>Crapol, *John Tyler*, 144-154. Richard Waldron was a member of Lieutenant Wilkes’ Exploring Expedition who had met Richards and Haalilio when the expedition stopped in Hawaii.

<sup>59</sup>Webster to Haalilio and Richards, Dec. 19, 1842, *The Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster*, vol. 12, national ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, & Company, 1903), 151-152. The letter is dated December 19<sup>th</sup>, but was received on the 29<sup>th</sup>. There are two possible explanations: Webster purposely held the letter for 10 days, or it was simply mis-dated.

Representatives to appropriate funds for the consular position, to which the legislators responded by providing compensation for a commissioner to the Sandwich Islands, a higher office than consul.<sup>60</sup> Through these measures, Tyler effectively expanded the Monroe Doctrine to Hawaii. The House Foreign Relations Committee Chair, John Quincy Adams, was author of the Monroe Doctrine and not surprisingly agreed that the Hawaiian government had earned the right “to be acknowledged by their brethren of human race as a separate and independent community.”<sup>61</sup>

Thus, by the end of 1843, the United States initiated a policy toward the Hawaiian Islands that would prove to be the standard for the next fifty years. It did not come from the ambitions of an expansionist executive branch, but rather from the strong urging of American citizens living on the archipelago. Without an official treaty obligation, the United States recognized the independence of the islands and promised protection for the fledgling nation against European colonial aggression while at the same time avoiding a larger commitment and responsibility that could threaten the U.S. progress in the world system.

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Once Richards and Haalilio received Webster’s letter and learned of the favorable response from Congress, they made their way to Europe where they met with similar indifference. The British foreign secretary, Lord Aberdeen, was skeptical of Washington’s intentions and gave the commissioners no concrete answer. His response left them less than optimistic about their mission, but they decided to continue on to Belgium and France, where they received a verbal, but not written, commitment from both to recognize the island nation’s

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<sup>60</sup>Message from the President of the United States, December 31, 1842, in *House Report Ex. Doc.*, 27 Cong., 3 Sess., No. 35, 2.

<sup>61</sup>John Q. Adams, “Committee of Foreign Affairs Report,” in *House Reports*, 27 Cong., 3 Sess., No. 93, 2.

independence. In response, on April 1, 1843, the two men received a letter from Aberdeen stating that England intended to recognize their independence as well.<sup>62</sup>

Before they could finalize their mission with formal written agreements, however, events in the archipelago threatened to derail the commission's progress. Many *haole* residents resented the changes made by Kamehameha III, which now subjugated them to the rule of natives without special privileges. One particular British subject, Consul Richard Charlton, had been in a dispute over a land with the king for several years resulting in Charlton's loss of the lease. On February 10, 1843, British frigate commander George Paulet arrived in Honolulu with orders to assist in Charlton's claim.<sup>63</sup> Paulet presented the king with a list of demands for reparations and special privileges and then threatened to revert to "coercive steps."<sup>64</sup>

After careful consideration with his advisers, Kamehameha III relented and agreed under protest to adhere temporarily to Paulet's demands, adding that he had already sent commissioners to England to address all the issues submitted by the captain. Not satisfied, acting British consul Alexander Simpson began demanding more concessions, which the king refused, prompting Paulet to remove the native flag and, on February 25, to declare the islands a provisional cession of the British crown. For the next five months Consul Simpson and Commander Paulet conducted the affairs of state for the Hawaiian Islands, creating numerous enemies among not only the natives, but also among American and French resident citizens. When representatives of the king arrived in Mexico to present their side of the story to Rear

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<sup>62</sup>Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:196-98.

<sup>63</sup>Alexander Simpson, *The Sandwich Islands: Progress of Events Since their Discovery by Captain Cook, their occupation by Lord George Paulet, their value and importance* (London, 1843), 63-64.

<sup>64</sup>Captain George Paulet to His Majesty, Kamehameha III, 17 February, 1843, *ibid.*, 78-79. Among these demands was his refusal to deal with Gerritt P. Judd, the king's personal representative, on the grounds that Paulet believed Judd used undue influence against Charlton. For a more detailed account of the discussions between Paulet and the Hawaiian government see: *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 45-60.

Admiral Richard Thomas, he promptly boarded his own vessel for Honolulu and restored sovereignty to King Kamehameha III on July 31.<sup>65</sup>

News about Paulet's cession arrived in the United States around the first of June, a few weeks after Webster's resignation as secretary of state, causing several shifts in status of the Hawaiian commissioners' mission. In a letter to Edward Everett, American minister to England, acting Secretary of State Hugh Legaré strengthened Webster's policy toward Hawaii. He directed Everett to remind the British that it was U.S. policy to "accept Governments *de facto* as Governments *de jure*," but that "there is something so entirely peculiar in the relations between this little commonwealth and ourselves that we might even feel justified, consistently with our own principles, in interfering by force to prevent its falling into the hands of one of the great power of Europe." Legaré then directed Everett to make his best effort to convince the crown to disavow Paulet's action and to enlist the help of the Russian and French ambassadors if necessary.<sup>66</sup>

Everett never had to carry out his instructions. Before the dispatch arrived, the British disavowed Paulet and told Everett they intended to restore Kamehameha's sovereignty as soon as the two countries could address British grievances. Although the instructions were never implemented, they added strength to the vague policy established by Webster. Legaré had authorized Everett to interfere in the relations between a European power and the Hawaiian Islands on the natives' behalf. While not an overt policy, it opened the Hawaiian monarch to the prospect of greater American protection.

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<sup>65</sup>Declaration by Rear-Admiral Thomas, enclosed in William Hooper to Daniel Webster, Aug. 15, 1843, No. 28, in *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:200-204.

<sup>66</sup>Secretary of State Legaré to Minister Everett, June 13, 1843, No. 46, in *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 113; a copy can be found in *Sen. Ex. Docs.* 52 Cong., 2 sess., No. 57, 7-8.

As a result, of the incident, and out of fear that the United States would take advantage of its growing relationship with Hawaii to influence the native government against the Europeans, Lord Aberdeen and French Minister of Foreign Affairs François Guizot proposed a tripartite treaty of recognition with special privileges for citizens of Great Britain, France, and the United States. All three powers had a vested interest in the islands and all had more pressing issues with each other that a conflict in Hawaii could derail. A tripartite treaty would ensure them all access to the Hawaiian ports until they were in a better position to take control of the archipelago and risk the potential confrontation.

Acting Secretary of State Abel P. Upshur, who as former secretary of the navy recognized the value of the archipelago, initially showed favor to the idea. He believed that Americans “scattered all over the world” had the right to request “the occasional presence of our flag” to protect their interests from foreign powers.<sup>67</sup> Ultimately, however, Upshur could not negotiate such an agreement because of established American policy against entangling alliances. England and France eventually completed separate treaties with Kamehameha III, recognizing and assuring the independence of the islands, and each gaining special rights for its citizens.<sup>68</sup>

While this appeared to be just another incident in a series of altercations between the Hawaiian government and European powers, it revealed the island nation’s increasing reliance on the United States. Regardless of Hawaiian efforts to create a government capable of nation-state status, the islands remained vulnerable to western aggression. This weakness slowly pushed Hawaii into relying on the United States for protection. In a letter to President Tyler,

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<sup>67</sup>Report of the Secretary of the Navy, Dec. 7, 1842, in *House Doc., No. 2, 27 Cong., 3 Sess.*, 535.

<sup>68</sup>“Declaration of Great Britain and France relative to the independence of the Sandwich Islands, London, November 28, 1843,” *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 64; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:200-204. In the three months following Daniel Webster’s resignation as Secretary of State, three men held the office: Hugh S. Legaré, William S. Derrick, and Abel P. Upshur.

Kamehameha III admitted that he and his people felt forced to submit to a conditional cession and to “throw ourselves upon the generosity of the British nation” as the only peaceful means of assuring the safety and property of the residents of Honolulu. Furthermore, they found themselves “in difficulties from which we could not extricate ourselves with honor and justice,” so they “signed with a heavy heart and many tears.” He then appealed to the president to use his influence in England to persuade the British to withdraw and restore Hawaiian sovereignty.<sup>69</sup> It was this letter that prompted Secretary Legaré to send his instructions to Everett in England.

The LaPlace episode also sparked a greater interest in the Islands from Washington. The efforts of the Americans living on the archipelago and the Hawaiian commissioners sent by Kamehameha III forced Washington to establish an official stance on Hawaii. Prior to this set of events, U.S. policy had been heavily reactionary and directed by representatives on the islands. American residents and investors on the archipelago continually requested action from Washington by stirring nationalist feelings in the United States through the press. As their interests grew, pressure on the executive mounted.

With increasing American interests, President Tyler decided to negotiate a new treaty with the king. He had already recognized Hawaii as an independent nation, but denied the need for an official agreement. Following the successful English and French negotiation guaranteeing special rights for their subjects, Tyler’s policy shifted and the newly appointed commissioner George Brown was given the authority to negotiate a treaty with Hawaii. The shift in Tyler’s policy really came from the repeated dispatches of Commissioner Brown voicing concern that the British and French benefited from special privileges negotiated by their governments, while Americans residing on the islands did not. Brown’s complaints caught the attention of

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<sup>69</sup>“Kamehameha III, native King of the Sandwich Islands, to His Excellency John Tyler, the President of the United States of American,” enclosure in Hooper to Webster, March 11, 1893, in *Sen. Ex. Docs.* 52 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 77, pp. 50-1.

Secretaries of State Abel Upshur and his successor John C. Calhoun, who encouraged the negotiation of a similar treaty for the United States.<sup>70</sup>

Unfortunately, during the late 1840s personality conflicts between U.S. representatives and Hawaiian government officials jeopardized American influence in the islands. Brown and his successor Anthony Ten Eyck failed to successfully complete discussions, falling out of favor with the monarchy over aggressive behavior regarding American rights in the archipelago and a personal dispute with the Royals. For example, Brown's quest to gain special legal privileges for Americans led him to protest a rape trial against an American citizen, ruining his official relationship. He became so aggressive that Hawaiian officials wrote Washington requesting his recall and proclaiming him *persona non grata*, which prohibited further communication between the commissioner and any Hawaiian officials. Ultimately, Brown's hands were tied as a diplomat, and negotiations over a treaty never began.<sup>71</sup>

In 1845, the new president, James K. Polk, recalled Brown and replaced him with Anthony Ten Eyck, who was empowered to complete Brown's mission. Secretary of State James Buchanan instructed Ten Eyck to use the British treaty as a model, but also granted him the liberty to make modifications as he deemed necessary. Ten Eyck ignored most of the secretary's advice, and in February 1847 abandoned the British model completely and adopted the "Memorandum for a treaty with the Hawaiian Government" formulated by George Brown. One of the most important provisions proposed extraterritoriality for Americans, similar to

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<sup>70</sup>Webster to George Brown, March 15, 1843, No.1, & Calhoun to Brown, January 1845, No. 4, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 67-68.

<sup>71</sup>Robert Crichton Wyllie, *Table of Consular Grievances, 1843-1846* (Hawaiian Department of Foreign Affairs), 1-44. The consular grievances list includes forty-four pages of American complaints, of which all but a handful were made by Brown or his consul William Hooper, and only half of which were legitimate complaints. Among them was the rape trial of an American, in which the defendant was denied an all American jury on the grounds that the alleged victim was Hawaiian and therefore the case fell under no special privileges. Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:245-251.

arrangements in China, and granted the U.S. commissioner the power to select juries for all criminal and civil cases involving Americans.

Ten Eyck also pushed American rights to own property. In the mid-1840s, the Hawaiian legislature began modifying the land tenure system to ensure more stable ownership, which would encourage greater foreign investment in the economy. It began as a result of the success of the Ladd and Company venture on Kauai. The Hawaiian government determined that native Hawaiians could be assimilated into the westernized political economy if given a tract of land to cultivate—the same theory that applied to Native Americans on the continent several decades later. In 1848, the lands of the kingdom were divided in what the Hawaiians called the *Mahele*. The king received “Crown lands,” the chiefs received land in fee simple title, and the government received land to divide and sell to individuals or use for the public good. The original policy applied only to native Hawaiians; foreign residents were not allowed to purchase tracts.<sup>72</sup>

Buchanan warned the commissioner that the Hawaiian government would not agree to a treaty that infringed so heavily on its sovereignty as an independent nation. Specifically regarding Ten Eyck’s request to press American citizens’ rights to own land, Buchanan informed him that the United States had already recognized Hawaii as an independent nation and therefore could not question its policy. He could influence decisions in the Americans favor, but was to “avoid the appearance of dictating to the Hawaiian government what course [the] should be.” Otherwise, his mission would fail.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Stuart Banner, “Preparing to Be Colonized: Land Tenure and Legal Strategy in Nineteenth-Century Hawaii,” *Law & Society Review*, vol. 39, no. 2 (June, 2005), 280-285; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:272-81, & 287-289.

<sup>73</sup>Ten Eyck to Buchanan, Dec. 21, 1848, No. 8, and Buchanan to Ten Eyck, Instructions, Aug. 28, 1848, No. 7, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

Buchanan was correct. Hawaiian Secretary of Foreign Relations Robert C. Wyllie agreed to place the United States “upon a footing of perfect parity with Great Britain and France,” but believed that the commissioner’s proposal “would have rendered the Americans, here, for all political purposes, just as paramount as they might choose to declare themselves to be, by a few pithy resolutions of which we have had instructive examples on the frontiers of Canada, in Texas, and under the Bear Flag, in California.”<sup>74</sup> Wyllie rejected Ten Eyck’s proposal and negotiations ceased for the remainder of 1847.

In February 1848, Ten Eyck attempted to reopen negotiations and again failed to achieve anything. His new proposal dropped extraterritoriality and offered to prohibit the importation of liquor aboard American vessels in exchange for a provision granting American claimants the right to fee simple title of lands in their possession through leases prior to 1840. While Wyllie was open to the proposal, others in the government refused, so Wyllie countered with an offer identical to the agreement made with Great Britain in 1846 with the addition of an article providing parity on import duties between the islands and the U.S. west coast. Unfortunately, three days after receiving the new offer, the king prohibited Ten Eyck from interacting with all Hawaiian officials. Like Brown before him, the commissioner had offended the native government over repeated personal confrontations with its officials and his involvement as an attorney in a civil case against the king.<sup>75</sup> From that point until his removal, negotiations took place in Washington between the specially appointed Hawaiian commissioner James Jackson Jarves and the state department.

Ten Eyck’s actions were typical of many American consuls and ministers to the islands, who often ignored or overlooked instructions from Washington in their eagerness to place

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<sup>74</sup>Barclay to Wyllie, Jan. 17, 1848, AH, FO & EX quoted in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:376.

<sup>75</sup>*Ibid.*, 395-97.

Americans in a more dominant position. Despite these personality conflicts, Hawaiian Secretary of Foreign Affairs Robert C. Wyllie still believed that “ the tide of events rushes on to annexation to the United States,” because of the decline of native Hawaiians and the increasing population in California. “As things are,” he added, “if they should come here, I fear they would feel it to be their interest to upset the government, just as the Americans did in Texas.”<sup>76</sup>

This statement appeared true to many Hawaiian officials because, regardless of the obnoxious behavior of the American representatives, the French behaved worse. In February 1848, a new French consul arrived in Honolulu, instructed to employ moderation in his relations with the Hawaiian government. Guillaume Patrice Dillon’s main tasks were to ensure French commerce on the islands and to protect the Catholic missions from oppressive policies. Dillon took his instructions much farther, demanding that the Hawaiian government equally fund Catholic and Protestant schools, remove the duty on brandy and other spirituous alcohol, allow French whaling ships to barter for said imported liquors, and require custom houses to accept documents in written French as well as English and Hawaiian. When the king denied Dillon’s request, Rear Admiral Legoarrant de Tromelin arrived with two French warships and presented the king with ten demands. When the Hawaiian government again refused, Tromelin’s forces took possession of the forts, government offices, and custom house and began destroying the buildings and armaments of the king’s guards. After failed negotiations between the Hawaiian Privy Council and Tromelin ended with the council demanding a resolution by the French government, the rear admiral confiscated the king’s schooner the *Kamehameha* and left with his fleet.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Wyllie to Judd (Private), Nov. 3, 1849, FO & EX, AH.

<sup>77</sup>Luther Severance to Daniel Webster, June 13, 1852, No. 51, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:393-395.

To address his grievances to the French king, Kamehameha III sent Hawaiian Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr. Gerritt P. Judd as special commissioner and plenipotentiary extraordinary on a mission to procure American and English assistance against France. In addition to Judd's official instructions, he received a secret letter from the king authorizing him to place the islands under a protectorate or even sell the islands to a foreign power, preferably England and then the United States. Judd never used this secret power.<sup>78</sup>

On his way to Washington, Judd first landed in San Francisco where he met Charles Eames, the newly appointed American commissioner then on his way to Honolulu, and quickly negotiated an agreement. Prior to leaving office, President Polk had appointed Eames as the American commissioner to Hawaii and directed him to negotiate a treaty favorable to Americans on the islands. Dr. Judd, just having dealt with the uncooperative commissioners Brown and Ten Eyck, took advantage of Eames's willingness to enter into negotiations. Eames followed his instructions to the letter, granting nothing to Hawaii that he was not authorized to give. The result was the Eames-Judd treaty, signed in October 1849. Eames forwarded the treaty to Secretary of State John M. Clayton with a recommendation to consider negotiating a formal treaty of international recognition on the grounds that, in exchange, he believed the United States could acquire the right for Americans to own real property in Hawaii.<sup>79</sup>

At the same time Commissioner Eames met with Dr. Judd in San Francisco, James Jackson Jarves completed talks with Secretary Clayton in the capital. Jarves was a long-term American resident of Honolulu and former editor of the government sponsored newspaper *The Polynesian*. After Jarves resigned his position and returned to his familial home in Boston, King Kamehameha III commissioned him to be his representative in Washington with the

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 397.

<sup>79</sup>C. Eames to Secretary Clayton, Oct. 22, 1849, No. 1, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

authorization to negotiate both formal recognition and reciprocal trade agreements with the United States.<sup>80</sup>

Both negotiations produced treaties — the Clayton-Jarves treaty being far more favorable to Hawaii than the Eames-Judd treaty. Because of the turmoil in Hawaii, Judd was more willing than his counterpart Jarves to grant the United States favors.<sup>81</sup> His agreement arrived in Washington a few days after the signing of the Clayton-Jarves treaty. A third treaty was created, using different articles from each, which became the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation. Hawaii gained less than negotiated by Jarves, but finally had an agreement that would last between the islands and the United States until the overthrow of the monarchy in 1893. The treaty established open trade and port access, an extradition agreement, and a postal service between both nations.<sup>82</sup>

After completing the treaty, Judd left San Francisco accompanied by Alexander Liholiho and Lot Kamehameha — the future Kamehameha IV and V respectively — to pursue a similar treaty with Great Britain before heading to France to address their grievances with Tromelin and Dillon. At first, the English were unable to assist the Hawaiians against France, being entangled simultaneously in a similar intrigue in Greece, but eventually they negotiated a treaty of commerce and a promise that England would serve as a mediator in the French situation. The French, however, were unwilling to negotiate until their demands were met on the Islands.<sup>83</sup>

Judd then returned to Washington, where he and Jarves held a far more promising meeting with Secretary of State Clayton. Unofficially, he promised to advise France and England

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<sup>80</sup>Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:377-79.

<sup>81</sup>*Ibid.*, 1:394-97.

<sup>82</sup>“Treaty of Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation, and for Extradition of Criminals,” Dec. 20, 1849, (9ST. at L., 977), in *Treaties and Conventions Concluded between the United States of America and Other Powers, 1873*, ed. 1 1873, (United States Printing Office, 1873,) 468; Instructions to Jarves, enclosure in Luther Severance to Daniel Webster, March 31, 1851, confidential, No. 8, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>83</sup>Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1: 395-97; Judd, *Honolulu: Sketches*, 196-207.

that the United States would not “look with indifference” upon any attempt to oppress or occupy the archipelago by anyone, thereby reinforcing the Tyler Doctrine established by Webster. He assured the envoys that the United States would send forces to protect Hawaii if necessary.<sup>84</sup> Officially, however, Clayton’s response was vague, stating that the president “will cheerfully do anything in his power, compatible with the cardinal policy of this Government.”<sup>85</sup>

Secretary Clayton authorized U.S. minister to France William C. Rives to inform the French that, if their intention in Hawaii was the same as in Tahiti — taking possession of the islands — the United States “could never with indifference allow them to pass under the dominion or exclusive control of any other power.” He was to remind the French that any perceived slight by the Hawaiian government resulted from their inexperience and the predicament created by France. Clayton hoped the French government would make amends to the Hawaiian government “as a great and magnanimous nation cannot fail to consider as due in such case to a feeble and injured state.”<sup>86</sup>

Clayton’s instructions to Rives indicated his willingness to intercede in a dispute between France and Hawaii and on the latter’s behalf. He considered the Hawaiian government to be in a juvenile state of development, thus allowing for occasional missteps by its authorities, which he felt the French should understand. Although not willing to enter into a tripartite protection treaty with the Europeans, Clayton also revealed a developing policy of unofficial protection of the islands. He believed that American interests were important enough to “require and warrant us in adopting other measures for the purpose of restoring and preserving harmony between their

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<sup>84</sup>Judd, Private Journal, June 4, 1850, cited in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:398.

<sup>85</sup>Clayton to Judd and Jarves, June 3, 1850, in *Sen. Ex. Docs.*, 52 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 77, 82-83.

<sup>86</sup>Clayton to Rives, July 5, 1850, No. 15, in *Sen. Ex. Docs.*, 52 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 77, 83-4.

government and that of either England or France.”<sup>87</sup> The French did not agree, taking great offense from Washington’s interference in their relations with Hawaii.

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In the midst of failing relations with France, a new American commissioner Luther Severance arrived in Honolulu. Appointed by the newly elected president, Zachary Taylor, Severance was a former newspaper editor, local Maine politician, and U.S. senator with anti-slavery, neo-mercantilist, semi-expansionist, and Whig political affiliations. Although he voted against war with Mexico and opposed the acquisition of Texas because of slavery, he favored territorial acquisition for economic expansion of the American system.<sup>88</sup> He arrived in Honolulu in the midst of another French altercation, without instructions for the situation. He would become one of the strongest advocates of U.S. annexation.

In February, one month after Severance’s arrival, the situation in Honolulu changed drastically. The newly appointed French commissioner Emile Perrin presented King Kamehameha III with a list of ten demands to reestablish normal relations— accompanied by a threat of hostile forces and a French warship indefinitely stationed in Honolulu harbor. When British Consul General William Miller declined the king’s request to raise the British flag as a temporary protectorate, the monarch turned to Severance with a document requesting the United States to proclaim one instead. The document granted the United States “all our rights as sovereign over them [the islands] are from the date hereto placed under the protection and safeguard of the United States of America.” Severance accepted the document in a sealed envelope with the phrase: “The King requests the Commissioner of the United States in case the

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<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>Burlin, *Imperial Maine*, 123.

flag of the United States if raised above the Hawaiian Islands, that he will open the enclosed and act accordingly.”<sup>89</sup>

After consulting with American Commissioner Elisha Allen and Captain William H. Gardner of the *U.S.S. Vandalia*, Severance told the Hawaiians in private conversation that, “if the King cedes the islands to the United States and puts up the American flag, I will do what I can to protect it for the time being.” In a formal letter, Severance informed the king that he could not guarantee the use of force against the French for three reasons. First, the United States was at peace with the French and wished to remain so. Second, it was against U.S. policy to interfere in another nation’s conflicts. Finally, the commissioner did not have the constitutional power to instigate war against another nation. Severance then added that because the king did not have the resources to protect American lives and property, he would ask the *U.S.S. Vandalia* to remain in the harbor to guarantee against French hostility.<sup>90</sup> Writing Washington to justify his actions, Severance explained that he sympathized with the natives’ predicament and “could not tell them we should reject their proffered allegiance, and stand passive while they, with the American flag in their hands, should be trampled underfoot by the French.” He warned Washington of the continuing threat and believed it pertinent to keep an American ship-of-war in Honolulu harbor because “its presence will have a salutary effect in preventing mischief.”<sup>91</sup>

Three weeks later, Severance sent a warning to Webster, who had just returned to the position of secretary of state at the request of President Millard Fillmore. Severance argued that

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<sup>89</sup>King Kamehameha III Proclamation, in *Sen. Ex. Docs.*, 52 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 77, 84-5; Judd IV, *Dr. Judd: Hawaii’s Friend*, 196-98; R.C. Wyllie to Archibald Barclay, March 11, 1851, confidential; Barclay to Wyllie, July 20, 1851, confidential, enclosures in Severance to Webster, Oct. 17, 1851, No. 24; and Severance and Wyllie, *Memorandum of Agreement*, March 31, 1851, enclosure in Severance to Webster, March 31, 1851, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.; Gerritt Judd to James Jackson Jarves, Aug. 1, 1850 & Normanby to Palmerston, Oct. 7, 17, 1850, Nos. 326 & 338, both cited in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:399.

<sup>90</sup>Severance to King Kamehameha, Mar. 5, 1851, enclosure in Severance to Webster, No. 6, Mar. 11, 1851, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>91</sup>Severance to Webster, Mar. 11, 1851, No. 6, and Confidential, Mar. 31, No. 8, 1851, Ibid.

the king's sovereignty was in danger and that he had only two options. He could give in to the colonial ambitions of one of the European nations and suffer the consequences, or the United States could annex the islands and save the king and chiefs from that fate. Severance proposed the latter, guaranteeing protection of existing property rights and assurances of citizenship for the natives. He then warned that neglecting the annexation opportunity would have negative results for the Americans living on the islands.<sup>92</sup>

In informing Washington of the turn of events, Severance took the opportunity to address American influence on the archipelago. He claimed that a large portion of the elected legislators were Americans, as well as the majority of the executive and judicial branches.<sup>93</sup> U.S. merchants conducted three-fourths of all business and also owned a large percentage of foreign held real estate, resulting in an almost exclusively American controlled sugar plantation system.

Severance asked the secretary for guidance on the annexation question. With this preponderance of American influence, Severance claimed, "The subject of annexation is here often hinted at, and sometimes freely discussed in private." He noted that even the king discussed the topic. He asked the secretary of state "how far I may go in protecting the American flag if it shall be raised here," believing that large numbers of volunteers would rush from California if the flag were raised. He admitted that he was "strongly inclined" to have Captain William H. Gardiner of the *Vandalia* defend Honolulu if the French warship fired on the city.<sup>94</sup>

Severance also speculated about the importance of the sealed letter of protectorate King Kamehameha III left in his possession. The American commissioner feared that the king's health

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<sup>92</sup>Severance to Webster, Mar. 29, 1851, No. 10, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>93</sup>Severance to Webster, July 17, 1851, No. 16, *ibid.* He later refutes this claim in another dispatch.

<sup>94</sup>Severance to Webster, Mar. 11, 1851, No. 6, *ibid.* At the end of his dispatch, Severance listed the Americans serving the King: From New York were Minister of Finance Dr. Judd; Chief Justice W. L. Lee; and Collector-General Bishop; Attorney General George Washington Bates from Michigan; Minister of Public Instruction Rev. Richard Armstrong from Pennsylvania; and Judge Lorrin Andrews from Ohio.

was failing and that his successor, Alexander Liholiho, had questionable morals and even more questionable associates. Severance warned that he might “throw himself into the arms of some interest altogether hostile to us.” He asked for advice, reminding the secretary, “In that event the paper I hold may have its use.” None of the commissioner’s dispatches left the islands promptly, forced to wait for a vessel headed to the American east coast and leaving Severance facing this dilemma without official guidance.<sup>95</sup>

Luckily for Severance, the French consul relaxed his stance and the U.S. commissioner never had to decide whether to use the king’s unsealed letter. After receiving the American commissioner’s assurances, the Hawaiian government sent a response to Perrin’s demands, agreeing to half. The French consul, having heard of the arrangement between the king and Severance, and being warned by British consul Miller that his actions were pushing Hawaii into American hands, took a more conciliatory approach to the offer.<sup>96</sup>

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A tentative agreement settled the immediate danger, but the king still feared the fragile state of his nation’s independence and decided to attempt a tripartite protection treaty again. When the *Vandalia* left for Washington carrying all the dispatches from Severance along with the king’s appeal for help, Kamehameha III asked American consul Elisha Allen to accompany the ship and meet with the secretary of state to discuss the possibility of concluding such an agreement.

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<sup>95</sup>Severance to Webster, Oct. 14, 1851, No. 23, confidential, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>96</sup>Armstrong to Chapman, Mar. 14, 1851, enclosure in Chapman to Webster, June 16, 1851, in Kenneth E. Shewmaker, ed., *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Diplomatic Papers*, vol. 2, ser. 3 (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1987), 271-2; Enclosures A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L in Severance to Webster, Mar. 31, 1851, No. 8, confidential, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

Just days before the dispatches arrived in Washington, Webster received a letter from Reuben Atwater Chapman, brother-in-law of Richard Armstrong, the Hawaiian Minister of Public Education. Chapman forwarded letters from Armstrong describing the struggle between the Hawaiian officials and the French consul and urged U.S. mediation in the troubles. He criticized the lack of support from then Secretary Clayton. Chapman added that he believed with protection, the Hawaiian Islands would “within a half dozen years have an American population capable of protecting themselves, & their government will be substantially like ours.”<sup>97</sup> Both men urged the secretary to provide protection to the Americans living on the islands until they were able to complete their occupation. The American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions also expressed its concern with American safety and made a formal application of protection by a United States vessel.<sup>98</sup>

This increasing flow of requests into Washington forced the president and secretary of state to reevaluate America’s Hawaiian policy, especially since the United States had changed considerably since Webster’s first tenure as secretary of state. When he left the office in 1843, the country only extended through the Louisiana Territory. When he returned, it stretched from coast to coast, including four major harbors on the Pacific Ocean. During his eight-year absence from the state department, the first telegraph lines were laid and a paddle-engine steamer service opened between New York and Europe, greatly increasing the speed of communication. With his negotiation of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty at the end of his first tenure, relations with Great Britain had settled. The Treaty of Wanghia, negotiated by Caleb Cushing, now opened the fabled China market to American merchant ships. The acquisition of Texas, the resultant war with Mexico, and the cession of the New Mexico territory and California had led to the near

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<sup>97</sup>Chapman to Webster, June 16, 1851, in. Shewmaker, ed., *The Papers of Daniel Webster*, vol. 2, ser. 3, 270-274.

<sup>98</sup>Webster to William Campbell Rives, No. 28, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

destruction of the nation. Webster's own experience as a senator during this ordeal had led him to advocate a compromise in 1850, including concessions on slavery that he did not agree with, to ensure the stability of the union. The president and the secretary were also in the midst of dealing with international complications resulting from American filibustering in Cuba.<sup>99</sup>

Webster still believed strongly in the Hawaiian policy he had developed during the Tyler administration—opposing territorial annexation and upholding the idea of an open door in an independent Hawaii — and did not agree with Clayton's policy or Severance's actions. When Webster received the dispatches from Hawaii, he immediately responded to the commissioner with strict instructions. In an open dispatch to be shared with the royal government, Webster restated Washington's insistence on respecting Hawaiian independence and not annexing the islands, while opposing a takeover by any European power. He then wrote a confidential dispatch in which he chastised the commissioner for accepting the letter of protectorate, and ordered him to return the document to the Hawaiian government immediately. He lectured Severance on his lack of constitutional authority to enter into such an agreement and warned that calling on a U.S. Naval vessel to protect the islands was an infringement on congressional war powers. Regardless of the prohibitions, however, Webster closed his letter with an assurance to Severance that the United States would uphold Hawaiian sovereignty against European encroachment and that the navy department would be instructed to keep the fleet "in such a state of strength and preparation, as shall be requisite" for the safety of Hawaii.

Webster then addressed the appeal for protection by Americans residing on the islands. The Americans working for the king, along with a large percentage of the AMCFM missionaries, had taken oaths pledging their loyalty to the Kingdom of Hawaii. Webster declared that once

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<sup>99</sup>Elbert Smith, *The Presidencies of Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1988), 219-224; David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861* (New York: Harper & Row, Inc., 1976), 101-103.

they decided to settle in the islands, they ceased to be Americans. By falling under the *animus manendi*, the intention to remain in a foreign land through the purchase of private property and by taking an oath of loyalty to a foreign sovereign, these individuals relinquished their right of protection by the U.S. Navy. Any security afforded them would come under the general policy of relations with friendly foreign governments.<sup>100</sup>

The secretary's definition presents an interesting facet of American foreign policy — the level of government obligation to protect citizens abroad without a constitutionally defined national citizenship. Because U.S. boundaries and identity were expandable, dynamic, and contested, national identity and citizenship were often in flux and indefinable. The question centered on whether American citizenship was based on location or identity. Even though Webster extended rights of protection to missionaries in Syria a decade earlier, after the turmoil of the 1840s brought on by actions of private citizens and their expansion, Webster's opinion of American citizenship rights changed. Webster was forced to consider protection of individuals outside of the nation-state boundaries, which could then threaten the security of the state itself. He chose to extend the right to protection only to those who did not intend to remain outside of the nation-state. Based on Webster's interpretation of the constitutional limits to a minister's actions and his definition of citizenship rights, the secretary prohibited Severance from encouraging the idea of annexation among these individuals.

Webster's warning also extended President Fillmore's proclamation issued two months earlier warning American filibusterers that any citizen engaging in military expeditions into

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<sup>100</sup>Judd IV, *Hawaii*, 73; Webster to Severance, July 14, 1851, No. 4, confidential; & Webster to Marsh, Apr. 29, 1852, in Shewmaker ed., *The Papers of Daniel Webster*, vol. 2, ser. 3, 275-279. Webster explained the policy of *animas manendi* to George Perkins Marsh who he sent on a special mission to Greece to assist an ABCFM missionary under arrest for reviling the Greek Orthodox Church. The missionary did not own private property in Greece, nor did he take any oath of loyalty to the sovereign and therefore merited assistance from Washington.

Cuba would forfeit their right of protection.<sup>101</sup> During his previous tenure as secretary of state, Webster had dealt with this same issue when he struggled through difficult negotiations to gain the release of U.S. citizens held in Mexico following their attempt to assist a force of Texans on an expedition to capture Santa Fe and take northern Mexico to Texas.<sup>102</sup> Fear of entanglements with Europeans over private American actions led Webster to take a strong stance against their activities in Hawaii. While seemingly unrelated, American foreign policy and private actions in Texas and Cuba had a great impact on Hawaii policy.<sup>103</sup>

Webster's instructions clearly reflected his personal constitutional interpretation and opinion about foreign policy. He did not approve of Severance entangling the United States in a dispute between Hawaii and France that could lead to war. Severance's request to Captain William Gardiner of the *Vandalia* to fire on the French ship in the event of hostility would have been an act of war, which the commissioner had no constitutional right to declare.<sup>104</sup> This stand possibly demonstrated Webster's opinion of the events in Texas leading to the war with Mexico. The secretary did not want a repeat of private citizens sparking a major war between the United States and another world power.

Regardless of Webster's instructions, America's response to the French demands had only a peripheral effect on the outcome of the Hawaiian troubles. The French were outraged at the perceived insult from Webster in interfering with negotiations between France and an independent Hawaii, but it was the British intervention that saved the island nation. Paris chose

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<sup>101</sup>Millard Fillmore, "Proclamation by the President of the United States," Apr. 25, 1851, in *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, vol. VI (New York: Bureau of National Literature, Inc., 1897), 2648-9. This statement came as the result of a series of failed filibusters which lead to loss of American lives in Cuba and Latin American.

<sup>102</sup>Frederick Merk, *The Oregon Question: Essays in Anglo-American Diplomacy and Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), 196-211.

<sup>103</sup>Webster to Severance, July 14, 1851, No. 4, Confidential, in Shewmaker, ed., *The Papers of Daniel Webster*, vol. 2, ser. 3, 279.

<sup>104</sup>Robert Remini, *Daniel Webster: The Man and His Times* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1997), 162-208.

to concede on some of its arguments after England informed France that its actions had pushed Hawaii into the arms of Washington. British agents encouraged the French to desist, threatening to accept Hawaii's annexation offer if the United States hesitated. France subsequently ordered its consul to negotiate on a more conciliatory stance.<sup>105</sup>

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By 1850, the international interest in Hawaii had reached a stalemate and the archipelago survived the initial land grabs of the first phase of Pacific imperialism. England, France, and the United States all held vested interests in the islands, but none was willing to risk full-scale war with the others to ensure complete control. Each nation also had more pressing matters in internal political and international issues, so they were willing leave Hawaii in its autonomous state as long as no other power gained an advantage.

During these first forty years of American interest in the islands, the United States established an official stance guaranteeing Hawaiian sovereignty against European aggression while emphasizing American interests in the archipelago. When tension increased between the Hawaiian sovereign and European powers, Americans living in Hawaii pushed Washington into this paternalistic stance. As a result, Secretary of State Daniel Webster and President John Tyler established an official policy that extended the Monroe Doctrine to the Islands and thereby recognized and guaranteed Hawaiian independence. As those American interests grew and began considering annexation, Webster again confronted an expansionist policy and, with Millard Fillmore's approval, chose to remain loyal to his original stance of Hawaiian independence. This broadly defined policy asserted an American protectorate without a formal treaty commitment,

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<sup>105</sup>“Resolution about the Joint Declaration,” Mar. 20, 1851, file 1 Annexation, F. M Hatch Papers, Manuscript Collection 58, AH; Severance to Everett, Jan. 29, 1853, No. 65, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:407.

thus establishing American dominance over the islands without incurring political or economic obligations to Hawaii.

Webster, however, would not remain secretary of state indefinitely, and not everyone agreed with his policy. While Hawaiian independence was saved temporarily by international competition, many Americans began to believe that the only solution to Hawaii's continuing troubles was annexation to the United States. The year 1853 marked a crucial turning point in Hawaiian history. An economic crisis beginning in 1852, combined with a declining native population from disease and an increase in American financial interests in the islands, led to internal conflicts in Hawaii, which threatened the stability of the government struggling to maintain international security. With the election of an expansionist president in 1852 and the rising influence of the "Young Americans" possibly planning a filibuster to Hawaii, Kamehameha III began to worry that the independence of the archipelago was near its end. Many Hawaiians feared that the Big Fish entering the White House in 1853 would finally swallow up the islands.

## Chapter 2 “A Shadow of Events to Come”

On the day of his inauguration, March 4, 1853, the newly elected Franklin Pierce promised, “my Administration will not be controlled by any timid forebodings of evil from expansion.” Addressing those who believed imperialism threatened the stability of the United States, he asserted that the success of recent acquisitions proved “the apprehension of dangers from extended territory, multiplied States, accumulated wealth, and augmented population has proved to be unfounded.” Because of this, it was not to be “disguised that our attitude as a nation and our position on the globe render the acquisition of certain possessions not within our jurisdiction eminently important for our protection, if not in the future essential for the preservation of the rights of commerce and the peace of the world.”<sup>1</sup>

Pierce’s speech marked a shift in policy from his predecessor Millard Fillmore satisfying a portion of the population who embraced westward expansion and endorsed the idea of expansion: the Young Americans. This group of individuals exalted the United States’ youth and democratic ideals and championed the nation’s rapid progress both economically and physically. Teeming with the filibustering spirit, they had become increasingly vocal about a desire to obtain Cuba and the Hawaiian archipelago in the early 1850s.

Additionally, while more concerned with acquiring Cuba, Pierce was also interested in safe ports and lucrative markets in the Pacific to placate the northeast business interests. Many prominent merchants and missionaries began urging Washington to build a closer connection to

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<sup>1</sup> Franklin Pierce, Inaugural Address, Friday, Mar. 4, 1853, in “Inaugural Address of the Presidents of the United States from George Washington 1789 to George Bush 1989,” *Sen. Doc.*, 101 Cong., 1 Sess., No. 10, 117-18.

the Islands in response to the activities of the French and the rumors of Kamehameha III's secret offer to sell them. Pierce attempted to take the opportunity to negotiate annexation when internal problems in Honolulu threatened to lead to revolution.

In Hawaii, Pierce's veneration of U.S. expansion caused significant concern. First, it was this westward settlement that had opened an important market for Hawaii in California, profoundly transforming the islands' economy and ultimately leading the archipelago into a greater reliance on the American west coast. At the same time, the anti-expansionist philosophy of the previous administration had helped to secure Hawaiian independence. While the islands benefitted from U.S. imperialist policies on the continent, the shift in policy, which could expand this aggression across the Pacific, posed a serious threat to the archipelago's sovereignty.

Uncertainty generated by Pierce's agenda only compounded the internal problems threatening the Hawaiian monarchy. French aggression, fear of American filibusters, ravages of another outbreak of smallpox, and a floundering economy threatened stability. Political intrigue grew in Honolulu, leading to repeated calls for the destruction of the monarchy and the creation of a republic, while rumors of filibusters from California led to great concerns over possible annexation. These rumors prompted U.S. commissioner David Gregg to ask Pierce for permission to open annexation negotiations. By August 1854, a completed treaty was ready for the king's signature, which was purposely delayed by his soon to be successor Alexander Liholiho who managed to be away from Honolulu and unable to give his formal approval which the king required before signing.

Regardless of Pierce's original intentions or the opportunity presented by Hawaii's internal difficulties, political disunity in the United States and its position in the international arena ultimately played a significant role in the failure of this annexation. Just as David Gregg

began his negotiations with Hawaiian Foreign Minister Robert C. Wyllie in early 1854, a contentious debate began in the United States over the admission of the Kansas as a state into the union. At the same time, an accord between England and France placed the United States in a vulnerable position, as these European countries jointly opposed American filibustering activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, while challenging expansion into the Pacific. The political turmoil over the Kansas questions and the resultant Democratic party defeat in the midterm elections, combined with increasing European pressure, led to an abrupt change of plans regarding the acquisition of Cuba and the annexation of Hawaii.<sup>2</sup>

Ultimately, annexation failed in the 1850s for three reasons. First, before the final signatures were on the treaty, Kamehameha III died and his nephew Alexander Liholiho ascended to the throne as Kamehameha IV along with his anti-annexationist policy. Second, had the treaty been signed and forwarded to Washington, many facets of the agreement would have never been approved by the president or Congress during this era heightened political dissent. Finally, the question of annexation became intertwined with international complications over the fate of Cuba and the United States' inability to control American filibusters, leading Pierce to postpone any aggressive policy, proving once again that the United States was unable to assume its first-tier destiny.

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Public instigation leading to the opening of annexation negotiations began in the United States. When the French consul Emile Perrin presented the crown with a list of demands,

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<sup>2</sup> Larry Gara, *The Presidency of Franklin Pierce* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 154.

Kamehameha III requested that Luther Severance accept a secret letter of protectorate against French aggression. Following the settlement of that incident, the king sent Elisha Allen on a mission to gain a tripartite security agreement from the United States, England, and France. The news of these two events, the letter and Allen's mission, began circulating in the American press, sparking speculation about possible annexation in the United States.

Almost two month before Severance's dispatches regarding the issue arrived in Washington, the San Francisco *Alta California* began running articles claiming that Hawaii would inevitably fall into the hands of some world power and told readers that, "the pear is nearly ripe; we have scarcely to shake the tree in order to bring the luscious fruit readily into our lap." The paper claimed that because of westward expansion, Americans could not remain "uninterested spectators" in the islands' fate and warned, "If the Hawaiian government is not to be left free, no other than the American nation can possess it."<sup>3</sup> By May, the *Alta* reported that the Hawaiian government had decided to apply for annexation and that a Hawaiian representative was in San Francisco on his way to Washington to present the request. While not mentioning any names, the paper must have been referring to Elisha Allen, whose trip to the Capital took him through the California port.

Dozens of newspapers across the nation began applying expansionist beliefs in Manifest Destiny to the archipelago. Images of America's predestined ownership of the islands appeared often as "manifest destiny seems to have decided that the scepter of sovereignty of these ocean gems shall pass from the hands of a weak and imbecile monarch and officials, into those of an

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<sup>3</sup> "The Sandwich Islands," *The Alta California* (San Francisco, CA), Mon., Apr. 14 & Apr. 22, 1851; col. D, p. 1; "Late from the Sandwich Islands," *The Alta California* (San Francisco, CA), Thurs., May 15, 1851; col. B, p. 1. Hawaii being a pear ripe for plucking became a common reference from the 1850s through annexation.

enlightened people.”<sup>4</sup> The *Daily Scioto Gazette* in Ohio declared, “It is the Manifest Destiny of the Hawaiian group to remain independent, or to become a State of the Union.”<sup>5</sup> The New York *Weekly Herald* connected the archipelago with continental expansion by claiming, “The day star of Republicanism which rose in California, now throws its light across the blue waters of the Pacific, kindling the hopes and exciting the anticipations of all who believe in the great political mission of the United States and her democratic sons.”<sup>6</sup> The Reverend Henry T. Cheever, who traveled through the Pacific in the 1840s and spent substantial time in Hawaii, wrote, “Perhaps it is in the providential plan of the world’s great Ruler, that the Sandwich Islands would yet be adopted into the Great American Confederacy.”<sup>7</sup>

Newspapers also began connecting expansion into the Pacific in familial terms, as Hawaii was often feminized with expressions of desire to bring the islands into the “family” of the nation. James Jackson Jarves claimed, “The Islanders have thus a moral claim upon the American nation for protection. In no way can this be more efficiently bestowed than by receiving them into the family of this great republic.”<sup>8</sup> The *Alta* told its readers, “We not only hope this is true, but also that the cloak of Uncle Sam may be folded around this beautiful sea nymph of the Pacific and she be domesticated in the great family.”<sup>9</sup>

By June 1851, following the arrival of Severance’s dispatches regarding the letter of protectorate from Kamemaheha III, rumors of an impending offer of annexation hit the

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<sup>4</sup> “Important from the Sandwich Islands—A Republic in the Pacific Ocean—Annexation of the Sandwich Islands to the United States,” *The Weekly Herald* (New York, NY), Sat., May 01, 1852; Issue 18; col C, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> “Sandwich Islands,” *The Daily Scioto Gazette* (Chillicothe, OH), Tues., July 22, 1851; Issue 196; col C, p.1.

<sup>6</sup> “Important from the Sandwich Islands,” *Weekly Herald*, col C, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> “The Sandwich Islands” *The Alto California* (San Francisco, CA), Oct. 1851, 298-300.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> “Late from the Sandwich Islands,” Thurs., May 15, 1851; col. B, p.1. For an extensive discussion on Manifest Destiny language in publications regarding Hawaii see “Health and Hula: Annexationists Consider Hawaii,” in Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 243-260.

newspapers.<sup>10</sup> One wondered, “If, then, the King of the Sandwich, with a long name, chooses to lay aside the trapping of his royalty and become a common citizen among the sovereign people of the United States, why should not his request be granted?” The paper predicted, “This is but “a shadow” of “coming events.”<sup>11</sup> The *Weekly Herald* asked, “Would it not be well to make the question of the annexation of these important islands to the United States one of the issues in your next Presidential election?”<sup>12</sup> A year later, Severance received copies of some of the newspapers speculating that he had negotiated an annexation treaty; he wrote the state department to remind it that there was no truth in the rumor.<sup>13</sup>

Not all newspapers were thrilled with the idea of annexing Hawaii. The *Hinds County Gazette* of Mississippi argued that, even though the islands were “extremely important to the commerce of all nations,” the United States still had “urgent matters” on the continent to address first. The Hawaiian question should wait “until we have solved the Cuban problem here at our doors, cleared away the obstructions which threaten to involve us in controversies with foreigners upon vital questions concerning Central America, and determined some domestic questions concerning the very nature of continuance of our Government.”<sup>14</sup>

Newspapers sharing the *Hinds County Gazette*’s concerns reflected the larger problem in the United States’ potential acquisition of non-contiguous possessions—its inability to bear the burden of an imperial possession before becoming a first-tier nation. As the article suggests, several more pressing issues of development required attention before the United States could throw Uncle Sam’s cloak across the Pacific Ocean. Internal political dissent over expansion,

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<sup>10</sup> “Arrival of the Crescent City Sandwich Islands Applying for Annexation,” *The Cleveland Herald*, (Cleveland, OH) Thurs., June 19, 1851; Issue 145; col C.

<sup>11</sup> “Sandwich Islands—Annexation,” *Dover Gazette & Strafford Advertiser* (Dover, NH), Sat., Nov. 15, 1851; Issue 2; col B.

<sup>12</sup> “Important from the Sandwich Islands,” *Weekly Herald*, col C, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Severance to Webster, Oct. 14, 1852, No. 58, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>14</sup> “The Sandwich Islands,” editorial, *The Hinds County Gazette* (Raymond, MS), Thurs., July 17, 1851; Issue 5; Col. D.

slavery, and the tariff, among other issues, needed resolution before Americans could focus on a first-tier foreign policy agenda. Further, more urgent foreign policy problems needed reconciliation, especially those concerning southern expansionist agendas regarding Cuba.

In response to anti-expansionist position, some newspapers made geopolitical arguments to encourage annexation. The *Ohio Observer* opined that Hawaii's independence was not sustainable and that the only way for Hawaii to achieve its potential would be "as a member of the American confederation." It supposed annexation was the only answer to keeping the foreign powers at bay and claimed that for the American inhabitants of Hawaii, "Annexation would be a blessing."<sup>15</sup> The *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* cautioned that if the United States did not take the islands, France would. More importantly, the paper warned that Hawaii was becoming "the resort of adventurers of all nations, and will soon be the theater of anarchy and confusion, unless the United States should interfere and extend over them their protecting powers." Finally, the article observed that if the United States annexed the archipelago, it would save the Californians from having to seize the islands themselves.<sup>16</sup>

This last article addressed an increasing concern that news of a possible annexation had inspired individual Americans to consider undertaking private filibusters to achieve what Fillmore and Webster refused. By the end of 1851, several newspapers began running stories of a rumored filibuster to Hawaii. The *New York Times* reported that a "large company of immigrants" was planning an expedition, armed with a constitution written in San Francisco replete with provisions to introduce slavery to the Hawaiian plantations.<sup>17</sup> Later reports claimed that a company of men was planning to embark on the *Game Cock* with the intent to take

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<sup>15</sup> "The Sandwich Islands," editorial *The Ohio Observer* (Hudson, OH), Wed., July 9, 1851; Issue 26; Col. A.

<sup>16</sup> "It is said," *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* (Bangor, ME), Tues., Dec. 23, 1851; Issue 148; col. C.

<sup>17</sup> "The California Expedition to the Sandwich Islands," *North American And United States Gazette* (Philadelphia, PA), Sat., Dec. 13, 1851; Issue 18, 323; col. H.

Honolulu with the assistance of pro-annexationists in Hawaii. The *New York Weekly Herald* reported that one boat of filibusterers had already left California with a second to follow. The paper opined, “those islands will soon be under the dominion of the star spangled banner.”<sup>18</sup>

Another newspaper claimed, “a number of American gentlemen, among whom is Samuel Brennan, esq., of San Francisco, have, within the last few months, made extensive purchases of land there with a view to the anticipated change in the form of government, and the raising of tobacco, sugar, coffee, &c., for the supply of California and the Pacific coast.”<sup>19</sup>

As these news stories arrived in Honolulu, they prompted concern for Hawaiian sovereignty. Meetings were held at Honolulu to adopt measures of defense, and a committee of safety was appointed to take such measures as the exigency might demand. Foreign Secretary R. C. Wyllie issued a proclamation, establishing defensive forces on each island of at least several hundred trained men, including thirteen hundred stationed in Honolulu because he felt it unwise to rely on U.S. forces to protect them from American filibusterers.<sup>20</sup> Commissioner Severance was also concerned about the rumors when he received a request from the Kahina Nui to take all measures allowable under U.S. law to stop the filibusters rumored to have left San Francisco. He quickly penned a dispatch asking for advice on how to deal with an armed invasion if it arrived.<sup>21</sup>

Ultimately, the rumors proved accurate but the expedition did not amount to a successful filibuster. The *Game Cock* did in fact land in Honolulu with Samuel F. Brannan and twenty-four other men on board who believed that Kamehameha III would willingly give up his crown for an

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<sup>18</sup> "Invasion" of the Sandwich Islands," *Bangor Daily Whig & Courier* (Bangor, ME), Thurs., Jan. 30, 1851; Issue 181; col C; "Ten Days Later from Hawaii Important Expedition from California—Threatened Invasion," *The Weekly Herald* (New York, NY), Sat., Dec. 06, 1851; Issue 49; col A; W. C. Wyllie to Severance, Nov. 3, 1851, confidential, enclosure in Luther Severance to Daniel Webster, Nov. 4, 1851. No. 26, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>19</sup> "Important from the Sandwich Island," col. C, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Andrew F. Rolle, "California Filibustering and the Hawaiian Kingdom," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 19, no. 3 (Aug., 1950), 256-57; Judd, *Honolulu: Sketches of Life*, 219-20; Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood*, 234.

<sup>21</sup> W. C. Wyllie to Severance, Nov. 3, 1851, confidential, enclosure in Luther Severance to Daniel Webster, Nov. 4, 1851. No. 26, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

annuity for life. They came armed with a constitution making Brannan governor-general and allowing for slavery. Their plan, however, failed because the king was not in Honolulu when they arrived and the marshal thwarted the men's efforts to contact him after learning of the plot from one of the intoxicated filibusters. When no uprising led by an American resident ensued, the men told American commissioner Luther Severance that they wanted to invest in sugar plantations and remain in Hawaii, but only if they could be given assurances of annexation in the near future. They wanted to ensure that their sugar investments would not be harmed by a tariff. Severance could not make them such a guarantee. Within days of this rebuff, several of the filibusterers found themselves in the middle of a barroom brawl in a French hotel after a placard exposing their embarrassing plot was hung on a fence outside their rental residence. Upon their release from jail, most returned to San Francisco disappointed that there was not a large revolutionary sentiment among Americans living on the islands.<sup>22</sup>

This incident, while not successful, created a paranoia in Hawaii that had profound impact on the direction of foreign policy and internal politics on the islands. First, the threat of filibuster opened discussions of protection, leading R. C. Willey to establish an expensive militia force, which led to debates over taxation during the recession. More importantly, it highlighted the problem with Hawaii relying on foreign naval vessels for security. While the United States offered protection from the European powers, would they provide the same against their own citizens? Further, many on the archipelago took this filibuster as a sign of Washington's true intentions to eventually take the islands as their own possession.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> William Cooper Parke, *Personal Reminiscences of William Cooper Parke: Marshal of the Hawaiian Islands, from 1850 to 1884* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1891), 27-31; Severance to Webster, Dec. 8, 1851, No. 32; June 13, 1852, No. 51; and June 30, 1852, No. 52, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA; Richard W. van Alstyne, "Great Britain, the United States, and Hawaiian Independence, 1850-1855," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 4, no. 1 (Mar., 1935), 15-24; Rolle, "California Filibustering," 251-263.

<sup>23</sup> Rolle, "California Filibustering," 256-57; Judd, *Honolulu: Sketches*, 219-20.

For the United States' part, the Brannan expedition also exposed a familiar problem for the U.S. government. Private American expansionists often pushed for greater acquisition of territory without the advice or consent of Washington, placing the United States in a precarious situation internationally. These men assumed that Kamehameha III would willingly turn over his nation to a group of filibusters in exchange for an annual annuity and they seemed completely oblivious to any possible reaction by the other foreign interests on the islands. The Fillmore administration, however, had to deal with the international complications arising from these rumors. Webster had already transmitted to Henry Bulwer, British minister to the United States, a copy of his dispatch to Severance regarding the letter of protectorate from Kamehameha III to assure England that Washington had no intention of violating Hawaiian sovereignty. Following the expedition, Webster was forced to reiterate his promise.<sup>24</sup>

If the acquisition of Hawaii only required the consent of a king with no means of protecting his nation, then the annexation would have been a simple feat, but Washington had to be mindful of the French and British response to any such aggression. Immediately upon the arrival of Brannan and his crew, British consul general Miller sent a letter to London expressing concern for the group's arrival and requesting a British naval vessel to be stationed in Honolulu harbor to keep the French from attempting another move and to intimidate any possible filibusters from California. Admiral Moresby, the British commander in the Pacific, agreed, believing the American influence on the islands was becoming too great and that those advising the king were not concerned for the nation, but rather with annexation. The French minister to Washington also expressed concerns directly to Webster who could only assure him that

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<sup>24</sup> Richard W. Van Alstyne, "Great Britain, The United States, and Hawaiian Independence, 1850-1855," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 4, no. 1 (Mar., 1935), 17-18.

California authorities were under orders to prevent the departure of any filibustering expedition.<sup>25</sup>

This incident greatly complicated a developing discussion over international interest in Cuba. While President Fillmore was still in office, England and France requested that the United States enter into a tripartite treaty ensuring the *status quo* in Cuba and guarantee that the Spanish secure control against possible American filibustering or European threat. Privately, Fillmore was interested in the idea, but wanted to extend the same guarantee to Hawaii in response to French aggression. This agreement would have guaranteed open U.S. access in both countries, while placing little burden on Washington to provide physical protection. When news of the Brannan filibuster arrived in Europe, protection against filibustering was added to the list of guarantees. Fillmore would probably have had an extremely difficult time convincing congress to agree to this treaty, but the idea never went past the point of discussions before Fillmore's defeat in the election of 1852. With the arrival of Franklin Pierce in the White House, the plan stalled.<sup>26</sup>

Ultimately, the filibuster failed and none of the treaties came to fruition, leaving U.S. newspapers to speculate what happened. The *Sacramento Union* argued that the Hawaiian filibuster fell apart in the planning stages because half of the investors backed out after slavery was introduced to the constitution.<sup>27</sup> The *Georgia Daily Morning News* surmised that the reports may have been started as a decoy for an actual expedition into Lower California.<sup>28</sup> The *New York Weekly Herald* claimed that the rumors were the result of a misunderstanding of a meeting

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 17; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:408-09.

<sup>26</sup> Van Alstyne, "Great Britain, the United States," 18-19.

<sup>27</sup> "The Sandwich Islands," editorial, *The Sacramento Union* (Sacramento, CA), Wed., Dec. 3, 1851; Issue 17; Col. F.

<sup>28</sup> "Invasion of the Sandwich Islands," *Daily Morning News* (Savannah, GA), Tues., Jan. 28, 1851; Issue 12, col. E; "Invasion of the Sandwich Islands," *Bangor Daily Whig and Courier* (Bangor, ME), Thurs., Jan. 30, 1851; Issue 181; col. C.

between Elisha Allen, and General James M. Estill, Samuel Brannon, and Henry E. Robinson in New York while Allen was under the commission of the king. The conversation involved creating an immigration company to settle in Hawaii.<sup>29</sup>

While the majority of the stories proved inaccurate, these newspapers revealed several important things. First, the media consistently represented the archipelago as a logical extension of the American annexation of California. While China and Southeast Asia were destinations of interest, Hawaii's connection to the American west coast trade seemed more important than the overseas markets. Second, many Americans already saw Hawaii as a vital U.S. interest prior to the Civil War, greatly contradicting the idea that the archipelago later became an interest, during the United States' rise to world power in the Gilded Age. Third, the arrival of the *Game Cock* in Honolulu demonstrates that, while private American citizens believed in expansion beyond the continent, Washington had to take a more cautious stance and could not condone or support such actions because of the international political ramifications and the United States' vulnerable position within that hierarchy. Finally, it is important to note that the majority of newspapers covering developments in the island nation were northern publications, indicating that missionary and merchant expansionists were far more interested than southern planters.

These discussions in newspapers also influenced interests in the U. S. capital. The first rumblings of annexation sentiment in Washington came in the fall of 1852 when the Senate and House passed resolutions calling for the president to furnish official correspondence regarding Hawaiian policy. California congressman Joseph W. McCorkle spoke in the official record of the need to annex Hawaii and criticized President Fillmore for rejecting any overtures from the

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<sup>29</sup> "The Reported Expedition to the Islands," editorial, in *The Weekly Herald*, (New York, NY) Sat., Dec. 6, 1851; Issue 49, col. A. This report was probably inaccurate because Brannon was also cited as being in California at this same time, and therefore could not have attended this meeting in New York. I have seen to records show any meeting between Allen and Brannon.

islands. He believed it was a “stupendous blunder” resulting from the president’s “short sightedness, as the gnat’s eye is incompetent to grasp the steeple of St. Paul.” As a Democrat, McCorkle criticized Fillmore for adhering to his party line against expansion, “which it would have been supposed that pride in our growth and power, if not patriotism, would have rejected.” He refuted the idea that enlarging the U.S. territory too extensively could be dangerous to the nation, arguing that such ideas were an “impeachment of our political system.” He attacked the Whig party’s anti-expansionist platform as unpatriotic, arguing, “it is time that the exploded anti-American notion that our Government is only suited to a small territory should cease to operate upon or have advocates in power.”<sup>30</sup>

Reflecting the congressman’s belief that Hawaii was already part of the American system and should be a U.S. possession, McCorkle argued against entering into a tripartite protection treaty because it would take the American prerogative of annexation away. He said that U.S. policy disallowed Europe to interfere on the continent, “but if we enter into joint treaties to guaranty the separate independence of the American Islands, we not only place it beyond their power, by their own consent, to become annexed to the United States.”<sup>31</sup>

That same month, the future expansionist secretary of state under President Abraham Lincoln, Senator William H. Seward, offered a resolution requesting information from the president regarding any offer by King Kamehameha III to transfer sovereignty of the islands to the United States. The resolution received unanimous consent. President Fillmore, however, declined the request twelve days later on the ground that it “would not comport with the public interest.”<sup>32</sup> With this rebuff, it became clear that the Fillmore administration would not alter Webster’s established policy. With the ailing secretary unable to work, and a presidential

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<sup>30</sup> Representative McCorkle, Aug. 30, 1852, *Congressional Globe*, 32 Cong., 1 Sess., append. 1084, 5.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, append. 1084, 5.

<sup>32</sup> Senator William Seward, *Senate Journal*, 32 Cong., 1 Sess., 572, 603.

election looming on the horizon, U.S. Hawaiian policy would remain intact until Franklin Pierce took the helm.

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Regardless of Samuel Brannan's failures, the inaccuracy of the newspaper reports, or Fillmore's adherence to his established policy, the filibuster threat in 1851 only compounded the developing political and economic problems in Hawaii. The kingdom had undergone major changes during Kamehameha III's reign which created a new internal threat to the archipelago's sovereignty. First, Hawaii's economy changed significantly in reaction to the California gold rush, creating a short-lived economic boom. Second, during those same years, the king made several changes to the political system. He established a new constitution granting universal suffrage and instituted a new land tenure system enabling foreigners to purchase land. These modifications caused a shift in the political structure of the islands with the development of political parties and the influx of foreign land speculators who asserted political pressure on the crown. Finally, a small pox epidemic hit the native population hard in the first half of 1853, killing thousands of native Hawaiians and threatening to leave the islands under the control of foreigners. These things, combined with the possible external threat of another American filibuster or French invasion, led Kamehameha III to consider negotiating an annexation treaty with the United States.

The California gold rush had a profound effect on the Hawaiian economy. As stated earlier, Hawaii began as a trading port on the Pacific merchant routes. The major economic resource of the islands through the mid-1840s was the whaling industry. Twice each year, whaling ships entered the harbor to resupply before heading to sea. Hawaiian merchants made

enormous profits that they reinvested by importing goods from the American East Coast, South America, and Europe. Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, the whaling industry began to decline as over fishing caused shortages in the whale population at the same time that discoveries of coal and petroleum oil led to a shift in manufacturing uses away from whale oil. By the late 1840s, Hawaiian imports outnumbered its exports.

Fortunately for Hawaii, as the whaling industry began to decline, massive immigration to Oregon and California began, allowing Hawaii to export much of its excess European stock to the coastline. The American west coast had already become a natural trade partner to the islands. In the 1830s, Hawaii started importing large amounts of lumber and salmon from the Hudson Bay Company in Oregon, while islanders relied heavily on Oregon lumber to build all its major cities and ports, especially Honolulu. As Americans began flooding into California and Oregon in the late 1840s, trade between Hawaii and the west coast grew steadily. This burgeoning trade began to replace the revenues lost by the declining sandalwood and whaling industries and created a quick profit.<sup>33</sup>

With the discovery of gold in California in 1848 and Australia in 1851, Hawaii also became a major stop for prospectors from the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and China, changing the population demographics of the islands. Many Hawaiians and foreigners living in the archipelago left the islands to make their fortune in the gold fields, greatly depleting the population. Laura Fish Judd, wife of Dr. Judd, noted in October of 1848 that three hundred men had already received passports to California and more requested them every day, most of whom returned during the winter, only exacerbating the already inflationary prices of the remaining supplies on the islands.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:319-21.

<sup>34</sup> Judd, *Honolulu: Sketches*, 175.

One of the major industries affected by demands in California was agricultural production. Prior to this, most agriculture on the islands centered on supplying whaling and merchant ships, but not in producing many staple crops. The sudden influx of miners in California created a lucrative opportunity for Hawaiians to sell their surplus goods. For example, in the late 1840s, Hawaiians producing Irish potatoes made substantial profit by selling to the California gold fields. This inspired an increase in plantation agricultural production, especially in two key tropical staple crops: sugar and coffee.<sup>35</sup>

The plantations were made possible by the change in land policy known as *Great Mahele*, which granted private land ownership in fee simple to native Hawaiians. The feudal lands were divided up among the king, chiefs, and native residents who could make a claim to lands they worked and lived on. These changes were enacted as a framework to allow the people to integrate into the new economic and political system being introduced on the islands.

In 1850, the legislature extended that policy, allowing subject and alien foreign residents to purchase land and to dispose of it on an equal footing with native Hawaiians. This was a controversial decision. Many natives and missionaries feared that allowing more foreigners to own land would dilute the political and social power of the natives and potentially lead to their domination of the government. Others saw this happening regardless and proposed tying these foreigners to the kingdom through land ownership, believing they would have a greater interest in preserving the sovereignty of the islands from foreign aggression if their fortunes were connected to the land. This change in policy would also help to ensure the growth of the

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<sup>35</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:319-21.

agricultural sector. Hawaiians needed foreign capital and the only way to acquire it was to guarantee land ownership to investors.<sup>36</sup>

That same year the legislature passed the Masters and Servants Act, establishing the legal basis for the contract labor system in Hawaii. Originally devised as a solution to the declining population and the increasing demand for labor, the law enabled business and plantation owners to import workers, especially from Asia and South America. The act had two parts. The first, loosely based on laws from Massachusetts, provided for apprenticing minors. The second part resembled New York and Connecticut shipping law, allowing anyone over the age of twenty to contract themselves to a term up to five years. There were legal penalties for failure to work or complete a contract, including jail time and fines.<sup>37</sup> This new act created the basis for the growth of the islands' plantation system.

High demand for food products in California and Australia, combined with the land reform and contract labor system, led to a major change in the Hawaiian economy. Where it had been a major hub of trade in the Pacific, it now became a producer of agricultural goods. These developments had a profound effect on the future of Hawaii. They created an environment of potential profit drawing more foreign investment and translating into increased foreign immigration. But all this resulted in over production and land speculation that led to a rise in land prices. By the early 1850s, California began producing its own foodstuffs, greatly decreasing trade with the islands and sparking a major recession in Hawaii.

The sugar industry survived because the men who established the first plantations took advantage of the capital gained during the boom to invest in cutting-edge technology, which enabled Hawaii to produce top grade sugar, competitive with lower grade prices. Many hired

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<sup>36</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:297; Helen Geracimos Chapman, *Shaping History: the Role of Newspapers in Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1996), 34.

<sup>37</sup> Edward D. Beechert, *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 41-45.

masonry experts to build taller, better designed, flue shafts for their furnaces, which enhanced the quality of molasses produced. Those who could afford it, purchased the new centrifugal separator that greatly improved the quality of both sugar and molasses while reducing the time and labor to separate them.<sup>38</sup>

Many of those “all sided men” also took advantage of the change in land tenure and the burgeoning sugar economy in Oregon and California to invest most of their resources into sugar plantations. Men like Henry A. Pierce, the Boston merchant who had urged Daniel Webster to formalize relations with Hawaii, collaborated with former Chief Justice of the Hawaiian Superior Court William Little Lee and his associate Charles R. Bishop to form the Lihue plantation on Kauai. Dr. Robert W. Wood and his partner A. H. Spencer formed the East Maui Plantation. Both used their resources to implement the newest technologies in sugar refining, including the new centrifugal machines.<sup>39</sup> These men had the financial resources not only to afford these upgrades, but to withstand several years of net loss to implement and perfect their use—something the small farmer could not outlast. As the plantations started showing large profits, many investors began to believe that sugar production would be the best solution to Hawaiian economic problems.

Furthermore, the economic decline also exacerbated a long running struggle between the native and foreign population over control of the political system. Property holding foreigners wanted more voice in economic policy, especially regarding to taxation and trade. Believing they were better equipped to deal with fiscal policy, these men pushed for political participation. Granting such privileges, however, was a highly contested and complicated issue. Many foreign

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<sup>38</sup> Dr. Robert W. Wood, “The Manufacture of Sugar,” vol. 1, no. 1, 65-71; H.A. Pierce, “On Agricultural Implements,” vol. 1, no. 2, 118-119, both in *The Transaction of the Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society*, (Honolulu: Henry M. Whitney, Government Press, 1850). (hereafter cited RHAS)

<sup>39</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:324-5.

residents were already serving under the king in his cabinet and had been granted subject status by him personally, but not all foreign residents were granted the same voting and office holding rights as natives under the 1840 constitution.

The first formal legislation addressing rights and responsibilities of citizenship appeared in the 1830s regarding foreign marriage. In an attempt to prevent the abandonment of women and children by foreign sailors, the government first outlawed fornication between unmarried individuals and then began requiring a monetary bond to obtain legal marriage certification. Proponents of this legislation believed that the implementation of these bonds would ensure that marriages would occur only between “good foreigners” who intended to settle permanently and block those who were seeking fortunes or less than reputable objectives.<sup>40</sup>

These laws introduced an idea that became important to *Haole*-native relationships: the idea of “good” and “bad” foreigners. Some of them proved to be an asset to the monarchy—members of the ABCFM such as William Richards and Dr. Gerrit P. Judd and British subjects like sitting Foreign Secretary Robert C. Wyllie— who gained their appointments through special compensation from the king and had been valuable advisors and representatives for the Hawaiian people. Others came to the islands for economic gains, with little respect for their sovereignty of the islands and even less intent on helping improve the economic viability of the archipelago beyond their own personal gain. The difference between these types of men would be instrumental in the debate over foreign citizenship rights. The monarchy recognized that foreign money and political acumen were necessary for Hawaiian survival, but there needed to be ways to ensure against abuses by the opportunists.

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<sup>40</sup> Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui*, 58-59.

These “bad *haole*” also proved to be the biggest challenge for the American leadership and the largest threat to the relationship between Washington and Honolulu. Many of the Americans who came to the archipelago in the 1840s and 1850s were not only “all-sided men” but also speculators, failed businessmen, filibusters, or even swindlers. The U.S. government had no control over the exploits of these men, who often engaged in activities that interfered in American diplomatic relations. When these individuals challenged the sovereignty of the monarchy, their actions placed Washington in a precarious situation between the European powers and the Hawaiian government.

In an attempt to remedy these problems, the completely native legislature passed the Residency Laws in 1850, allowing foreign participation in the political process. Such participation had already existed for decades with individuals such as Judd and Wyllie, but these laws allowed for a more extensive participation by those without a direct relationship to the king. The first section granted full rights to naturalized foreigners, requiring a denunciation of one’s former citizenship and an oath of loyalty to the kingdom. When the majority of foreign residents refused to accept these requirements, the legislature extended the franchise and the right to hold office to denizens — residents who received a letter from the king rendering them subject to the laws in the same respect of full citizens without a formal transfer of citizenship. This was a way to subjugate foreigners to the native laws and to negate any privileges of extraterritoriality, without forcing them to renounce their original citizenship. A procedure now existed that enabled foreigners to become *Haole* and participate in political decision affecting their investments while ostensibly ensuring the incorporation of only “good” foreigners.

The first major election including *Haole* came in 1851, resulting in a shift of focus by the legislature. Traditionally, the House of Representatives had been an extension of the paternalistic

system through which the people could address minor grievances. The legislators spent the majority of their time reading petitions from individuals regarding local law, tax, or land disputes. With the election of *Haole*, this body began referring such matters to committees and started proposing legislation directed at improving the economy, infrastructure, and legal system of the islands. Instead of dealing with individual complaints, they would now be creating a legal system to address all grievances in a structured manner.

The focus of these new legislators was to stimulate commerce, which was increasingly at the mercy of the American economy. For sugar to succeed, it had to have a market, which led many in Hawaii to believe that economic success relied on the possibility of a reciprocity treaty between the islands and the United States. Understanding the American west coast to be the archipelago's natural trading partner, Hawaiian sugar planters argued that a duty free reciprocity treaty would benefit sugar plantation owners, merchants, and California manufacturers.

The idea had been gaining in popularity for several years and for differing reasons. In 1845, the Scottish native Robert C. Wyllie became Hawaiian foreign minister and believed the best way to preserve Hawaii's independence was to secure commercial treaties with the major nations. This would have a two-fold effect. First, trade agreements would provide much needed economic growth for the islands. Second, he believed that expanding the economy and opening it to all countries would satisfy the foreign residents and thus the foreign powers who threatened the archipelago's independence by reducing the possibility of frictions over lack of access or opportunity.<sup>41</sup>

Wyllie's proposition gained more allies as many foreign investors saw staple crop productions as the future of the island's economy and began calling for either reciprocity treaties

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<sup>41</sup> Sylvester K. Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii, 1842-1898* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1954), 46-47.

or annexation to the United States. By 1852, the Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society (RHA) called for a treaty removing the tariff wall from American markets. By then, many of those fledgling plantations were either bankrupt or on the verge, and foreign investors grew increasingly concerned that their investments would soon be lost. Then RHA President William Little Lee articulated the need for duty free sales of sugar to San Francisco but expressed doubt it would come to fruition.<sup>42</sup>

U.S. representatives shared the RHA's concerns and attempted to persuade Washington in that regard. American consul Elisha Allen wrote a friend of his conviction that the United States needed to annex or enter into a reciprocal trade agreement with the archipelago to alleviate the financial troubles of the sugar industry. His counterpart, Commissioner Luther Severance wrote directly to Washington, proposing the negotiation of a duty free exchange of Hawaiian sugar for Oregon salmon, flour, and lumber. He argued that the sugar producers, predominantly American, could not compete with the low-grade and inexpensive sugar imported from China and the Philippines unless they reached an agreement. He further contended that an arrangement involving the west coast would have little negative impact on the Louisiana sugar producers.<sup>43</sup>

Nothing came of this appeal and the Hawaiian economy declined farther, causing greater political infighting and concern for the king. Several businessmen and office seekers began blaming the troubles on the Ministers of Finance and Public Instruction, Dr. Gerrit Judd and Rev. Richard Armstrong.<sup>44</sup> Both former missionaries, they earned powerful enemies among the *haole* by supporting Hawaiian sovereignty, encouraging moral legislation, and promoting native rights. It was believed that these two men were strongly influencing the king against requesting

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<sup>42</sup> William Little Lee, "Report of the President," *RHAS*, vol. 1, no. 3, 1-9.

<sup>43</sup> Rhoda Elizabeth Armstrong Hackler, "Elisha Hunt Allen: Son of new England-Man of Hawaii" (M.A. Thesis, University of Hawaii, 1972), 83; Severance to Webster, Jan. 27, 1852, No. 38, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>44</sup> Luther Severance to Edward Everett, Jan. 29, 1853, No. 65 & Jan. 31, 1853, No. 66, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

annexation to the United States and that their removal from office could greatly increase the possibility of his pursuing that course.

The ministers' adversaries began their move in 1853. Early that year, an American vessel, the *Charles Mallory*, arrived in Honolulu flying a yellow flag, signaling disease onboard. One crewmember suffering from smallpox had been left on a reef at Kalihi and the rest of the crew exhibited no signs of illness. The Privy Council<sup>45</sup> directed Judd to set up a quarantine facility and asked Armstrong to work on an improved vaccination. By the end of March, no new cases appeared and the *Charles Mallory* was allowed to leave. Several months later, after numerous other vessels from the American west coast had come and gone, two Hawaiian women fell ill with smallpox. The disease spread quickly into an epidemic, resulting in an estimated four and six thousand native Hawaiian deaths.<sup>46</sup>

The islands' leaders held public meetings to discuss the epidemic and its negative effect on the commercial exchange and whaling industry. The government had attempted to prevent an outbreak by encouraging vaccinations, but efforts failed because of a disagreement over the type of vaccination to administer and the fear by most native Hawaiians that the vaccination might make them sick. The men who attended the meeting agreed to petition the king to take stronger measures enforcing vaccinations and containing the disease by issuing laws governing burial methods, forced hospitalization of the sick, and vaccination for the healthy.<sup>47</sup>

A group of Judd and Armstrong's most radical political opponents attempted to use this outbreak to their advantage, accusing the duo of causing the epidemic and calling for their

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<sup>45</sup> The Privy Council consisted of the Chief Judge of the Courts, Judge Lee, the king, and the chiefs- including the princes.

<sup>46</sup> Daws, *Shoal of Time*, 139-140; Judd IV, *Dr. Judd: Hawaii's Friend*, 220-224. The outbreak is believed to have come from a trunk of cloths purchased from one of these ships, sorted and washed by the two women who were the first known cases among the natives.

<sup>47</sup> Judd, IV, *Dr. Judd: Hawaii's Friend*, 203-204; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:413.

removal. Many of them attended the public meetings and proposed a much more aggressive approach to the problem—the removal of Judd and Armstrong and the possible annexation to the United States. When rebuffed, they called another meeting on July 20, 1853, where they elected officers to comprise a “Committee of Thirteen” whose purpose was to draft a petition calling for the ministers’ resignations. Their petition was signed by 260 foreigners and 12,220 natives and presented to the king.<sup>48</sup> The core group of thirteen, however, did not believe that a petition went far enough and secretly decided to force the abdication of the monarchy and apply for annexation to the United States. They threatened to invite filibusters from California and to incite whalers to riot in an effort to assist in the overthrow as a means of intimidating the king into acquiescing to their petition.

As rumors of these radical Americans began to circulate around Honolulu, several other factions voiced concern over the sovereignty of the islands. Five days after the Committee of Thirteen formed, another public meeting of predominantly native residents convened, adopting a counter petition supporting Judd and Armstrong and declaring the charges against them to be slanderous. Another group, composed of several chiefs and cabinet members, rallied around the young prince Liholiho, influencing him against consenting to any abdication proposed or agreed upon by his uncle Kamehameha III.<sup>49</sup>

This deluge of petitions overwhelmed the king, leading him to ask the Privy Council to investigate the accusations against Judd and Armstrong. Its members discovered that the majority of the native signatures collected by the Committee of Thirteen were forged and only a quarter of the non-native names were actually citizens with the legal right to petition the king. Many of the legitimate signatures were from men who either held personal grudges against Judd

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<sup>48</sup> George Washington Bates, *Sandwich Island Notes* (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1854), 437-443; Severance to Marcy, Aug. 15, 1853, No. 88, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>49</sup> Judd IV, *Dr. Judd: Hawaii's Friend*, 203-206; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:414.

and Armstrong or disliked the missionary inspired laws prohibiting liquor. They also determined that most of the accusations were unsubstantiated, and the few based on fact were not sufficient justification for removal. The king agreed, but decided to leave the decision to the local chiefs and Prince Alexander Liholiho.<sup>50</sup>

While the Privy Council conducted its investigation, another group of Americans met separately to discuss the future of the islands. They determined that the Committee of Thirteen's actions were too radical and invited too much danger and instability to warrant their compliance. Consequently, they decided to send their own memorial to the king. It addressed their concern that certain elements in Honolulu were purposely agitating political turmoil to incite a revolution in which they would obtain control over the islands and then sell them to the United States for profit. They warned the king that the dismissal of the ministers would not appease these men, but rather play into their agenda. This memorial then urged the king to consider negotiating a legal and peaceful annexation to preserve the prosperity of the archipelago and the security of the natives. Nineteen men signed this document, all considered to be the "most respectable merchants and planters" of the islands.<sup>51</sup> It appeared that the "good *haole*" were concerned that they could no longer control the "bad *haole*" who threatened the stability of their investments. The best course of action they saw was annexation to a more powerful nation which could provide a safeguard against these men.

The English and French were equally worried. British Consul General William Miller and French Consul Emile Perrin jointly met with Kamehameha III to express their concerns over the rumors of annexation and to remind the king of his 1843 treaty in which each nation agreed

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<sup>50</sup> Severance to Hammond, Aug. 24, 1853, enclosed in Severance to Marcy, Aug. 25, 1853, No. 89, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA; Miller to Clarendon, Aug. 13, 1853, No. 17, *Report of the Historical Commission of the Territory of Hawaii: for the period ending December 31* (Honolulu: Historical Commission of the Territory of Hawaii, 1922), 27-29, 31-32.

<sup>51</sup> Severance to Marcy, Aug. 25, 1853, No. 89, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

to uphold the islands' sovereignty in exchange for most-favored-nation status. They warned that Hawaii could not enter into any such agreement without violating its own constitution and international law, which both nations would not look upon favorably. After this meeting, each commissioner also requested the stationing of naval vessels in Honolulu harbor as a preemptive measure.<sup>52</sup>

With the situation becoming increasingly menacing, Kamehameha III determined he could not make the decision alone. He announced that he agreed with the Privy Council's finding, and then turned the matter over to the cabinet, local chiefs, and Prince Liholiho. R. C. Wyllie opposed their dismissal, fearing a precedent leading to more dismissals under pressure from the Committee of Thirteen. Several others felt the accusations were false and the men should retain their positions. Other members, including Prince Liholiho, believed that, regardless of the validity of the accusations, both men should resign as a means of avoiding more conflict with the opponents of Judd and Armstrong. In an attempt to stave off any further trouble, especially a possible threat against the monarchy, the Privy Council asked for the resignation of the cabinet in a five to four decision. On September 3, all four ministers tendered their resignations. Two days later, Kamehameha III promptly restored all ministers except Dr. Judd, who was replaced as Minister of Finance by former U.S. Consul Elisha H. Allen.<sup>53</sup>

The incident seems on the surface to have been an internal political fight based on personal grievances, but it had an important impact on foreign policy. Prior to the removal of Dr. Judd, it was widely believed that Kamehameha III would respond positively to an offer of annexation from the United States if not for the negative influence of the former missionary. As the economy deteriorated, several of the different political factions began to push for one

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<sup>52</sup> Memorandum from Emile Perrin and William Miller to Kamehameha III, Sept. 1, 1853, copy, and Wyllie to Severance, Sept 3, 1853, No. 8, both enclosed in Severance to Marcy, Sept. 5, 1853, No. 92, vol. 4, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>53</sup> Daws, *Shoal of Time*, 143; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:414-415.

particular solution, annexation, and were glad to see Judd's influence removed. Further, the king's willingness to turn the Judd/Armstrong matter over to his chiefs and heir left many questioning his ability to maintain authority. Foreign consuls started doubting the sustainability of the Hawaiian sovereignty as the *haole* residents increasingly maneuvered toward more control over the annexation question against this seemingly weak monarch. Additionally, rumors of Kamehameha III's worsening alcoholism further concerned those with vested stakes in the stability of the islands.

This was the situation that President Franklin Pierce's newly appointed American commissioner found when he arrived in Hawaii. David Gregg landed in Honolulu on December 19, 1853, and was immediately struck with annexationist talk. On January 4, he met with Judd, who told him the king was tired of dealing with the troubles and wanted to seek annexation but was held back by the two princes who disagreed. Judd believed that if Kamehameha abdicated to Alexander Liholiho, it would not take long for another incident to bring the young heir to the same conclusion. Judd also assumed that Gregg could negotiate a treaty of favorable terms to the chiefs.

Later that same day, William Ladd and Wesley Newcomb called on Gregg and introduced themselves as members of the Committee of Thirteen. They informed him that the group's purpose was to use "peaceful agitation" to "compel" Kamehameha III to cede the islands to the United States. If the king refused, they would consider sparking a revolution and creating a republic. Ladd and Newcomb offered this information because they wanted to know if Gregg was empowered to negotiate an annexation treaty and asked what he would do if an "emergency arose."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> David Lawrence Gregg, Jan. 4, 1854, *The Diaries of David Lawrence Gregg: An American Diplomat in Hawaii 1853-1858*, ed. Pauline King, (Honolulu: Hawaiian Historical Society, 1982), 58-59 (hereafter cited as *Gregg*

Two days after these meetings, Gregg formally presented his credentials to the king. At a reception that followed, attended by most of the government officials, Gregg spoke with other foreign residents who disagreed with this annexationist sentiment. G. W. Ryckman of San Francisco was concerned that the Committee of Thirteen's actions "were injudicious and might lead to bad results." The following day Gregg learned that this Committee of Thirteen was formed at the same meeting that composed the petition requesting the removal of Judd and Armstrong from the cabinet. Gregg believed "a crisis is at hand" and saw a clear conspiracy forming among a certain sector of the population.<sup>55</sup>

The Committee of Thirteen's actions greatly concerned Gregg so he sought the advice of some of the leaders on the islands. He held a private conversation with former U.S. consul and newly appointed Hawaiian minister of finance Elisha Allen who believed annexation was in the best interest of the island, but that the Committee of Thirteen was a group of "agitators" whose rash actions could result in a bloody reprisal by the natives if they went "too far." Allen suggested that Gregg speak with the committee leaders about moderation, reasoning that they would listen to the American commissioner if they were under the assumption that he knew something about annexation discussions.<sup>56</sup> Two days later, Gregg took Allen's advice and urged the Committee of Thirteen to take a "moderate approach," hinting that confidential talks were underway.<sup>57</sup>

Of course, Gregg lacked the authorization to enter into annexation negotiations, but he began to believe that it was possibly the best course. He wrote in his diary, "It is apparent, that

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*Diary*). William Ladd was one of the founding members of the mercantile firm Ladd and Company, who, along with Peter Allen Brinsmade, attempted to create a tripartite joint stock company with the Kamehameha III and a Belgian company to exploit lands leased to Ladd by the king. The venture failed and Ladd and Company lost everything to creditors. William Ladd blamed the king who refused to extend their longer leases on land and instead sold the land in accordance with court judgments.

<sup>55</sup> Gregg, Jan. 7, 1854, *ibid.*, 62-63.

<sup>56</sup> Gregg, Jan. 10, 1854, *ibid.*, 65-66.

<sup>57</sup> Gregg, Jan. 11, 12, 1854, *ibid.*, 67.

no great effort would be necessary to induce the government to make an offer of annexation. But I cannot move, at least, directly.” He knew that the United States could not initiate annexation without violating international agreements and its own honor, but he surmised that by playing on native fears of domestic and international disturbances, especially “filibustering” expeditions from California, he could encourage annexation through “the aid of inducements skillfully held out in an indirect way.” Gregg further worried that the actions of individual Americans could create an international situation that would prohibit Washington from taking the diplomatic route to annexation or more importantly, could drag United States into a conflict it for which it was ill prepared.<sup>58</sup> For the time being, Gregg could only wait and see how events unfolded.

On Monday January 9, the Privy Council met to consider another petition received by the king requesting that he cede the islands to the United States. The petition came from Judd and was signed by fifty-six of the most prominent foreign residents, including those who had warned against the Committee of Thirteen. These men were concerned with the rumors of an impending filibuster from California and a possible revolution against the monarchy by the Thirteen. An anonymous source told Gregg that every member of the council was in favor of the petition except Prince Liholiho, so the petition was referred to the king’s ministers. Later that day Gregg wrote in his diary, “One thing appears certain, the United States must accept the cession of these Islands, or forever lose the chance of acquiring them.”<sup>59</sup>

Three days later, Hawaiian Foreign Minister Robert C. Wyllie and Chief Justice William L. Lee met to discuss the growing internal problems and the subsequent push for annexation. They both agreed that maintaining Hawaiian sovereignty was the priority, but doubted they could sustain it long. If annexation were inevitable, they preferred the United States to England or

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<sup>58</sup> Gregg, Jan. 7, 1854, *ibid.*, 62-63.

<sup>59</sup> Gregg, Jan. 8, 1854, *Gregg Diary*, 63; Privy Council Records, Mon., Jan. 9, 1854, VIII, AH reprinted *ibid.*, 64, 521.

France. A joint protectorate by all three nations was the best solution, but Lee questioned whether such an agreement was attainable due to American traditional objections to any such arrangements. The remaining option would be to negotiate annexation to the United States as long as Hawaii entered as a state, which seemed unlikely. Ultimately, the two decided that there was no harm in trying to negotiate such a deal if the king asked them to do so.<sup>60</sup>

As Wyllie and Lee debated the issue increasing daily, the king's concern with the political intrigue and internal threat reached its limits and he decided to authorize the negotiation of annexation to the United States. On February 6, 1854, Kamehameha III ordered Wyllie to open talks with the American commissioner. Without any instructions or authorization allowing him to do so, Gregg agreed to begin the negotiations *ad referendum*, fearing that a prolongation of the discussions to await directions from Washington could result in the Hawaiians turning to Europe.<sup>61</sup>

Gregg promptly wrote Secretary of State William Marcy about this turn of events, which did not come as a surprise in Washington as the secretary had already been dealing with the backlash from England and France. As early as February 1853, the British minister in Washington began warning London that the United States' aggression on the continent was not containable and that he saw it spreading to the Pacific. Subsequently, in November 1853, he received instructions to acquire information regarding the United States' intentions toward Hawaii and its level of participation in the political intrigue by foreign residents in Honolulu. Upon meeting with Marcy, British minister John Crampton reminded the secretary about the Anglo-French declaration of 1843 ensuring Hawaiian independence, which previous American

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<sup>60</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:421.

<sup>61</sup> Order of the King to Mr. Wyllie, Feb. 6, 1854 printed in *House Ex. Docs.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 47, 149; Gregg to Marcy, Feb. 9, 1854, No. 11, vol. 5, Dispatches, NA; Gregg, Feb. 6, 7, & 8, 1854, *Gregg Diary*, 85-86; Protocol No. 1, *ibid.*, n.531. To negotiate *ad referendum* meant that any agreement reached was subject to the approval of Washington.

administrations had recognized and upheld. Marcy replied that the United States had no desire to force the annexation of Hawaii, nor would it condone the actions of individuals who conspired to such ends, but that if the Hawaiian Kingdom requested entry into the union, the United States would be disposed to annexation. He also made it clear that the United States would “resist strenuously” any attempt by England or France to take possession and that Washington would not entertain the idea of a tripartite agreement of protection.<sup>62</sup>

By December, Marcy assumed an offer of annexation was imminent, so he instructed his minister to England to determine how far British leaders were willing to go to uphold their 1843 agreement with Hawaii. The response he received was similar to the warnings of the previous month. James Buchanan, the new minister to London, had warned that the British, and he suspected the French, would not react well to annexation and that consent from either was “out of the question.” He could not gauge, however, whether they were willing to resort to war to prevent it from happening. He further offered advice, arguing against the acquisition because the United States was not ready to “defend against a strong maritime power,” and would not be “for many years.”<sup>63</sup> Buchanan’s opinion reflected the larger problem for the United States in its relationship with the Hawaiian Islands— its international vulnerability as a second-tier nation. Marcy had to gauge any response from the European nations before making decisions on a possible annexation to avoid a conflict for the U.S. Navy. Furthermore, the United States needed to maintain a stable relationship with the British to continue cooperation in its Latin American policy, especially regarding the construction of a Central American canal and the stability of Cuba.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Van Alstyne, “Great Britain,” 19-20; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:418.

<sup>63</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion*, 67-8.

<sup>64</sup> Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine*, 116-118.

Then a turn of international events provided an opportunity for Marcy to press an expansionist agenda. Tensions had been growing in Europe between Russia and the English and French over Turkey, which ultimately led to the Crimean War in March of 1854. As hostilities heightened in Europe, events in Cuba between the United States and Spain reached a critical point as well. On March 7, Cuban officials seized the *Black Warrior* for harbor violations. While some in the cabinet and Congress called for war, Pierce and Marcy took a more conciliatory approach in light of the Cuban military preparations and the possibility of European interference. Then word arrived from Buchanan in London that there would be no Anglo-French defense of Cuba in the event of a war. It seemed that they were too preoccupied with the conflict in Turkey to extend forces to assist Cuba.<sup>65</sup>

As a result, Marcy saw the possibility of achieving several goals while the British and French were enmeshed in European matters. He needed to assess Russian opinion of Hawaiian annexation. The Russian minister, who was looking for an American alliance or neutrality in the European war, replied that the tsar approved any action by the United States that antagonized the British. Marcy then asked the Russians about their willingness to sell Alaska to the United States. The secretary also sent W. L. Cazneau and Captain George B. McClellan to the Dominican Republic to acquire trade agreements and cession for a coaling station in Samana Bay.<sup>66</sup> On April 3, 1854, after news of the opening of hostilities in Turkey, Marcy sent a dispatch instructing U.S. minister to Spain Pierre Soulé to negotiate for the acquisition of Cuba.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Gara, *Franklin Pierce*, 150-153.

<sup>66</sup> For an extensive explanation of the United States relationship with Santo Domingo and the effort to acquire Samana Bay see: Harold T. Pinkett, "Efforts to Annex Santo Domingo to the United States, 1866-1871," *The Journal of Negro History* (Jan. 1941), vol. 26, no. 1, 12-45.

<sup>67</sup> Frank A. Golder, "Russian-American Relations during the Crimean War," *American Historical Review*, vol. 31, no. 3 (Apr., 1926), 467; Roy Franklin Nichols, *Franklin Pierce: Young Hickory of the Granite Hills* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1958), 328-329; Gara, *Franklin Pierce*, 136-156;

The following day, on April 4, Marcy sent Gregg a dispatch authorizing negotiations of annexation. He explained that it was not the policy of the United States to force annexation on the Hawaiian Islands, but if a natural course of events left the kingdom vulnerable, the United States would not allow it to fall to any other nation. He further asserted that Gregg should not entertain a discussion of a protectorate, because such an arrangement placed a heavy burden on the United States without “compensating advantages.” Gregg’s instructions allowed him to offer the royals a \$100,000 annuity, without granting them special rights or privileges beyond property holdings. To expedite ratification, Marcy requested that the treaty be signed by the Hawaiian government before sending it to the United States, accompanied with an individual vested with full powers to authorize any modifications made by the secretary or Senate once in Washington. Finally, Marcy warned Gregg that the European powers opposed annexation and would possibly attempt to thwart any negotiations, so he urged the commissioner to expedite the process.<sup>68</sup> Marcy sent this dispatch prior to receiving word of Wyllie’s negotiation proposal. It was clear that the secretary hoped to take advantage of the European distraction to annex the islands without risking a major confrontation to accomplish the goal.

While Gregg and Wyllie proceeded with their talks, the propaganda battle in Hawaii ensued. The Department of Public Instruction began publishing pro-annexationist stories in the Hawaiian language newspaper the *Ka Nu Hou*, while a public discussion was held at the Kawaiahaeo Church. The crowd appeared to be against the proposal, hissing at Gerrit Judd when he spoke on the subject but applauding when Cabinet member John Ii and Prince Liholiho advocated independence. In opposition, the Committee of Thirteen began posting handbills and making public appearances at which they would publically denounce the king, referring to him

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<sup>68</sup> Marcy to Gregg, April 4, 1854, No. 6, in *Sen. Ex. Docs.*, 52 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 45, 2-3.

often as a “nigger,” and endorsing a revolution. Dr. George Lathrop, one of the committee leaders, also used his drugstore to inform customers of filibustering plans for the summer.<sup>69</sup>

These ruthless attacks on the king left Gregg unimpressed with the men of the Committee of Thirteen, believing their character to be less than upstanding. He considered George Lathrop, a doctor who immigrated in 1846 and dabbled in business and politics, to be a good physician but a poor statesman. The commissioner also thought Wesley Newcomb, a doctor on the islands for only three years, was “not remarkably gifted with a sense of discretion” and an “unscrupulous partisan.” To Gregg, all the committee members were nothing more than “foolish conspirators.”<sup>70</sup> Obviously, he did not view these men as the “good *haole*.”

The British consul Miller also engaged in the propaganda campaign against annexation. He had been warning Hawaiians that all Americans were racists and that the United States government would deny them basic citizenship rights because of their skin color. Miller often referred to the mistreatment of native inhabitants in California, questioning the U.S. government’s willingness to extend legal equality to native Hawaiians. He also reminded the native chiefs of American slavery, suggesting a similar fate for the natives under territorial rule. Upon gaining the favor of the two princes, Miller influenced Alexander Liholiho and his brother Lot to oppose the treaty by offering protection for the archipelago against American aggression and by reminding them of their negative experiences in the United States several years earlier when they were removed from a train for whites while on official state business as the Hawaiian Princes.<sup>71</sup>

In the midst of this growing public debate and tension, Gregg continued with the negotiations, which he found to be even more frustrating than the propagandist activities. While

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<sup>69</sup> Judd IV, *Dr. Judd*, 218-219; Gregg, March 11, 19, 1854, *Gregg Diary*, 109; Daws, *Shoals of Time*, 149.

<sup>70</sup> Gregg, March 21, 1854, *Gregg Diary*, 110.

<sup>71</sup> Gregg, March 21, 1854, *ibid.*; Gregg to Marcy, March 14, 1854, vol. 5, *Dispatches*, NA.

Minister Wyllie was authorized to conduct the discussions, he had to present every item to the king, ministers, privy council, and prince for approval before moving to the next item. This procedure posed a serious problem to expediency, especially when Prince Liholiho was continuously away from Honolulu throughout the spring and summer. The Hawaiian chief justice, William Lee, also spent the majority of the fall traveling throughout the outers islands even though the negotiations required his approval. The prince and Lee both opposed annexation and hoped that by delaying the process, they could hold out until the need or threat subsided. Further, although these talks were supposed to have been confidential, members of the Committee of Thirteen and the British consul seemed always to know the information contained in the treaty shortly after the information was transmitted to the privy council, indicating a leak within the government. Finally, demands by the prince and privy council over statehood, guarantee of citizenship rights, and provisions for federally funded education overstepped Gregg's authorization. He became increasingly aggravated with the entire process and began to suspect that the whole affair was a ruse to stave off a possible filibuster.<sup>72</sup>

Regardless of the obstacles, Gregg and Wyllie finalized a treaty on August 19, 1854, and presented it to the king for his signature. It provided for the admittance of Hawaii as a state and an annuity of \$300,000 to the royal family, with an additional \$75,000 annually for ten years to support education. There was also a secret provision allowing for the immediate annexation prior to ratification in the event of an emergency or threat. The king refused to sign it until Prince Liholiho returned to Honolulu and approved it, something the prince seemed to be avoiding because Gregg believed he was "ambitions to wear the crown."<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Merze Tate, "Slavery and Racism as Deterrents to the Annexation of Hawaii, 1854-1855," *The Journal of Negro History*, vol. 47, no. 1 (Jan., 1962), 2-4; Protocol, No. 1, 3, 4, & 5, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 616-619.

<sup>73</sup> "Treaty of Annexation Concluded between His Majesty the King of the Hawaiian Islands and the United States of America", *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 127-129; Gregg, Nov. 11, 1854, *Gregg Diary*, 201.

As Gregg awaited a signature on the final draft, the political climate changed rapidly in Honolulu, threatening ratification. While many in Honolulu were aware of the meetings between Wyllie and Gregg throughout the summer of 1854, it was not public knowledge that the king had authorized the actual negotiation of annexation. After Wyllie presented the king with the completed treaty, the king's involvement became public knowledge and the native response was not positive. Native members of the legislature introduced a resolution requesting information on the negotiations to confirm the rumors while two of the high-ranking chiefs, Paki and Judge John Ii, began a campaign against any movement that threatened the archipelago's sovereignty.

The Committee of Thirteen also became very active against the annexation treaty. Originally, the committee had supported the idea of annexation, but Gregg learned by August that two of the leaders, John Lathrop and J.D. Blair, had consulted with British consul Miller, who offered protection to a new Hawaiian republic if it came into being. Many of the members were concerned about securing their political control and feared that the United States could regulate the land and resources in a way to secure rights to the natives at their expense. These men wanted to be in a position to engage in business and land speculation without the interference of native leaders, a problem already experienced by Ladd and Company.

As a result, of the committee's actions, a new round of filibuster rumors began to circulate in early August and threaten the treaty negotiations. In mid-August, Lathrop and Blair boarded a ship for San Francisco in what most believed was campaign to raise forces. Gregg did not believe that the British had actually allied with the Thirteen, but suspected that both were using each other to thwart the annexationist movement. What he was concerned about was the rising fear that these men would actually attempt to overthrow the government with the intent to

establish themselves as the government *de facto* long enough to sell the islands to the United States. Gregg concluded that such actions could incite the British into military measures.<sup>74</sup>

Furthermore, in response to this more aggressive stance by the Committee of Thirteen, many of the American residents who originally championed Hawaiian sovereignty began to support annexation. Missionaries, such as Judd, started to believe that an independent Hawaii would not last long and feared that a republic under these “bad *haole*” would be far more detrimental to the natives than living under the United States government. Many American merchants also opposed the possibility of European control that could infringe on their ability to conduct business with tariffs and land reforms.<sup>75</sup>

With all this debate, British consul Miller did not wish to wait for the American residents to decide the fate of the archipelago and took a stronger position against the annexation treaty in a personal meeting with the king. He came armed with newspaper articles regarding annexation from the *New York Herald* and *Tribune* claiming this was a conspiracy directed by Washington from the start. He warned the monarch about Americans’ disrespect of aristocracy and primogenitor and their love of land speculation and squatter riots. Finally, he described the disorderly and sometimes violent condition of California and other U.S. territories, which he claimed was proof of Washington’s inability to provide stability to its possessions. He closed by reminding the monarch of the security the British provided its colonies. He closed with a reminder of the 1843 guarantee of sovereignty offered by the English and French and proposed a new tripartite treaty of protection, with naval assistance, against any foreign aggression. This proposition gave Hawaii an alternative to annexation an option favorable to Prince Liholiho, Justice Lee, and Minister Wyllie. A guarantee from all three powers would extend the

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<sup>74</sup> Gregg to Marcy, Aug. 8, 1854, vol. 5, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>75</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion*, 72-73; Gregg to Marcy, Aug. 8, 1854, vol. 5, Dispatches, NA.

independence of the islands and enable the monarchy to continue its quest to rise within the international hierarchy.<sup>76</sup>

This meeting alarmed Gregg and Marcy, but a dispatch Buchanan sent to the secretary of state in October allayed their fears. He wrote regarding impressions of his most recent interview with British foreign minister Lord Clarendon. Buchanan doubted that London would risk war with the United States over Hawaii and thought the warnings were mostly an attempt at intimidation. He also cautioned to take Louis Napoleon's threats seriously. To Buchanan, the French leader "regards the existence and the rapid advance of the Republic of the United States as a standing censure upon his usurpation and tyranny." Because he knew that the U.S. naval forces were "comparatively insignificant," Napoleon would "attempt to humble [the United States] by one of those bold strokes in which he so much delights." Buchanan urged Marcy to abandon the Hawaiian project and focus solely on Cuba, which he deemed more worth the risk.<sup>77</sup>

By the time this dispatch and the news from Gregg of the completion of the treaty arrived in Washington, however, most of Marcy's expansionist agenda had fallen completely apart. His efforts in the Dominican Republic led to a negotiation of a treaty of recognition and amity containing concessions in Samana Bay. Before completion of the document, British and French thwarted the ratification effort by convincing the Dominican Congress to hold out on the negotiations until the United States agreed to offer the same rights and privileges to Dominicans in the United States, regardless of race, as the treaty extended to Americans in the island. By December, it was clear that William Cazneau, the U.S. representative, could not get the Dominicans to budge on this stance, making it impossible to get such an agreement through Congress, so the secretary recalled Cazneau and terminated this mission.

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<sup>76</sup> Gregg, Sept. 18, 1854, *Gregg Diary*, 186; van Alstyne, "Great Britain," 18-21.

<sup>77</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion*, 69.

Marcy's plan for Cuba proved equally futile. The plan to purchase Cuba failed because of the improper conduct of the American minister to Spain, Pierre Soulé. Upon receiving orders to discuss the situation with his counterparts in England and France, James Buchanan and John Y. Mason, the three met and wrote the Ostend Manifesto in which they stated that if Spain would not sell Cuba, then the United States would be justified in seizing it by force. Coupled with another threat of filibuster by John Quitman, Cuba felt alarmed enough to increase its military capabilities. Marcy realized that a purchase was now out of the question and that the United States could not afford to gain the island through "robbery or theft," and was forced to chastise Soulé, renounce the Ostend Manifesto, and abandon his attempt to purchase the island.<sup>78</sup>

Even if Pierce and Marcy had wanted to save these projects, the ongoing internal trauma over Kansas completely ended any possibility of salvaging either. The introduction of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in May of 1854 had allowed for slavery's expansion through popular sovereignty, violating the Missouri Compromise's provisions prohibiting the expansion of slavery to those territories. This bill set off an intense debate that continued for several years, but more importantly, it sparked a reorganization on the political party system. The midterm elections in November proved costly for the Democratic party and forced Pierce and Marcy to repudiate their expansionist policy. As was true for most of the United States' foreign policy plans in the first half of the nineteenth century, its development as a second-tier nation stood in the way of an aggressive first tier foreign policy.

This domestic political situation convinced Pierce and his cabinet that the negotiated treaty of annexation would fail in the Senate, so Marcy sent the draft back to Gregg for modification. Many provisions of the document were unacceptable. First, he would need to

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<sup>78</sup> Marcy to Shepard, Apr. 18, 1855 cited in Nichols, *Franklin Pierce*, 395; Gara, *Franklin Pierce*, 148-155.

amend the section providing for immediate statehood, only allowing a grant of territorial status upon annexation with no reference to future status. Second, the amount of annuity paid to the royals far exceeded the original authorization of \$100,000. Gregg received word of this in January 1855, one month after Kamehameha III died and his anti-expansionist nephew Alexander Liholiho became king.<sup>79</sup>

By the time Marcy's instructions reached Gregg, the dispatch was a moot point. Throughout the fall on 1854, Prince Liholiho continued to engage in a deliberate procrastination and absence from court to avoid the annexation issue. By November, he returned and Gregg believed that the ratification was imminent until another crisis involving an American filibuster arose. For several weeks, there had been a great influx of Californians in Honolulu, a common occurrence in the fall of every year. By mid-month, the filibuster rumor sparked a sudden alarm leading Gregg and the senior American naval officer in port, Captain Thomas A. Dornin, to warn Minister Wyllie of the impending threat and recommend immediate ratification of the annexation treaty to prevent the insurrection. Wyllie interpreted this meeting as an attempt at intimidation, which was not Gregg's intent, so he recommended a hold on negotiations until they could resume without threat of coercion.

This delay ended any possibility of annexation. By the end of the month, there were four warships in Honolulu harbor— two American, one British, and one French— all offering protection to the Hawaiians. Wyllie and Prince Liholiho saw this as an opportunity to retain the islands' sovereignty and convinced the king and cabinet to turn this temporary situation into a permanent arrangement. On December 8, Kamehameha III issued a statement accepting the military aid from the United States, England, and France, claiming his sovereignty was now

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<sup>79</sup> Marcy to Gregg, Jan. 31, 1855, No. 12, *Sen. Ex. Docs.*, 52 Cong., 2 sess., No. 45, 13-14.

firmly established. The king's proclamation placed the United States in a precarious situation, because it implied that Washington was in agreement with the other powers on ensuring Hawaiian autonomy, yet the Americans had not submitted to any such arrangement. It also made clear that the annexation negotiations were suspended and any that possibility of reopening the discussion was unlikely because the king's health was failing. Less than a month later, he was dead.<sup>80</sup>

The ascension of Alexander Liholiho to the throne as Kamehameha IV essentially destroyed all hope of annexation. Gregg sent a dispatch on December 29, just four weeks before Marcy sent his dispatch regarding revisions to the annexation draft, advising the secretary of state that he believed the new monarch was "disposed to preserve, if possible, the separate independence of the Hawaiian Islands." Gregg's suspicions were confirmed officially three weeks later when Wyllie informed him that Kamehameha VI ordered the cessation of treaty negotiations in favor of a tripartite security treaty involving the United States, England, and France.<sup>81</sup>

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The termination of the annexation negotiations was a significant turning point in the American-Hawaiian relationship and serves as evidence of the continuing process of both nations maneuvering through the world hierarchy. The willingness of Kamehameha III to consider annexation by the United States exposed the vulnerability of the Hawaiian nation within the international structure. The Hawaiian monarch's original goal had been to include the islands in the world economy and international political system as a means of ensuring their independent

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<sup>80</sup> Gregg, Nov. 12, 13, 14, 15, 1854, *Gregg Diary*, 201-203; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 426-427; van Alstyne, "Great Britain," 22.

<sup>81</sup> Gregg to Marcy, January 24, 1855, No 69, vol. 5, Dispatches, NA.

nation-statehood, yet that incorporation severely limited their sovereignty and economic viability. Debates over the best way to improve Hawaii's internal system led to the realization that the islands were heavily reliant on a trade relationship with the United States and an assurance of security from the European nations. Virtually every non-native in the archipelago believed that Hawaii could not remain independent for long, yet the natives, especially the young princes, were adamant about retaining their autonomy and continuing Hawaii's progress in the international system. Prince Liholiho and his supporter, Chief Justice Lee, used stall tactics to delay the completion of annexation, believing that the imminent threat would pass and they could continue Hawaii's progress as an independent nation. For them, the only way to assure against another move on the monarchy would be to improve the economy through trade treaties and international security agreements.

The failed annexation bid also exposed the United States' developing status within the hierarchy. The Pierce administration's expansionist agenda hit several roadblocks, including challenges from their European rivals and domestic political turmoil, which hampered any progress toward their goal. As a second-tier nation, the United States had to cater its foreign policy agenda to European actions, making aggressive moves only when the British and French were preoccupied with Turkey. Furthermore, the increasing fissure between the north and south within the United States over issues of expansion and development limited Washington's international progress. Thus, America's incomplete internal development as a first-tier nation hindered the ability of the federal government to implement a cohesive international plan.

Finally, the near annexation and subsequent failure transformed the American-Hawaiian relationship. By the early 1850s, American businessmen, missionaries, and lawyers were an integral force on the archipelago, gaining great influence over Kamehameha III and the

economy. Their presence opened the door for an imperial relationship between the islands and Washington, but the United States' inability to take advantage of such an arrangement left room for the Hawaiians to retain their dream of autonomy and international status. With the death of Kamehameha III, the close relationship between the Americans and the monarchy weakened. Kamehameha IV preferred the aristocratic and hierarchical system of the British to the American Puritanical society that had which dominated his youth. He intended to ensure his monarchy and the independence of the Hawaiian people by ending any possibility of annexation by the United States. His reign would transform the virtual student/teacher relationship between Hawaiians and Americans into a trade relationship under which the two nations would exist for the following forty years. Once again, Hawaii managed to avoid the "big fish."

## Chapter 3

### “Today We Begin a New Era”

As he addressed the crowd following his coronation ceremony as Kamehameha IV, Alexander Liholiho announced, “Today we begin a new era.”<sup>1</sup> These few words conveyed the hopes of a young king facing a tumultuous political situation and a declining economy, but they also foreshadowed a domestic transformation that both Hawaii and the United States experienced over the subsequent three decades. Both nations entered a new phase in their development, necessary for them to progress into the next stage in the international hierarchy. Hawaii faced an economic transition from the mercantilist trading port into an agricultural producer. The United States had to reconcile two different economic systems, one embracing a first-tier diversified wage-labor financial system and the other a stagnated second-tier slavery-based agricultural economy. The American-Hawaiian relationship suffered because of the Americans’ preoccupation with their domestic traumas, which left Hawaii with changes that brought it closer to the British and vulnerable to internal political intrigue.

When Kamehameha IV ascended to the throne, he terminated the annexation discussions and reinvigorated a resolve to maintain Hawaiian sovereignty. He wanted the “new era” in Hawaii to “be one of increased civilization—one of decided progress, industry, temperance,

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<sup>1</sup> Kamehameha IV, *Speeches of His Majesty Kamehameha IV to the Hawaiian Legislature* (Honolulu: Government Press, 1861), 5.

morality, and all those virtues which mark a nation's advance."<sup>2</sup> The young king intended not only to maintain independence, but also to continue the islands' advance in the international hierarchy by securing protective treaties and building stable trade relations. He interpreted the domestic turmoil during the first half of the 1850s as the result of foreign residents' dissatisfaction with the economic recession and believed that through stabilizing the economy and modifying the political system established by the constitution of 1852, he could quell any further threat of rebellion while advancing Hawaii in the world system.

Kamehameha IV's successors continued his policy of relying on foreign security and soliciting reciprocal trade agreements to alleviate domestic problems, while implementing internal political changes that strengthened the ruling *ali'i* class and diminished *haole* power.<sup>3</sup> This constitutional transformation placed power into the hands of the economic elites and foreign residents of Hawaiian, creating an environment ripe for political intrigue. Ultimately, regardless of Kamehameha IV and his successors, Hawaii had to rely on American trade to sustain its independence and security.

Across the ocean, the United States also transitioned into a new era. As David Gregg, the first U.S. minister to Hawaii appointed in 1853, and Robert C. Wyllie, minister of foreign affairs in the Kingdom of Hawaii, began their annexation negotiations, the United States once again grappled with its own internal discord. The continuation of westward expansion on the continent resulted in a violent debate over the entry of Kansas into the union, causing political turmoil that forced the Pierce administration to sideline its expansionist foreign policy agenda. This increasing fissure between the diversified, industrializing North and the agriculturally reliant South exposed the reality of a nation struggling with itself between progressing into a first-tier

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> *Ali'i* is the Hawaiian term for the hereditary class of rulers, including the Kamehameha line and the descendants of the ruling chiefs on all the islands.

nation and remaining a second-tier agricultural producer. This tense situation ultimately led to the Civil War and a new era in the United States that fully embraced industrialization, technological advancement, and a world capitalist view. More importantly, the United States had to complete this transition to enter into a first-tier status.

While dealing with this internal turmoil, Washington had to place its relationship with Hawaii on hold, and attempt to maintain its influence in the islands without being able to expend resources to strengthen it. Unable to provide naval protection during the Civil War, the United States left American residents in Hawaii feeling vulnerable to British and French aggression. During the Reconstruction era, the U.S. State Department and Navy refocused their attention on the islands, but because they had no political support from Washington, their best option was to station naval vessels in the North Pacific to protect American property on the islands. Taking possession of the archipelago, therefore, was not feasible, so the United States turned to the best option for bolstering the relationship: trade.

Ultimately, Americans and American-Hawaiians living in the archipelago were forced to regain their own influence over the islands and reinvigorate the bond between the nations. The second generation of collaborationists strongly advocated a renewed interest by the state department and used all their political connections to promote the passage of a new commercial agreement between the United States and Hawaii, believing that reciprocal trade would strengthen the islands' reliance on the United States and ensure these individuals' influence over the monarchy and legislature. Thus, the new era that Kamehameha IV envisioned, an independent Hawaii, slowly became an autonomous archipelago informally controlled by its economic dependence on the United States.

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Alexander Liholiho, the king's nephew, became Kamehameha IV on January 11, 1855. He was the grandson of Kamehameha I through his mother and was educated in the Chiefs Children's School, run by American missionaries. As an adult, he resented his strict childhood under protestant missionaries and tended to rebel against their advice as king. He was also greatly concerned with the growing American interest on the islands and feared that a future annexation would end the monarchy and lead to the extinction of the Hawaiian people.<sup>4</sup>

Kamehameha IV's immediate concern was to stabilize domestic affairs by solving the international problems exacerbating them: economic instability and foreign threats. First, the new king needed to stabilize the economy by reducing Hawaii's reliance on the whaling industry and increasing its agricultural markets. To accomplish this, he hoped to increase capital for production and reduce trade-restricting tariffs with Hawaii's major trading partners, especially the west coast of the United States. The two best ways to achieve this was either through a reciprocal trade agreement with the United States or annexation. Influenced by his close friendship with Robert Wyllie, the king revived the foreign minister's plan to negotiate commercial reciprocity. An annexation treaty was already completed and awaiting signature, but Kamehameha IV promptly ended that discussion, wishing to retain his sovereignty and secure Hawaiian independence indefinitely.<sup>5</sup>

To address the second problem, the king returned to Wyllie's idea of a quadripartite agreement of protection from the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia. Wyllie believed that Hawaii's geographic location made the archipelago's independence important to many foreign nations, especially those with coastlines on the Pacific. He recognized the potential

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<sup>4</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom: 1854-1874 Twenty Critical Years*, 2 vols. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1953), 2:33-36.

<sup>5</sup> Gregg, January 20, 1955, *Gregg Diary*, 212.

of using this leverage to Hawaii's advantage by playing the maritime powers against each other to entice all parties into a protection agreement. Realizing that such an arrangement would be less about protecting Hawaiian sovereignty and more about assuring their own access to the archipelago, Wyllie hoped the Europeans and Americans would embrace such an arrangement, which he regarded as the only measure to ensure an internationally recognized independence. As an incentive, a quadripartite treaty would guarantee equality of privilege and obligation to each foreign nation. To that end, the foreign minister engaged in a four-year campaign to persuade any foreign acquaintance from any maritime power in the Pacific of the importance of his mission, filling volumes of letter and document files with his efforts.<sup>6</sup> Liholiho agreed with Wyllie's assessment and authorized the minister to pursue negotiations on both measures.

On March 12, 1855, the king sent Chief Justice William L. Lee as Hawaiian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to Washington with two instructions: negotiate a quadripartite security agreement with the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia, and obtain a reciprocity trade agreement with the United States. Lee was a Harvard trained lawyer and civil engineer who came to Honolulu in 1846. Voyaging to Oregon with his friend Charles Reed Bishop on a business venture, the pair stopped in Honolulu for a rest and decided to stay. The intelligent and young Lee was offered a governmental job, which turned into an appointment to the Hawaiian Supreme Court. While serving as judge, he helped reorganize the court to resemble the American system. After serving on the land commission in charge of determining property contracts during the Great Mahele, he became a member of the privy council where he developed a close a friendship with Prince Liholiho. He was an obvious choice for this mission

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<sup>6</sup> Hopkins, *Hawaii*, 502-504.

to the United States because the king trusted him implicitly, since he had been a close ally in the obstruction of the annexation negotiations throughout the preceding year.<sup>7</sup>

Lee's first priority was to obtain a quadripartite security treaty, which Wyllie recognized as the most important to acquire and the least likely to achieve. Both men knew that the United States had refused to enter into a similar alliance in 1843 and doubted that the Pierce administration could change the policy against entangling alliances. In a move to improve the odds of completing this objective, Wyllie informed French consul Emile Perrin and British consul general William Miller of the proposition and received approval from both. He requested that they write their respective governments at home and representatives in Washington, encouraging their assistance in completing this treaty. Wyllie made similar gestures to the Russian minister in Washington and sent dispatches to the Hawaiian consuls in San Francisco and New York.<sup>8</sup>

Lee's second objective was to secure a reciprocity treaty with the United States that would secure tariff-free admission of Hawaii's agricultural products.<sup>9</sup> The whaling industry was declining and the agricultural sector needed more capital to increase production. The best market for these commodities was the U.S. west coast, but the high tariff wall constricted the profitability. Reciprocal trade would remove this barrier and enable the agricultural sector to expand in Hawaii. Wyllie and Lee both believed they could complete this agreement.

U.S. commissioner David Gregg shared their belief and wrote the state department in support of the treaty. He did not think the free admission of Hawaiian sugar would harm

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<sup>7</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:39-40; Bob Dye, *The Merchant Prince of the Sandalwood Mountains* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), 18.

<sup>8</sup> Osborne E. Hooley, "Hawaiian Negotiation for Reciprocity, 1855-1857," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Jun., 1938), 130.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 129; Gregg to Marcy, Mar. 14, 1855, No. 77, vol. 6, Dispatches, NA.; Kuykendall, *The Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:39-40.

American planters in Louisiana and Texas because the islands traded mainly with the west coast, which normally imported from the Philippines and East Indies due to the transportation costs of southern sugar. Like Wyllie and Lee, Gregg also believed that the free entry of sugar into the U.S. market would appease the planter and merchant classes enough to quiet political agitation on the islands and ensure American property. More importantly, the commissioner doubted that the monarchy could survive long and saw reciprocity as a means of increasing American interests in the archipelago until what he believed was the inevitable end of Hawaiian independence.<sup>10</sup>

As the secretary of state considered Gregg's advice, Lee arrived in Washington on July 10, 1855, and began work on negotiating a reciprocity treaty. During his stop in San Francisco, he met with California senator William Gwin, who encouraged him to focus on reciprocity and drop the idea of a quadripartite security treaty, warning that the Senate would never approve such an agreement. Lee took Gwin's advice and began with a discussion on trade even though Wyllie valued sovereignty over commerce as the priority.

Lee's first meetings with Secretary Marcy and President Pierce confirmed Gwin's prophecy. The president tried to underplay the need for a security agreement by assuring Lee that annexation was off the table, emphasizing the constitutional complications of acquiring a quasi-colonial possession. He then declared that the United States would never allow any other nation to infringe upon the islands' sovereignty because he believed it in the best interest of both nations that Hawaii remain independent with open trade. Again, Pierce upheld the long-standing

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<sup>10</sup> Gregg to Marcy, Mar. 10, 1855, No. 75; Mar. 12, 1855, No. 76; Mar. 17, 1855, No.79; Mar. 19, 1855, No. 80, vol. 6, Dispatches, NA.

U.S. policy established by President John Tyler's extension of the Monroe Doctrine to Hawaii. Marcy confirmed the president's opinion the next day when he met with Lee for the first time.<sup>11</sup>

Marcy and Lee began negotiations on July 12 and completed a reciprocity treaty by the twentieth. Marcy initially raised concerns that the proposed agreement infringed on previously existing most-favored-nation clauses in treaties the United States had with Spain and other sugar producing countries. Ratification of Lee's proposal could force the United States to grant those same privileges to other nations, greatly affecting its tariff income. Ultimately, they agreed to allow only unrefined Hawaiian sugar on the duty free list to appease southern sugar refiners and other American trading partners. The completed treaty included the free admission of Hawaiian agricultural products—including sugar, molasses, coffee, and arrowroot—to the United States in exchange for free admission of American wheat, fish, coal, timber, and lumber into Hawaii.<sup>12</sup>

They sent the treaty to the Hawaiian government and the U.S. Senate where it received very different reactions. The Hawaiian government ratified it immediately, leading Kamehameha IV to say he was "highly pleased." The U.S. Senate, however, did not greet the document with the same enthusiasm. It was read and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations where it stayed for six months until brought back before the Senate and tabled. The senators from Louisiana and Texas fought against the free admission of sugar, garnering support from wool interests in Vermont. Others argued that the treaty violated congressional powers to regulate commerce, including the tariff, by granting Hawaiian products duty free admission. Finally, there were other more pressing matters for Congress to deal with in 1856, relegating the Hawaiian question to a back burner. When the bill finally came before the full Senate in March 1857,

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<sup>11</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:41.

<sup>12</sup> Hooley, "Hawaiian Negotiation," 129; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:40-41. Hooley has a detailed account of the wrangling in the Senate and the discussions between Hawaiian representative and the secretary of state.

Louisiana senator Judah Benjamin threatened a filibuster to prevent a vote on the bill, stalling its passage past the approved termination date for the exchange of ratification.<sup>13</sup>

Lee's second assignment, a quadripartite security treaty, proved equally difficult to achieve. Upon arriving in Washington, Lee met with John F. Compton, British minister to the United States, who expressed doubt that the Americans would agree to a treaty. The United States had resisted a three-year discussion over a similar arrangement for the protection of Spanish control over Cuba. Throughout 1854, Pierce had repeatedly refused the agreement, while secretly attempting to purchase the Caribbean island. Even when facing European attempts to push the president into a tripartite guarantee over Cuba, Pierce rebuffed the idea, wishing to avoid any promise that would remove the American prerogative of obtaining the island in the future. Furthermore, historically, the United States did not enter into entangling alliances with European powers, which tended to violate Congress' constitutional declaration of war powers. As a result, Washington repeatedly offered assurances that the United States would respect the independence of Hawaii and refrain from interfering in Cuba matters without signing any official agreements in that respect. This policy enabled Washington to avoid entanglements and assure both nations of good intentions, while ensuring a possible change of policy in the future without violation of any formal agreement. If Pierce subsequently acquiesced to Lee's proposed quadripartite treaty for Hawaii, he would lose his grounds against this Cuban agreement.<sup>14</sup>

Regardless of both Crompton and Senator Gwin's advice mentioned earlier, Lee introduced the quadripartite plan to an unreceptive Marcy. The secretary confirmed the

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<sup>13</sup> "Report on the Official Relations of the United States with the Hawaiian islands from the First Appointment of Consular Officer thereby this Government," *Sen. Ex. Doc.*, 52 cong., 2 Sess., No. 77,10; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:45-46; Hooley, "Hawaiian Negotiation," 145.

<sup>14</sup> Richard W. Van Alstyne, "Great Britain, the United States, and Hawaiian Independence, 1850-1855," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 4, no. 1 (Mar., 1935), 18-21. President Fillmore had been interested in a protection arrangement for Cuba in exchange for a similar arrangement for Hawaii in early 1851 to counter French aggression, but Franklin Pierce abruptly ended any talks on the subject when he entered office. It is unlikely any arrangement would ever gain ratification.

minister's warning that the United States could not entertain discussions on a multilateral agreement for Hawaii without jeopardizing its stance on Cuba, but he did offer to consider a unilateral statement of protection by the United States. In response, Lee requested an American assurance of naval assistance against filibuster expeditions and a promise to maintain an American vessel in the Pacific region under orders to make frequent visits to Honolulu harbor.

Marcy took the time to construct a carefully worded declaration, providing an offer of protection without committing to an unbreakable promise of continued sovereignty. The secretary's statement said that the United States would "not regard with unconcern" an attempt by any foreign power to interfere with Hawaiian security and would use all its power to prevent the outfitting of filibustering campaigns within its borders. In addition, a U.S. naval vessel would be stationed near the islands with instructions to "watch over and protect the interests of American citizens in that quarter." With this final statement, Marcy pledged the military protection that the Hawaiians requested without making promises of independence.<sup>15</sup>

Marcy's response was significant for two reasons. First, his wording avoided any mention of protecting or guaranteeing Hawaii's sovereignty, thus preserving the possibility of annexation in the future. Second, the promise to maintain a naval presence near the archipelago to protect American interests left room for the possibility of intervening in internal struggles when Americans or their property were threatened. This portion of the statement initiated the policy of U.S. naval involvement in Hawaiian domestic difficulties over the subsequent four decades, establishing the precedent used by U.S. minister John L. Stevens during the revolution against Queen Liliuokalani in 1893.

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<sup>15</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:44.

In the end, Robert Willie's main foreign policy agenda failed on both counts. Hawaiians believed the American guaranty of security was not enough to end any possibility of filibustering from California, curb future aggressive moves by the United States, and prevent potential interference by Great Britain and France. Furthermore, the largest threat to the archipelago's sovereignty came from economic instability on the islands, which the reciprocity treaty was supposed to address. Without that trade agreement, Willie and Kamehameha IV feared that continued economic instability would produce further threats from the American merchants and planters.

Luckily, the failure of these treaties proved less devastating than Willie predicted. On March 3, 1857, the U.S. Senate passed a new tariff, which lowered the duties on many of the products listed in the treaty, especially sugar. While not the economic boon Willie hoped for, it helped the Hawaiian market to stabilize, quelling some of the internal discontent. Then, with the outbreak of hostilities in the American Civil War, sugar prices on the international market increased, offsetting the remaining tariff and rapidly expanding the Hawaiian economy.<sup>16</sup>

Beyond the immediate financial considerations, this episode in the American-Hawaiian relationship was revelatory in a number of ways. By the 1850s, Hawaii was well integrated into the international economy, but still vulnerable as a developing nation. Hawaiians continued to pursue a diplomatic course that would help them grow economically while providing international security. A reciprocity treaty with the United States would have enabled investors to make a profit that they could reinvest in developing the archipelago's economy. It would also have provided security for the struggling monarchy against internal threats from foreign residents. At the same time, Hawaii had to rely on the guarantee of other nations to ensure its

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 2:46.

sovereignty, for it lacked the ability to repel foreign advances. Garnering a tripartite, or possibly quadripartite, security agreement would have given the archipelago a means of safeguarding its sovereignty through pitting foreign powers against each other. The failure of the two treaties left Hawaii in this state of vulnerability.

At the other end of the negotiating table was a nation on the cusp of first-tier status, whose incomplete development kept it from taking advantage of Hawaii's vulnerability. The expansionist mentality of the antebellum United States led the nation to an imperial policy, which ultimately exacerbated the internal discord and threatened the destruction of the nation. This was the result of the United States' unique condition prior to the Civil War. Half of the nation had embraced the industrialization, economic diversification, and technological advances required to become a first-tier nation, but the southern half remained predominantly an agricultural producing second-tier nation.<sup>17</sup> The internal debate over protective tariffs and the spread of a slavery-based agricultural economic system across the continent was a consequence of this relationship. Southern cotton producers opposed all protective tariffs as an intrusion into their trade relationship with England while the North favored the tariffs as a tool of protection for its rise to first control over technology and industrialization. The proposal of another reciprocity treaty infringing on the tariff system only complicated this already unstable setting. The Pierce and Buchanan administrations were unable to pursue an aggressive foreign policy because of this growing internal dissension, leaving the United States' relationship with Hawaii in a holding pattern until the government in Washington solved the nation's internal developmental problems.

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<sup>17</sup> Robinson, "The Excentric Idea of Imperialism," 267. In his discussion on the evolution of British imperial policy, Robinson argues that prior to the Civil War, the American south was an informal imperial branch of British business and that as the North industrialized, it took steps to absorb the South into its industrialize economy and place it under a protective tariff system, thus ending Britain's imperial control.

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While the United States struggled with its domestic troubles, the Hawaiian government continued to pursue its own development by addressing issues that Kamehameha IV judged most threatening to the nation. His dual concerns centered on Hawaii's internal political instability, now exacerbated by a failing economy and a weakened monarchy. He and his successor Prince Lot agreed that the solution to both problems was a continued effort to gain a reciprocity agreement with the United States combined with constitutional reforms restoring monarchial supremacy.

Kamehameha III recognized the need to establish a governmental system subject to the rule of law to guarantee Hawaiian stability in international politics. To that end, several of the king's American and British advisors constructed the constitution of 1852. The new government was an interesting combination of the British constitutional monarchy and the American republican system. The legislative branch consisted of a House of Representatives—the equivalent of the British House of Commons— which was responsible for taxation, appropriations, and economic legislation. A House of Nobles, whose members were appointed by the king from the ruling *ali'i* class, counter balanced it. In the executive branch, the king held ultimate authority but had to obtain consent for all foreign policy decisions from a privy council comprised of the king's four-member advisory cabinet and all the ruling chiefs of the islands.<sup>18</sup>

Foreign residents had mixed opinions on this constitution. Americans believed this document was a positive step toward modernizing the nation's political and legal system, lessening the arbitrary rule of the monarchy and increasing the involvement of productive citizens, especially regarding economic matters. Foreign minister and Scottish born Robert

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<sup>18</sup> Kingdom of Hawaii Constitution of 1852, June 14, 1852, AH.

Wyllie felt the constitution was too republican in form, allowing the ignorant masses power over the monarchy. He shared this sentiment with the two future heirs, Princes Liholiho and Lot.<sup>19</sup>

One of the most controversial provisions of this document was the adoption of universal suffrage provided for in Article 78. Any male subject over the age of twenty, who was native, naturalized, or denizen one year prior to an election, and with fully paid taxes, was granted the right to vote for the representative from his district of residency. The ruling elites worried that universal suffrage granted too many native Hawaiians—who lacked a formal education and were unfamiliar with political or legal matters—an enormous influence over the governance of the nation. They were less concerned with foreigners voting than with the native peasants, which was a direct reflection of the traditional Hawaiian social structure in which the people did not share power with the *ali'i*.<sup>20</sup>

Kamehameha IV was one of the strongest opponents of the 1852 constitution. He rejected the idea of universal suffrage and wanted a literacy test for the franchise. Events of his first six months as king only confirmed to him that universal suffrage was a detriment to the islands. In the regular session of the legislature of 1855, the House of Nobles deadlocked with the Representatives on an appropriations and militia bill, forcing Kamehameha IV to dissolve the legislature, call for a new election, and force a special session to reconsider the bills. The incident raised the question of amending the constitution to correct what the king and his privy council believed the source of the problem, universal suffrage.

The king asked the legislature to amend the constitution through the legal procedures outlined in the document. Amendments had to gain a majority in both houses, and then be published for three months prior to the next election of the legislature. The new legislature would

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<sup>19</sup> Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui*, 105-110; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:115-123.

<sup>20</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:115-126.

then also vote on the amendment where it had to garner a two-thirds vote in each house before receiving the king's signature. It was through this process that Kamehameha IV had to gain the amendment he wanted: a restriction of universal suffrage, the termination of the position of Kahina Nui (similar to a vice-king), and a clarification of succession to the throne. The 1855 legislature began the process with nine proposed amendments, none of which addressed any of the king's desires.<sup>21</sup>

Over the course of the next nine years, Kamehameha IV fought with the legislature to gain his desired changes to the constitution. His main goal was to deplete the power of the House of Representatives by reducing its size and creating strict property qualification for office holders. Repeated appeals to the legislature in 1858, 1860, and 1862 gained the king none of his requests, leading his brother and future king to conclude that attempting to amend the constitution through proscribed means was futile.

In November 1863, Kamehameha IV suddenly died and his brother Prince Lot took up the quest to amend the constitution.<sup>22</sup> Like his brother, Lot opposed many articles, including the franchise and the reduction of royal power. Upon his accession to the throne as Kamehameha V, he refused to take the oath of loyalty to the constitution, ensuring that he could modify the document to his liking without committing any act of treason by circumventing the legislative process.<sup>23</sup>

At first, he attempted to gain the modifications through legislative amendments, but when progress stalled again, he called a convention to create a new constitution. With twenty-seven elected representatives and sixteen appointed nobles, the delegates' first order of business was to

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<sup>21</sup> Kingdom of Hawaii Constitution of 1852, June 14, 1852, AH.

<sup>22</sup> Kamehameha IV died at the age of twenty-nine. It is unclear what the immediate cause was, but most accounts link his demise to the death of the four-year-old son a year earlier.

<sup>23</sup> William DeWitt Alexander Statement, *Sen. Reps.*, 53 cong., 2 Sess., No. 227, p. 320 (hereafter referred to as Morgan Report).

resolve the debate over the legality of writing a completely new constitution. Because the 1852 constitution clearly defined the amendment process requiring ratification by elected officials of two different legislatures, they determined that writing a completely new constitution would connote a revolution. Thus, the assemblage voted to amend the existing document and follow the process proscribed in the original. Four members disagreed with this assessment, and fearing a repeat of the deadlock in the legislature, resigned. They were correct. The delegates began progressing quickly through all the proposed changes until they reached an impasse on voting qualifications. Again, the king faced a stalemate over the most important change he requested.<sup>24</sup>

Once it became clear that the delegates would never reach a consensus on this issue, Kamehameha V dissolved the convention, abrogated the 1852 constitution, and announced his intention to proclaim a new one. He and his advisors worked for seven days, modifying articles in the existing document to address the king's concerns. On August 20, 1864, Kamehameha V promulgated Hawaii's new constitution without procuring the consent of the people.<sup>25</sup>

The new constitution made several important changes. It abolished the position of *Kahina-Nui* and greatly reduced the power of the Privy Council by negating its veto privilege. The king gained a full veto power over legislation, restoring power to the monarchy. The two chambers of the legislature were merged into one, forcing the nobles and the elected representatives to sit in the same chamber and pass legislation as one body. Most importantly, property and income qualifications for both the franchise and office holding limited the previous universal suffrage, while literacy and educational qualifications constrained the native

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<sup>24</sup> Alexander Statement, Morgan Report, 320; Merze Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom: A Political History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 23-24; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:127-134.

<sup>25</sup> McBride to Seward, Aug. 13, 1864, No. 34, vol. 11, Dispatches, NA.; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:127-134.

Hawaiians.<sup>26</sup> In the practical application of Hawaiian politics, monarchial powers were strengthened at the expense of the legislature and local elites.<sup>27</sup>

The constitutional changes on the island worried the American *haole* that they were losing influence to the British. Kamehameha IV had already abolished the position of minister of public education, always held by an American missionary, and by 1862, he had removed all Americans from the cabinet. Additionally, the introduction of the Anglican Church to Honolulu in 1862 and the conversion of Kamehameha V increased British sway over the court and elevated the new British consul general, William F. Synge, and the Bishop of Honolulu, Reverend Thomas Nettleship Staley, to positions of influence.

This sparked concern with the new U.S. minister James McBride, who wrote Secretary of State William H. Seward in August 1864 of the declining influence and the uncertain rights of Americans under the new constitution. Seward responded that the U.S. government had no duty to interfere in a domestic matter of another country. Furthermore, Americans residing on the islands who had taken an oath of loyalty to the Hawaiian monarchy to gain political positions should not expect protection for their interests, because they had rejected their full American citizenship status upon pledging allegiance to the crown. The secretary's statement reiterated the position taken by Daniel Webster in 1851, but it also demonstrated Washington's occupation with more pressing matters.<sup>28</sup>

Kamehameha V's actions had a far more significant impact on the constitutional development of the islands. In proroguing the constitutional convention and promulgating his

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<sup>26</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom* 2:128-133.

<sup>27</sup> Kingdom of Hawaii Constitution of 1864, AH.

<sup>28</sup> McBride to Seward, Aug. 13, No. 83 & Aug. 14, 1864, No. 84, vol. 11, Dispatches, NA.; Seward to McBride, Oct. 12, 1864, No. 22, vol. 1, Diplomatic Instructions of the Department of State, microscopy number M-77, Records Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, National Archives. (Hereafter cited as Instructions, USDS, NA); Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:196-198.

own document, Kamehameha V violated the 1852 procedures for modifying the existing government. He did so out of frustration with the stalled proceedings and based on his interpretation of his rights as a sovereign. Lot subscribed to the idea of monarchical consent—that the power of the constitution came from the consent of the monarchy, which promulgated the original constitution granting the people political participation. It was therefore his right to revoke that grant and create a new constitution without the consent of the people, who were not the source of the original power.<sup>29</sup>

This constitutional interpretation was one of the most difficult disputes for foreign residents to reconcile. The American advisors believed the document's power came from the consent of the governed and thus required electoral endorsement by the people. They clashed with native Hawaiians because Americans did not understand the concept of monarchical consent: the idea that the king signed the constitution into law, meaning that his consent created the government. This in turn meant he could remove his consent and change the document at his will. This basic struggle between the monarchical and republican interpretations of the constitution became the basis of decades of arguments.

Most importantly, the constitutional changes created a new environment that would shape the next thirty years of politics on the islands. Property qualifications for voting reduced the electorate to the economic elites, while the recentralization of power in the monarchy opened the door to corruption and undue influence by less than reputable individuals. It also led to increased criticism from factions unhappy with monarchical rule.

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<sup>29</sup> Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui*, 115-117.

In addition to overhauling the constitution and restoring monarchical power, Kamehameha V wanted to stabilize Hawaii's economy and foreign relations. Shortly after he began his reign, the king and his ministers assessed the situation and determined that they should perfect their treaty relations with Washington. They recognized the importance of a close relationship between the islands and the United States, especially economically, and wanted to solidify an official relationship through a completed reciprocity or protection treaties. To remedy this problem, the king and cabinet decided to send new Chief Justice Elisha Allen to Washington as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to complete Lee's failed mission. Hoping to alleviate the tense and distant relationship that had developed between the nations, the king also instructed Allen to clarify that Hawaiian policies were neither anti-American nor pro-British, but rather designed to advance the archipelago's development.<sup>30</sup>

Two issues prompted this move: Washington's distracted policy during the Civil War and the economic boom in Hawaii resulting from that conflict. During the Civil War, the United States had a strained relationship with Hawaii, even though Seward hoped to maintain as much influence as possible. Seward's imperial proclivities were well established—he had supported annexation when offered during the Fillmore administration. Serving as a senator from 1851-1855, he was a staunch advocate of American expansion into the Pacific, believing it would become “the chief theater of events in the world's great hereafter.”<sup>31</sup>

As hostilities broke out, most American naval vessels were recalled from the Pacific to assist in the blockade of southern ports, leaving Honolulu's defense in the hands of the Europeans. Hawaii proclaimed neutrality, leading the department of state to push the monarchy for assurances against allowing privateers to enter Hawaiian ports. Wyllie reminded the secretary

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<sup>30</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:199. Elisha Allen was the former U.S. consul who replaced William Lee as Chief Justice of the Hawaiian Supreme Court following the former's death in 1857.

<sup>31</sup> Seward, July 29, 1852, *Cong. Globe*, 32 Cong., 1 Sess., 1973-6.

of state and the U.S. naval commander in Hawaii that the king had no military forces to prevent armed vessels from violating his neutrality without a U.S. naval vessel stationed in the harbor. Unfortunately, the secretary could not afford to overextend the United States' military by keeping the entire fleet in the Pacific.<sup>32</sup> The resultant tension injured the official relationship. For the remainder of the war, the United States' policy stance toward Hawaii was friendly but distant.

The American Civil War also affected Hawaii's internal development. With the U.S. sugar industry distracted by the conflict, producers on the archipelago were able to increase their exports from 1.4 million pounds in 1860 to approximately 10.4 million pounds by 1864. By 1872, that number increased to over 19 million pounds, making Hawaiian sugar its first multi-million dollar a year industry. These profits were reinvested, allowing the development of twenty more plantations and mill companies while upgrading sugar quality to top grade levels. What all this meant was that by the end of the American Civil War, Hawaiian sugar had become a major competitor for southern producers as well as California refiners.<sup>33</sup> The king needed to stabilize trade agreements before American sugar production revived.

This economic boom for the sugar industry did not translate into increased revenue for the government, throwing the monarchy into huge debt. Kamehameha IV wanted to continue Hawaii's development by making improvements on the harbors and roads in Honolulu. He also spent large amounts to promote the establishment of a steamship company to improve communications between the islands and the American continents. All these measures were necessary to expand the Hawaiian economy and develop the islands technologically, but they

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<sup>32</sup> Dryer to Seward, Sept. 5, 1861, No. 4; Dryer to Wyllie, July 24, 1861, No. 1; Wyllie to Dryer, July 27, 1861, No. 1; Allen to Wyllie, July 26, 1861; & *Proclamation of Kamehameha IV*, Aug. 26, 1861, in *FRUS, 1861*, 433-436; William Seward, "Memorandum from Secretary Seward," April 1, 1861 printed in *The Writings of Abraham Lincoln: 1858-1865*, ed. Arthur Brooks Lapsely, vols. 5 (New York: Lamb Publishing Co., 1906), 278-279.

<sup>33</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii*, 85-90; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2: 142-143.

were costly projects paid for by government revenues. To cover these expenditures, the legislature increased property taxes, which failed to cover most of the expense. The king was forced to turn to high interest international loans. Ensuring a reciprocity agreement with the United States would increase revenues and help the monarchy pay off this debt.<sup>34</sup>

The war was significant to the relationship in a more long-term way as well. Seward and President Abraham Lincoln had to reduce the level of interest in foreign policy toward Hawaii and other locations to focus most of their energies on ending the war with a northern victory. This was important not only for reunifying the country, but also for national development. Seward focused on the European response to the war out of concern that the three main powers— England, France, and Spain— would take advantage of the situation to reassert themselves into the Western Hemisphere and thereby violate the Monroe Doctrine. He and the president needed to keep the British especially from recognizing the Confederacy and aiding their war effort. This could have placed the American South firmly under the informal imperial control of the British, which would have greatly hampered the United States' development after the war.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, the Civil War was also about ending slavery and the economic system connected to it, which was holding half of the United States in an agricultural based second-tier status. When looked at from this perspective, the Civil War can be seen as the northern economic system forcing the southern economy into alignment with itself to ensure the progression of the nation as a whole into a first-tier status. This was a necessary step for the United States to become a first-tier nation ready to embrace a more involved policy with Hawaii.

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 2:175-176.

<sup>35</sup> Seward, "Memorandum," 278-279; Howard Jones, *Union in Peril: The Crisis over British Intervention in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

While Washington was preoccupied with the Civil War, Americans on the islands became greatly concerned with their loss of influence and turned to the secretary of state for assistance. Attempting to regain American attention, U.S. minister McBride wrote Seward urging him to accept the former reciprocity treaty, claiming it would ensure American interests on the islands without overextending U.S. naval forces. In a later dispatch, McBride suggested that Hawaii could add a grant of land in fee simple to build a naval port. The minister hoped to entice the secretary to reinvigorate the Hawaiian policy and to boost Allen's mission to Washington. Seward responded that it would be considered at an appropriate time. To show that he was not completely ignoring the archipelago, he asked Congress to elevate the U.S. diplomatic representative in Hawaii to that of a minister, hoping to assure the Hawaiians of his continued interest in their future by recognizing the islands' upgraded status in the international community.<sup>36</sup>

McBride was not alone in his concern for the declining influence in the archipelago. Dr. Rufus Anderson, the foreign secretary for the ABCFM, wrote Senator Charles Sumner, head of the foreign relations committee, that the Hawaiian royals were becoming too comfortable with the British while Washington was neglecting its relationship. He suggested that the United States keep a ship at Honolulu harbor with a friendly captain who could reestablish positive interactions with the monarchy.<sup>37</sup> McBride reiterated this request to Seward by suggesting Honolulu become a permanent port for American naval vessels.<sup>38</sup>

It was for these reasons that Elisha Allen was sent to Washington to negotiate the much desired reciprocity treaty. He arrived in June 1864 and immediately began talks with everyone willing to meet with him. He paid his respects to President Lincoln and had several interviews

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<sup>36</sup> McBride to Seward, Dec. 10, 1863, No. 16 & Sept 15, 1864, No. 36, vol. 11, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>37</sup> Anderson to Sumner, June 27, 1863, in *FRUS, 1865*, vol. I, 431.

<sup>38</sup> McBride to Seward, Aug. 12, 1865, No. 54, vol. 11, Dispatches, NA.

with Seward who proposed that he also meet with the secretary of the treasury. Allen then spoke with numerous senators and representatives promising support for reciprocity, especially Senator Benjamin F. Harding from Oregon who had been instructed by his state's legislature to encourage such an agreement.

When he met with Treasury Secretary William P. Fessenden, however, Allen was discouraged by the warning that he and many others in Congress opposed reciprocity treaties in general. They were working to terminate a similar treaty with Canada—the Marcy-Elgin Treaty.<sup>39</sup> Allen tried to minimize Fessenden's opposition to his treaty by pointing out that, because Canada produced the same goods as the United States, the Marcy-Elgin Treaty created a direct competition for American merchandise. The Hawaiian treaty contained a list of specific “tropical” goods not readily produced in the United States, and therefore would not compete with American products. The secretary did not budge on his stance.<sup>40</sup>

In his final interview with the secretary of state, Seward clarified the president's stance on the Hawaiian question for Allen. The United States would never agree to a tripartite treaty with Great Britain and France, but he was willing to modify the 1849 promise of protection, to the extent that the war effort would permit. On the reciprocity treaty, he submitted it to the president who determined that, due to the Civil War, negotiations would be impractical and impertinent, but promised that after the cessation of hostilities, he would be pleased to resume talks.<sup>41</sup> Seward followed through with his promise to both Allen and McBride when the war ended. The navy reorganized the fleet, creating two squadrons for the Pacific. The Northern Pacific Squadron was assigned permanently to patrolling near the Hawaiian Islands. In the fall of

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<sup>39</sup> Seward to Allen, Jan. 11, 1865, vol. 1, Notes to Hawaiian Legation, Dispatches, NA.; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:199-200.

<sup>40</sup> “Mr. Morrill's Speech, Fortieth Congress, Second Session,” Jan. 15, 1869, *New York Times*, col. C, 1; Burlin, *Imperial Maine*, 145-146.

<sup>41</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii*, 95-96.

1866, the *U.S.S. Lackawanna* arrived in Honolulu with orders to stay indefinitely and protect American property while reestablishing a positive relationship with the monarchy.<sup>42</sup>

While Allen was in the United States wrapping up his business and making his final efforts to sway congressional opinion, two important events occurred in Hawaii. First, Robert C. Wyllie, minister of foreign affairs for over twenty years, died on October 19, 1865. He had been a committed advocate of the archipelago's independence with the ultimate goal of negotiating a quadripartite security treaty for Hawaii. He had also declared that if Hawaii could not maintain its independence, he preferred annexation to the United States over any European power. Charles Varigny, the former French consul and member of the privy council, replaced him as minister of foreign affairs. Varigny disagreed with Wyllie's policy and immediately recalled the envoy sent to Europe to negotiate the multilateral treaty. He intended to negotiate unilaterally with each nation.

The other development in Hawaii during Allen's absences was the result of the changes made to the system of succession to the throne in the 1864 constitution. The constitution required the heir be a direct descendant of Kamehameha I. In that absence of such an individual, the current monarch's closest living relative would succeed him, with that individual's descendants establishing the new line. In the event of no remaining genetic relations, the reigning monarch would name a successor or the legislature would be required to elect someone from the *ali'i* class. Kamehameha V was a single man with no living children and his health was in decline. Most residents of the islands assumed his successor would be his sister Princess Victoria Kamamalu, but her death in May 1866 left no clear heir to the throne.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:199-200.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 239-240.

The princess' death led to an upheaval in the partisan struggles on the islands. The native led legislature passed a resolution directing the king to marry in the hopes of producing an heir. The king had never married because he was in love with his younger brother's widow Emma and supposed that after Liholiho's death, her religious belief would prohibit her from accepting an offer. He was correct. She declined the arrangement when Varigny presented it to her, leaving the king unmarried and childless.

With the king's refusal to marry anyone else, foreign residents began jockeying to find a new heir to support in an election. The British still favored the appointment of Queen Emma, who was devoutly Anglican and held pro-British political opinions. The U.S. minister saw the possible succession crisis as an opportunity to advance American interests by manipulating an election toward a pro-American monarch, Bernice Pauahi Bishop. Luckily for the Hawaiian nation, Kamehameha V's health was more stable than the partisans believed and he continued his reign until 1872.<sup>44</sup>

This succession crisis proved to the American interests on the islands that they needed to firmly reestablish American primacy before the monarchy fell to someone unfriendly to the United States. Many assumed that with the decline of the native population, the archipelago's independence could not last forever. These Americans wanted to ensure that the strides already made toward a closer relationship were not lost. With the monarchy firmly opposed to annexation, the best way to improve the connection would be through a commercial trade agreement.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 239-241.

By the end of 1866, the topic of reciprocity returned to center stage. The Hawaiian economy was starting to feel the effects of a rebounding American sugar economy. During the war, the price of sugar remained high, drawing numerous new investors to the islands. Many of these men were speculators with little business acumen who borrowed money to finance their plantations at high rates of interest. After the Civil War ended, sugar prices fell, leaving these speculators with unmanageable debts. At the same time, overproduction flooded the San Francisco market, the largest destination of Hawaiian sugar. Several firms heavily invested in sugar refining were forced into bankruptcy, sending the Hawaiian economy into a recession. Two solutions proposed to recover Hawaiian progress were to renew negotiations on a reciprocity treaty with the United States, and to acquire contracts with San Francisco refineries to consume the surplus sugar.

Fortunately for the Hawaiian sugar producers, at the same time their economy was failing, the United States replaced Minister McBride with Edward M. McCook. After serving as a Union general, McCook was sent to the islands with the impression that the native government had grown hostile to the United States. He spent several weeks assessing the attitude of the Hawaiian government and determined that the friendly relationship between the nations was still intact and that connecting them economically would solidify that relationship permanently.<sup>45</sup> McCook devised a plan with the local sugar producers and merchants to gain a new reciprocity treaty. He would travel to Washington to exert influence over senators and representatives, while the plantation owners would persuade the monarchy to approach Washington once again. His trip was subsidized by businessmen in Honolulu.

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<sup>45</sup> McCook to Seward, Sept. 3, 1866, No. 6, vol. 11, Dispatches, NA.

McCook received positive responses. Both President Andrew Johnson and Secretary Seward were interested in a treaty and Seward submitted the 1855 treaty to Secretary of the Treasury Hugh McCulloch for his opinion. McCulloch argued that there was no economic gain for the United States in agreeing to the proposed treaty with the exclusion of American cotton and most manufactured goods from the list. He was willing to concede, however, that the political advantage gained in connecting the Hawaiian economy to the United States was useful enough to offset any financial losses. When the Senate agreed with McCulloch's assessment, Johnson approved McCook's authorization to negotiate and sign a reciprocity treaty in Hawaii. He was provided with statistical data from the secretary of the treasury and was instructed to gain the best terms possible for the United States, leaving no room for disapproval by the Senate.<sup>46</sup>

Efforts in Hawaii to sway the monarchy to enter negotiations also met with hesitant but ultimately successful responses. Varigny supported the treaty because it could produce great advantages for the islands, but he was worried that if the United States declined to renew the treaty after the proposed seven-year guarantee, it could cause an economic crisis on the islands similar to the predicament they now faced. If another depression occurred, it could then lead to another call for annexation by American planters and merchants.<sup>47</sup> Varigny did not realize how prophetic his concerns were. Regardless of the minister's reservations, King Kamehameha V appointed Minister of Finance Charles C. Harris with full power to negotiate and sent him to Washington.

Harrison and McCook, met in San Francisco and drafted a treaty. It was heavily influenced by the San Francisco sugar refiners who the pair took time out of negotiations to meet

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<sup>46</sup> McCulloch report, printed in *Sen. Ex. Docs.*, 39 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 20, 1-5; *Congressional Globe*, 39 cong., 2 Sess., 866, 903-904; McCook to Seward, Nov. 21, 1866, No. 14, Dispatches, NA.; Seward to McCook, Feb. 1, 1867, No. 19, printed in *Sen. Docs.*, 56 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 231, Vol. 8, 152-153.

<sup>47</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2: 211.

with and take tours of their refineries. The treaty provided for the duty free admission of several Hawaiian products, with sugar below the number 12 grade Dutch standard<sup>48</sup>—a grade that would not compete with sugars refined in California. In exchange, the United States received a long list of products admitted into Hawaii. The agreement would last seven years with either side able to terminate it after the expiration date with a one-year notice.<sup>49</sup> The two agreed to take the draft to each government, McCook heading to Hawaii and Harrison continuing his assigned journey to Washington.

When McCook returned to Honolulu with the negotiated treaty, he found a new development threatening ratification. The *U.S.S. Lackawanna* had been in Honolulu harbor since February 1867 with instructions to remain until otherwise ordered.<sup>50</sup> The ship was captained by William Reynolds—a former resident of Hawaii from 1852-1861 who had gained a reputation as a staunch supporter of annexation. His renewed presence in Honolulu disturbed many government officials, including Varigny who found his continued stay conveniently timed with the opening of reciprocity discussions.<sup>51</sup> The foreign minister and king addressed the issue with McCook, arguing that the king could not engage in treaty discussions with the United States while a U.S. ship-of-war was stationed in Honolulu harbor. McCook suspected that this warning was a ploy by the anti-treaty factions to keep the king from ratifying the treaty.<sup>52</sup> Not receiving the desired response from the U.S. minister, Varigny wrote Harrison in Washington, urging him

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<sup>48</sup> L. H. Rayner, “The Sugar Industry and the Tariff,” in *The Louisiana Planter and Sugar Manufacturer*, Jan. 6, 1912, Vol. XXXXVIII, No. 1, 7-8; C. A. Browne and F. W. Zerban, *Physical and Chemical Methods of Sugar Analysis* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1941), 1039. The Dutch Standard system grades sugar on the level of brown coloring present in the granules: the higher the number, the darker the color. Most white granules have been refined to remove any impurities but may also be less sweet.

<sup>49</sup> McCook to Seward, May 29, 1867, vol. 11, Dispatches, NA; Harris to Varigny, April 1, No. 1 & May 28, 1867, No. 8, box 58, file C. C. Harris Mission, FO & EX, AH.

<sup>50</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:207-8 & 213.

<sup>51</sup> DeVarigny, “Notes of conversations,” cited in *Sen. Ex. Docs. 52 Cong.*, 2 Sess., No. 77, 145-147.

<sup>52</sup> McCook to Seward, Aug. 5, 1867, No. 3 & De Varigny to McCook, July 25, 1867, enclosed in Vol. 11, Dispatches, NA.

to discuss the *Lackawanna's* presence with the secretaries of state and navy, and warning both that the Hawaiian government could not allow any foreign power to station permanently an armed vessel in a Hawaiian port. He instructed Harrison to file a formal complaint with the state department.

Concerned that pressing the matter could jeopardize the treaty negotiations, Harrison held off filing an official complaint and instead wrote Seward of Varigny's complaint. The secretary of state responded with an assurance of the *Lackawanna's* friendly intent and a declaration that the United States would not remove the ship from Honolulu. Seward's main concern was the rumors of Kamehameha V's failing health and his possible death sparking a political crisis over succession. The *Lackawanna* was stationed in Honolulu to protect American lives and property in the event that such an emergency occurred. Seward's note ended the discussion and the following May, the *Lackawanna* was ordered to San Francisco on unrelated business.<sup>53</sup>

While the Hawaiian government worried over the presence of the *Lackawanna*, on July 13, 1867, President Johnson submitted the treaty to the Senate where it was jostled about for the next three years. A vote referred it to the Committee on Foreign Relations where it sat until January 1868, when it was submitted to the full assembly for consideration. It was not until July that the senators opened discussion on the document. They debated it for two days and then tabled it again. Charles Sumner of Massachusetts advocated approval, strongly defending the treaty as a politically significant connection between the islands and the United States. Groups outside of Congress also attempted to persuade the Senate to support the treaty. The San

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<sup>53</sup> Kuykendall, 2:214-216.

Francisco Chamber of Commerce and the Boston Board of Trade sent resolutions and memorials to the Senate, strongly endorsing the treaty and urging its passage.<sup>54</sup>

William Fessenden, the former treasury secretary who had tentatively endorsed the treaty in 1866, became its biggest opponent. He argued that the duty free exchange was more favorable to Hawaii than the United States, even to the point of the United States losing money. Other members used the traditional constitutional argument that a reciprocity treaty violated congressional powers over taxation. For the next two years, the treaty was brought up for debate and reported back to a committee three times, never gaining passage. In December 1868, while the treaty lay on the table, President Johnson gave his State of the Union address. After discussing the foreign policy goals toward various Latin American countries, Cuba and St. Domingo in particular, he said of Hawaii, “the attitude of the United States toward these islands is not very different from that in which they stand towards the West Indies.”<sup>55</sup> The president clearly connected the Pacific island chain with the secretary of state’s policy in the Caribbean.

Seward’s larger foreign policy goal was to strengthen the influence of the Monroe Doctrine over the Western Hemisphere, which Seward saw as damaged during the United States’ preoccupation with the Civil War. Often labeled an expansionist, Seward’s theories really went beyond the acquisition of land for settlement and exploitation purposes. His vision was couched in a global perspective, hoping to ensure the United States’ position in the world system by controlling the Western Hemisphere. To achieve this goal, the secretary had to counter European aggression in the Caribbean and Latin America by securing bases in the West Indies and the Pacific. The secretary’s immediate plan was either to purchase Samana Bay or annex the whole

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<sup>54</sup> John Patterson, “The United States and Hawaiian Reciprocity, 1867-1870,” *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 7, no. 1 (Mar., 1939), 20.

<sup>55</sup> President Andrew Johnson, “Message of the President of the United States,” December 9, 1868, in *Ex. Doc.*, 40 Cong., 3 Sess., No. 1, 15.

island to provide a coaling station for the U.S. navy and a strategic post to guard a future Central American canal. Seward found an opening in 1867 when the new Dominican president, General Jose Maria Cabral, requested a loan from the United States. The secretary offered to purchase or lease Samana Peninsula for \$2 million in lieu of a high interest loan. Some Americans called for annexation of the whole island, offering a location in addition to Liberia for the settlement of freedmen. The negotiations came to a halt when Cabral was overthrown and Buenaventura Baez was restored to power. Anti-annexationist elements in both the United States and Santo Domingo thwarted the ultimate consummation of a lease and annexation. Though these negotiations proved fruitless, they demonstrated Seward's hemispheric policy agenda, into which Johnson placed the Hawaiian Islands.<sup>56</sup>

Like the Santo Domingo negotiations, the idea of annexation also thwarted Hawaiian reciprocity. In September 1867, Minister McCook wrote Seward warning of a growing desire in the islands for annexation. He thought this faction would frustrate the reciprocity efforts, fearing that a commercial treaty could alleviate the economic problems in Hawaii, satisfy the foreign residents, and take away the incentive for annexation. He believed that "if the policy of annexation should really conflict with the policy of reciprocity, annexation is in every case to be preferred."<sup>57</sup>

Not all *haole* residents agreed with McCook and started circulating an alternate theory about the reciprocity treaty in Hawaii. Refusing the treaty would cause an economic depression that could inspire many American investors to leave the islands, diminishing U.S. influence.

Ratifying the agreement would stimulate the economy and entice more Americans to move to

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<sup>56</sup> Pinkett, "Efforts to Annex Santo Domingo," 12-45. During the Civil War, Spain attempted to reestablish sovereignty over the Dominican Republic. They were forced out in 1865, and Seward initiated an inquiry into establishing naval bases at St. Thomas or Samana Bay. Some Americans wanted to annex the entire island as a location for freed slaves to immigrate. They began a push for annexation which caused difficulties in the negotiations.

<sup>57</sup> McCook to Seward, Sept. 12, 1867, confidential, vol. 11, Dispatches, NA.

Hawaii. Many of the *haole* who were proponents of annexation believed that objective not attainable at that point and saw reciprocity as a step closer to achieving that end.<sup>58</sup> Still others refuted the claim that reciprocity would postpone the inevitable annexation by arguing that the U.S. government was not in a position to consummate annexation. The more prudent path was to ensure a closer relationship through reciprocity until the United States was ready.<sup>59</sup>

Regardless of which side the *haole* landed on, it was evident that many people in Hawaii were discussing the merits of annexation. Some believed the best solution to the economic problems on the islands was to remove all trade barriers. Reciprocity would achieve a similar result, but was not permanent and could lead to an even greater economic crisis if revoked after seven years—a sentiment endorsed to by Robert Wyllie several years earlier. A smaller faction advocated annexation because of its dislike of the monarchical system created by the 1864 constitution. These islanders believed that corrupt individuals surrounded Kamehameha V and wanted the complete destruction of the monarchy and a return of their rights. Annexation would achieve all those goals.

Discussions of annexation also began to appear in Washington. Several members of Congress received letters from Reynolds, the staunch manifest destiny captain of the *Lackawanna*. He contended that without reciprocity the Hawaiian government could not survive long, causing it to fall into the hands of the United States. Duty free trade would give new life to the Hawaiian monarchy and prolong the inevitable annexation.<sup>60</sup>

This mindset gained popularity in the Senate, which concerned Henry A. Peirce, who became a strong lobbyist for the treaty. Previously mentioned for his merchant business and

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<sup>58</sup> Zehaniah S. Spalding to R. P. Spalding, Mar. 29, 1867, vol. 12, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>59</sup> Carter to Bond, May 16, 1867, cited in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:224.

<sup>60</sup> Marshall to Bond, July 15, 1867, quoted in John Patterson, "The United States and Hawaiian Reciprocity, 1867-1870," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 7, no. 1 (Mar., 1939), 20.

meeting with Daniel Webster in 1843, Peirce had a stake in Hawaiian sugar.<sup>61</sup> Although residing in Boston, in 1849 he briefly returned to Hawaii and decided to organize the firm H.A. Peirce & Company, with William Lee and Charles Bishop as partners. They set up a sugar plantation on Kauai run by a fourth party.<sup>62</sup> Back in Washington, Peirce began his campaign for the commercial treaty, refuting Reynolds' claims and arguing that reciprocity "would be the surest, safest, and most proper way in the end to acquire their possession." He spent months trying to convert senators to his view, realizing that "annexation seems to be the cry and object of all. If we can prevail with Senators to believe that the treaty will increase the chances of success of great object, it will be ratified."<sup>63</sup>

President Johnson even added to the debate in his State of the Union address when he pointed out that the treaty "would be a guarantee of the good will and forbearance of all nations until the people of the islands shall of themselves at no distant day, voluntarily apply for admission into the Union."<sup>64</sup> He argued that the Hawaiians knew their government was "feeble and precarious" and that their independence would not remain indefinitely. A reciprocity treaty could bring the islands into a closer relationship with the United States until the inevitable occurred.

Ultimately, the treaty came to a final vote in June 1870 where it failed by a count of twenty to nineteen, with thirty-nine senators not voting.<sup>65</sup> This can be attributed to a number of things including the unequal exchange of goods in the agreement, the constitutional infringements implied, and annexation talk in Washington. It was also the result of bad timing.

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<sup>61</sup> Peirce's background previously discussed in chapter 1, pg. 37-38.

<sup>62</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 1:324-325. Bishop came with Lee to the islands and married Bernice Pauahi a high chiefess and possible heiress to the throne.

<sup>63</sup> Peirce to Bond, Dec. 14, 1867, *ibid.*, 22.

<sup>64</sup> Johnson, "Message of the President of the United States," in *Ex. Doc.*, 40 Cong, 3 Sess., No. 1, 15.

<sup>65</sup> *Journal of the Executive Proceeding of the Senate*, XVI, 354-355.

Johnson presented the treaty to the Senate when Congress was preoccupied with the difficulties of reconstruction and the ongoing Republicans' battle with the president that resulted in his impeachment in 1868. Johnson clearly advocated the Hawaiian treaty, which automatically made it unpopular with some of his staunchest opponents. Furthermore, the exigencies of reconstructing the nation and restoring economic production in war-ravaged areas took precedent with most senators, which was evident in that only half even bothered to cast a vote on the treaty.

Seward himself recognized the improbability of successfully completing reciprocity or annexation. He wrote to the newly appointed consul in Hawaii, "Without going into an explanation of the causes for the condition of national sentiment which temporarily exists, it is enough to say that the public attention sensibly continues to be fastened upon domestic questions which have grown out of the late civil war." He warned that with the presidential election approaching, each party's focus remained on economic and political reconstruction.<sup>66</sup> When Ulysses S. Grant took over the White House, he displayed even less interest in pursuing an aggressive policy toward Hawaii. The new president told his secretary of state, Hamilton Fish, to forward dispatches from the Hawaiian minister to the Senate without expressing the administration's opinion, thereby placing any decisions in its hands.<sup>67</sup>

This episode in the American-Hawaiian relationship once again revealed that American foreign policy was dictated by its progression as a second-tier nation. With the opportunity to increase its involvement in the islands, or possibly take the islands altogether, America's internal development blocked such a move. The United States had to reconstruct itself, fully embrace a unified economy, and completely possess its western territories before embracing a first-tier imperial policy across the Pacific. The Hawaiian government was also still working to maintain

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<sup>66</sup> Seward to Spalding, July 5, 1868, No. 42, cited in *Sen. Ex. Doc.*, 52 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 77, 140.

<sup>67</sup> Hamilton Fish, March 21, 1871, Diary, *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, ed. John Y. Simon, vol. 21, 301n.

its independence by acquiring an economic stimulus to ensure its internal stability. There would have been great opposition in the islands to an American occupation. Those individuals who advocated annexation were grasping at an idea that was not yet feasible. For the United States to take possession of Hawaii, it would have had to employ military force to ensure success, something that a nation just recuperating from one of the most deadly wars in history could not envision.

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With the failure of the reciprocity treaty, discussions of annexation in both the United States and Hawaii ended, but the need for a commercial relationship still weighed heavily on the Hawaiian government. There was a resurgence of Hawaiian nationalism with a campaign to rely on Hawaiian resources to further international trade as a means to preserve the archipelago's independence. Yet the islands' economy continued to decline, leading many to return to the idea of a commercial treaty with the United States. These advocates knew that another appeal to Washington without something new to offer would be futile. The possibility of enticing the Americans with a lease or cession of Pearl River as a coaling station became the new driving force of the pro-treaty factions in Hawaii.

Several significant changes in Hawaii led to this new interest in offering the Pearl River. First, the United States sent a new minister, to the islands, Henry A. Peirce, who was both a great supporter of the reciprocal trade and a believer in the relationship between the United States and Hawaii. During his tenure in office, he pushed for not only a treaty, but the creation of a naval base at Pearl River and a possible annexation of the archipelago. Second, Kamehameha V's health was again in rapid decline and he died in 1872, leaving no officially declared successor to

the throne. The crisis that followed threatened the stability of the islands and led many to advocate a renewal of annexation. These two changes, combined with the failing economy, reopened reciprocity negotiations and increased concern over domestic struggles.

One of the biggest advocates of the treaty was Henry A. Peirce, President Grant's newly appointed replacement for McCook. A long-time resident and merchant on the islands, Peirce had for the past decade resided in Boston where he was active in promoting the reciprocity treaty of 1867. His arrival in July 1869 placed him at the center of the final year of that treaty debate. Witnessing the Senate's apprehension over engaging in a commercial relationship with the islands, and seeing firsthand the political turmoil in Honolulu over the declining economy, Peirce became a staunch advocate of a treaty with the United States.<sup>68</sup>

Peirce began his campaign just two months after his arrival. In September 1869, he sent a dispatch listing the reason why the United States needed a naval station in Honolulu, particularly noting the declining health of the monarch and the advantage that a U.S. vessel in the harbor would give to American interests in a succession crisis. The next year after receiving word of the failed reciprocity treaty, he wrote again to express the same worries over possible civil upheaval in the event of the king's death. He added to this a broader view of Hawaiian significance to the United States. Peirce discussed the growing importance of Pacific and Asian trade to the global economy and the commercial advantage of the United States retaining its supremacy over the archipelago. He insisted that it was "proper, wise, and sagacious for the United States Government to again consider the project of annexing the Hawaiian Islands to territory of the republic."<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Josephine Sullivan, *A History of C. Brewer and Company, Limited: One Hundred Years in the Hawaiian Islands, 1826-1926* (Boston: Walton Advertising and Printing Company, 1926), 24-71.

<sup>69</sup> Peirce to Fish, Sept 11, 1869, No. 15, vol. 11; July 30, 1870, No. 64; Sept. 20, 1870, No. 72; and, Feb. 25, 1871, No. 101, vol. 12, Dispatches, NA.

Another American in Hawaii, Zephaniah S. Spalding, also hoped to revive the treaty efforts. Spalding had been a resident of Honolulu since 1867 when Seward sent him as a bearer of dispatches and eventually made him U.S. consul to Honolulu. Secretly, Spalding's real mission was to observe the situation in the archipelago and determine the effect that a reciprocity treaty would have on the economy and American interests on the islands. Subsequently, he reported that he opposed reciprocity and felt annexation was the best course for ensuring American influence. He used his position in Hawaii to influence American senators against the reciprocity treaty until 1869 when the incoming Grant administration replaced him as consul. Spalding then decided to stay in the archipelago, and became a partner in a Maui sugar plantation with the Hawaiian minister of finance, Dr. Ferdinand Hutchinson, and the king himself, Kamehameha V.<sup>70</sup>

Spalding's experience as a sugar producer changed his opinion on reciprocity and in the fall of 1870, while on a trip to Washington to visit his father Congressman Rufus P. Spalding of Ohio, he proposed a new plan. Feeling he could speak for the king, Spalding wrote Secretary of State Hamilton Fish and President Grant, suggesting that if the United States would agree to admit Hawaiian sugar up to number 16 Dutch Standard grade, the Hawaiian government would "grant a lease" for ninety-nine years on land and water rights for a naval depot in Oahu. Furthermore, the monarchy would allow the United States to fortify this property for its defense and the Hawaiian government would not grant a similar privilege to any other nation as long as a reciprocity agreement remained in effect.<sup>71</sup>

In July 1870, Peirce wrote Fish expressing concern about Hawaii's new movement to establish commercial relations with Australia and New Zealand. The legislature had authorized a

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<sup>70</sup> Zephaniah Swift Statement, Morgan Report, 233-241.

<sup>71</sup> Spalding to Fish, Sept 27, 1869, cited in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, Vol. 20, 82-83n.

subsidy of \$50,000 to establish a steamship line between the islands. The king approved the opening of negotiations for a reciprocal trade for Hawaiian sugar, hoping to replace the American market with one with British possessions. This move alarmed Peirce, who viewed this as another British effort to separate the islands from the United States. Spalding also warned that this agreement could absorb the entire island's sugar production, excluding the United States from trade with Hawaii.<sup>72</sup>

Both men were attempting to persuade the Grant administration to take a stronger interest in the American-Hawaiian relationship by using U.S. status in the Pacific as an incentive. The offer of a naval base in Hawaii would give the United States a geopolitical and commercial advantage in the burgeoning Asian markets. Grant was aware of this possibility. In 1869, he ordered Rear Admiral John Irwin of the Pacific squadron to Hawaii to assess the viability of building a naval base in Honolulu Harbor or at the mouth of the Pearl River, and he received a positive report. Even with this naval backing, the president remained aloof on the treaty agreement.<sup>73</sup>

Fish noted the dispatches and decided to pursue a more engaged policy toward the islands. In October 1870, he presented the cabinet with several of Peirce's dispatches, but received no response and temporarily dropped the issue. Then in February 1871, Fish received a third dispatch from Peirce requesting instruction in the event of the king's death. The secretary of state expected a crisis over succession and supposed that a large segment of the population would use the opportunity to request annexation to the United States. Peirce wanted permission

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<sup>72</sup> Peirce to Fish, July 30, 1870, vol. 13, Dispatches, NA; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 229.

<sup>73</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion*, 108-109.

to engage in negotiations if that occurred. When Fish presented this dispatch to the president and cabinet, they agreed to forward all the letters to the Senate, without comment.<sup>74</sup>

The Senate received the letters on April 7, 1871, two days after Grant forwarded a report by special commissioners sent to Santo Domingo to collect information on the desirability of the island. The Senate was also holding on to an annexation treaty for the Dominican Republic and Grant wanted to encourage its passage. Ultimately, the Senate chose to refer the information on Hawaii to the Committee on Foreign Relations where it was tabled.<sup>75</sup> Nothing more happened with the archipelago for another year.

On December 11, 1872, Kamehameha V died without naming an heir, creating for the first time in Hawaiian history the need to elect a new monarch. Four names were under consideration in the legislature. Bernice Pauahi Bishop, one of the last high chiefs, was the favorite of the majority of Americans mainly because she was married to the American Charles Bishop, former plantation partner of Henry Peirce and William Lee. Ruth Keelikolani was the king's half-sister and a favorite of many chiefs due to her relationship to all of them. David Kalakaua had a more extensive genealogy. His paternal grandmother shared a great grandfather with Kamehameha I, and his paternal grandfather had descended from Kamehameha I's great uncle. Kalakaua was ambitious to wear the crown and campaigned hard for the position, but most *haole* and elites disliked him because he was a member of the Hawaii for Hawaiians organization that actively opposed annexation. The final candidate was William Charles Lunalilo, whose lineage is unclear, but claimed to be the grandson of Kamehameha I's half-brother.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Peirce to Fish, February 25, 1871, No. 101. vol. 13, Dispatches, AH; Fish Diary cited in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, ed. John Y. Simon, vol. 21, 301n.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui*, 145-151.

All four were in some way distantly related to the monarchial line, but none had a clear claim to the title. There was, however, one front-runner. Lunalilo was the favorite of Kamehameha V and most of the native Hawaiians outside of the *ali'i* class, but he was considered to be the least qualified for the position. Some of his supporters wanted him to proclaim himself the king and avoid any legislative maneuvering, but he chose instead to issue a manifesto outlining his genealogical claim to the throne and then announcing that he would submit to the decision of a plebiscite of the people. This was a brilliant move on his part because the majority of the legislature was leaning toward electing Kalakaua. The resultant election was an overwhelming majority for Lunalilo, but the constitution stipulated that the legislature was responsible for the election. It was unclear if the legislators would comply with the wishes of the people, so in a brilliant move, Lunalilo supporters proposed a motion that required each member to sign the back of their ballots. This ensured that no one would cast his vote against the plebiscite. Thus, Lunalilo received an almost unanimous vote. This political intrigue within the legislature actually saved the islands from the crisis of succession that Peirce and Spalding had predicted.<sup>77</sup>

Lunalilo's first order of business was to select a new cabinet. For minister of foreign affairs, he selected Charles Bishop, the American banker and husband of Bernice Pauahi. Edwin O. Hall, a local businessman previously associated with the ABCFM in secular capacity, became the minister of the interior. Dr. Gerrit P. Judd's son, Albert Francis Judd, became attorney general. The only non-American, the Scotchman Robert Stirling, became minister of finance. Henry Peirce was pleased with the very pro-American cabinet.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (Honolulu), Jan. 11, 1873; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 239-245; Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui*,

<sup>78</sup> Peirce to Fish, Jan. 15, 1873, No. 184, vol. 15, Dispatches, NA.

The new king's first urgent concern was to appease the business interests on the island by addressing the depressed economy. Henry M. Whitney, whose parents were part of the original company of missionaries, presented the king with a document proposing that he offer the United States a fifty-year lease on Pearl Harbor in exchange for reciprocity. Whitney believed this would be enough incentive to convince the U.S. Senate to accept the treaty. The long-term lease would ensure that the economic boom of reciprocity lasted long enough for the Hawaiian market to stabilize and expand—unlike a seven-year treaty that would only lead to another depression. Finally, Whitney thought this would quiet the annexation movement by appeasing the merchant and planter class, while ensuring American security of the islands. Newspapers reported that Lunalilo favored the idea but did not propose it because the United States would not agree to a lease.<sup>79</sup>

Within a month of his crowning, the new king received several more petitions and a visit from members of the Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce requesting that he make another effort to secure a reciprocity treaty with the United States. In a petition written by Henry A. P. Carter, a young business partner in the C. Brewer & Co. shipping firm, it was suggested to the king that he personally go to Washington to negotiate, hoping that action would improve the chances of success and offer any additional incentives not previously suggested. He quietly circulated this petition and gained most of Honolulu merchants' signatures before presenting it to the king. The Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce considered endorsing his petition, but ultimately decided against it because the document also urged the cession of Pearl Harbor and the negotiation of immigrant labor from China to reduce production costs. Instead, the Chamber elected to send a

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<sup>79</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2: 249.

five-member delegation to confer with the government on devising measures to induce the United States into a treaty.<sup>80</sup>

The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* picked up the story and publicly advocated the cession of Pearl River to entice the United States into a treaty. In a February 8, 1873, article, the *Advertiser* described the declining commercial status of the islands and concluded that it was time to obtain a reciprocity treaty at any cost. Citing two U.S. naval officers in Honolulu, the paper suggested that the U.S. government would accept the offer of Pearl Harbor. The *Advertiser* and the *Hawaiian Gazette* continued to print articles debating the cession of Pearl River and the possibility of annexation for the next several months, inspiring a growing public debate on the issue.<sup>81</sup>

At the time, two American warships were in Honolulu harbor, one arriving just a week after Lunalihō became king. Many people assumed that the ships were sent as a show of force to sway the election results. In reality, Kamehameha V had arranged transportation on the *California* to Europe for medical treatment prior to his death. It was preparing to leave San Francisco to pick up the king when word arrived of the monarch's demise. President Grant ordered Admiral A.M. Pennock to continue on to Honolulu and assist Minister Peirce if events necessitated. The ship conveyed Major General John M. Schofield, commander of the Army Military Division of the Pacific, and Brevet Brigadier General B. S. Alexander, of the Army Corps of Engineers. They were on a confidential mission from Secretary of War William W. Belknap to ascertain the defensive capabilities of the Hawaiian ports and collect any other

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<sup>80</sup> Peirce to Fish, Feb. 7, 1872, No. 189, vol. 15, Dispatches, NA ; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2: 250-251. Carter was born on the island to American parents; his father had owned a shipping company that traded sandalwood in China. He had worked his way up from a typesetter for the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, to a clerk for C. Brewer and Company, and eventually a full partner in the firm. He was a close personal friend of American Minister Henry Pierce (who he may have been named after) and married one of Dr. Gerrit Judd's daughters.

<sup>81</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (Honolulu), Mar. 15, 22, 1873; *Peirce* to Fish, Feb. 10, 1872, No. 190, vol. 15, Dispatches, NA.

information that would prove useful in the event of war with a major maritime power. They staged their visit as a vacation trip and received abundant assistance from local authorities. Their resultant report discussed the potential of Pearl Harbor, which would require a very large expenditure to cut through the coral reef blocking the entrance.<sup>82</sup>

Minister Henry A. Peirce was less enamored with the Pearl Harbor leasing scheme and wrote several dispatches to Fish regarding his opinions of reciprocity and annexation. Concerning the economic depression gripping the islands, Peirce explained that many Hawaiian officials, planters, and merchants believed that the “panacea for the cure of these evils” was a reciprocity treaty with the United States and that offering Pearl Harbor was the best means to secure it. Peirce, however, assumed the U.S. government would not agree to lease a portion of the islands. Furthermore, he did not think King Lunaliho would ever agree to relinquish his sovereignty unless forced to do so by a revolution, which many of the *haole* were considering. Peirce requested that Fish declare an official stance on all the above issues because “this nation is bewildered and suffering to some degree, not knowing how to shape its own policy.”<sup>83</sup>

In June, Peirce finally received instructions from Washington. Fish disclosed that both houses of Congress were still against any reciprocity treaty and that he could not predict how the offer of Pearl Harbor would affect that opinion. Regarding to annexation, he warned that many in the government opposed the acquisition of non-contiguous lands and would oppose any offer of cession. He later added that some individuals in positions of influence understood the future importance of the Hawaiian Islands and would never permit them to fall under the control of another power. Because of Hawaii’s “evident tendency to decay” and the strong movement

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<sup>82</sup> Schofield and Alexander to Belknap, May 8, 1873, printed in *Sen. Ex. Doc. 52 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 77, 150-154*; William Michael Morgan, *Pacific Gibraltar: U.S.-Japanese Rivalry Over the Annexation of Hawaii, 1885-1898* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011), 21-23.

<sup>83</sup> Peirce to Fish, Feb. 7, 1872, & Feb. 10, 1872, No. 190, No. 189, vol. 15, Dispatches, NA.

toward annexation on the islands, Peirce was directed to “not discourage the feeling which may exist in favor of annexation” and to ascertain any terms that the monarchy would require if such a proposition was made. Fish could not authorize Peirce to engage in negotiations because he did not have the support of Congress, but wanted to ensure American future interests on the islands by leaving the possibility of annexation open.<sup>84</sup>

Peirce took this information to Charles Bishop to present to the rest of the king’s cabinet, whose members were already engaged in a debate over the advisability of ceding Pearl Harbor to the United States. The three American members supported the idea of a lease or cession, believing it the only way to resuscitate the economy. Minister of Finance Stirling did not agree, fearing that a cession of any land could be disastrous for the islands. After hearing both sides of the argument, King Lunalihō decided to authorize Bishop to open negotiations with Peirce for a reciprocity treaty with a cession of Pearl Harbor included.<sup>85</sup> Peirce could not enter into talks without authorization but forwarded the request and awaited instructions. This move sparked another round of debates in the cabinet during which the king revealed that he did not like the idea of ceding Pearl Harbor and feared the people greatly disapproved. He would not agree to sign any negotiated treaty including that provision until after the U.S. Senate approved it.

Before Peirce received word back from Fish, the king’s concerns with native disapproval became all too evident. By mid-summer, the Hawaii for Hawaiians organization began a campaign against the rumored Pearl Harbor scheme. On June 30, natives held a public meeting in Kaumakapili Church to discuss the matter. Several speakers roused the crowd with a warning that cession of the harbor would lead to complete annexation in the near future. One English spokesperson reminded the crowd of the recent civil war in the United States and detailed dire

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<sup>84</sup> Fish to Peirce, March 25, 1873, No. 86, Instructions, Hawaii, vol. 2, United States Department of State, National Archives. (hereafter cited USDS, NA)

<sup>85</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:254-255.

consequences for the native people if the Americans took possession of the islands. The crowd adopted a resolution disapproving of the cession of land to the United States.<sup>86</sup>

Throughout the summer and early fall, public sentiment against the treaty grew. The *Hawaiian Gazette* claimed there was a general rise in native patriotism brought on by the fear of the cession of Hawaiian lands. It said of foreigners, “their money and skill to develop the resources of the country were welcome, but any cession of territory must be unalterably opposed.”<sup>87</sup> David Kalakaua also led a protest against the Pearl Harbor scheme through the Hawaii for Hawaiian organization, challenging the king’s honor as a Hawaiian monarch.<sup>88</sup> Charles Bishop informed Peirce that even his own wife, Bernice Pauahi, opposed the cession. Queen Emma wrote a relative of her reaction to what she perceived as a plot by American *haole*, saying that “there is a feeling of bitterness against these rude people who dwell on our land and have high handed ideas of giving away somebody else’s property as if it was theirs.” The queen was mistaken. Not all Americans agreed with the scheme. J. O Carter, Henry Carter’s brother, wrote strongly worded letters against the treaty and Walter Murray Gibson used his Hawaiian language newspaper to campaign against both the treaty and the continuation of the existing cabinet.<sup>89</sup>

When Fish’s instructions finally arrived in December 1873, the most recent treaty affair had ended because the king had withdrawn the offer. As public hostility continued to grow into the fall, King Lunalihō fell seriously ill with pulmonary tuberculosis. He was taken in September to Kailua on the Big Island to convalesce, but his health only deteriorated. On November 14, the four cabinet members went to Kailua to discuss the treaty with Lunalihō, where he advised them

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<sup>86</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (Honolulu), July 5, 1873; *Hawaiian Gazette* (Honolulu), July 2, 1873.

<sup>87</sup> *Hawaiian Gazette* (Honolulu), July 30, 1873.

<sup>88</sup> Peirce to Fish, March 7 & 17; July 3, 7, & 10, 1873, vol. 15, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>89</sup> Queen Emma to Keliimoewai, Aug. 20 1873, cited in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:256.

that he could no longer support the offer. It was decided that day to withdraw the treaty and await the outcome of the king's health crisis.<sup>90</sup>

The king never recovered, and on February 3, 1874, he died without naming a successor, throwing the Hawaiian kingdom into yet another crisis. The legislature had to elect a new monarch from the remaining candidates of the previous election, but this time there was no clearly popular candidate. They all had different groups of supporters on the islands and the result was a highly partisan election process that ended in violence. The first, Bernice Pauahi Bishop, was a favorite of the Americans, which actually worked against her in the elections because of the presumption of her support for a reciprocity treaty. The other two candidates were Queen Emma and David Kalakaua, both of whom had vocally opposed the Pearl Harbor scheme and, therefore, were presumed to be hostile toward the Americans. These two campaigned extensively for the crown, often making scathing accusations against each other.<sup>91</sup>

On February 12, 1874, the legislature convened to elect a new monarch under threat of violence from a crowd of natives who gathered in the downtown area. No plebiscite was held prior to this election, so the members were able to cast secret ballot votes for the candidate of their choice. The native people supported the election of Emma and gathered outside the courthouse to await the outcome. At noon, the representatives cast their votes and elected Kalakaua over Queen Emma by a thirty-nine to six vote.<sup>92</sup>

The queen's supporters were so angry that they stormed the courthouse, vandalized the building, and attacked the legislators as they attempted to leave. Dozens of the members were beaten, one was thrown from a second story window, and several were seriously injured. One

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<sup>90</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 2:256-257.

<sup>91</sup> Osorio, *Dismembering Lāhui*, 150-159. Osorio give an extensive explanation of the native Hawaiian attitudes toward all three candidates.

<sup>92</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom, 1874-1893* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1967), 3:8-12.

member died a few days later from his injuries. Several foreign residents attempted to calm the rioters, including a young Sanford B. Dole and his brother George, but were unsuccessful in quelling the violence. The riot continued to escalate as many of the royal police officers took off their badges and joined in the violence.<sup>93</sup>

After a half-hour, Kalakaua and Charles Bishop contacted the U.S. minister and British consul to request assistance. Two American warships and one British gunboat were in Honolulu harbor and both men had already discussed preparing their troops to come ashore in the event of hostilities during the election. Within ten minutes, 150 American marines were on the scene with 70 British troops joining them a few moments after. The crowd of rioters cheered when they saw British forces arrive, assuming they would assist in the disturbance because the British were known to support Emma. They were mistaken because the American Marines and British troops worked in concert to disperse the crowds and make arrests.<sup>94</sup>

The American and British troops remained ashore for eight days while the people calmed down and Kalakaua solidified his reign. Foreign Minister Bishop asked British consul James Wodehouse, French commissioner Theodor Ballieu, and U.S. minister Peirce to extend recognition to Kalakaua in an effort to force Queen Emma to concede the elections. They all agreed and the British and French representatives made a personal visit to Emma to encourage her to make a public statement. She complied with their wishes and that afternoon she formally recognized Kalakaua as the legitimately elected monarch. By the next day, the crowd had

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<sup>93</sup> Peirce to Fish, Feb. 17, 1874, vol. 16, Dispatches, NA; Admiral W. H. H. Southerland, "Incidents Connected With the Election of King Kalakaua in February 1874," in *Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society*, vol. 21, no. 1, 12-15; Ethel M. Damon, *Sanford Ballard Dole and His Hawaii* (Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1957), 125-128; Lorrin Thurston, *Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution* (Honolulu, 1936), 17-18.

<sup>94</sup> Peirce to Fish, Feb. 11, 17, 19, 20, 1874, No. 241-245, vol. 16, Dispatches, NA; William D. Alexander, "Politics of Kalakaua's Reign, up to the Constitution of 1887," box: Alexander, William Dewitt 1833-1913 papers, file 1864-1893, William Dewitt Alexander Collection, Manuscript collection M003, Archives of Hawaii, 3. (Hereafter Alexander Collection, AH)

dispersed and Kalakaua was publicly sworn in as the new king. Within weeks, the nation returned to a tranquil and orderly society.<sup>95</sup>

This violent reaction and the Hawaiian government's inability to protect its citizens resulted in a great change in attitude toward the stationing of foreign naval vessels in Hawaii. This was the first time foreign troops landed to suppress an internal disturbance on the island, but the positive result of the use of British and American forces set a precedent that would be used again. Peirce requested that U.S. Navy permanently station a military vessel in Hawaii to protect American persons and property in light of the evident inability of the Hawaiian authorities to provide security. Eighty American residents agreed with him in a memorial sent to the United States legation. They congratulated the marines for their service and requested a continued presence on the island. The state and navy departments agreed, and began systematically rotating the Pacific fleet to ensure a continuous presence in Hawaiian waters.<sup>96</sup> It was evident that the violence had ended the Hawaiian opposition to American vessels so adamantly expressed in the *Lackawanna* incident a decade earlier.

With the election crisis under control, David Kalakaua began his reign by shocking many of the American residents. During Lunalilo's rule, Kalakaua had openly opposed reciprocity, annexation, and the cession of Pearl Harbor, even criticizing the king's honor for considering such a move. But, on April 30, 1874, the new ruler announced to the legislature that he considered a commercial treaty with the United States his biggest priority. He asked the legislature to grant him full power to negotiate and sign a reciprocity treaty.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3: 10-11.

<sup>96</sup> Peirce to Fish, Feb. 17, 1874, No. 243 & Memorial Dated Feb. 26, 1874 enclosed in Peirce to Fish, March 3, 1874, No. 250, vol. 16, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>97</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii*, 118.

To complete his promise, the king left Honolulu in December with an entourage of Henry Peirce, Governor John Dominis, and several other dignitaries to embark on a good-will tour of the United States. His ultimate goal was to gain enough public support through his visit to sway the Senate to agree to the reciprocity treaty. As the first sovereign of any state to visit the United States, he spent five days in New York City as its guest and another two weeks in Washington D.C. This good-will tour was a resounding success, garnering a great deal of press coverage.<sup>98</sup>

While Kalakaua toured the nation's capital, the rest of his entourage began a massive political campaign to advocate the treaty's passage. Elisha Allen and Henry Carter had already been in Washington for several months negotiating with Fish and, once completed, they began soliciting congressional support. U.S. minister Henry Peirce also appeared before the Senate foreign relations committee where he warned of a loan offer from New Zealand, which would place Hawaiian property and revenue under lien. Along with testimony by the Hawaiian Club of Boston and the Boston Board of Trade concerning the fate of their investments in the archipelago, many senators began to view reciprocity as being far more important to the political alliance than to the trade relationship.<sup>99</sup>

The effort worked. On March 18, 1875, the Senate approved the treaty, following the insertion of an additional article, by a vote of fifty-one to twelve. The additional article stipulated that the Hawaiian Kingdom would not lease, place a lien upon, or dispose of any port, harbor, or other territory to any other power while the treaty remained in effect. Kalakaua signed the treaty on April 18, and President Grant added his signature on May 31, 1875. It took another year for

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<sup>98</sup> Merze Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 39.

<sup>99</sup> Merze Tate, "Canada's Interest in the Trade and the Sovereignty of Hawaii," in *Canadian Historical Review*, 44 (1963), 21-26; Merze Tate, "Australasian Interest in the Commerce and the Sovereignty of Hawaii," *Historical Studies Australia and New Zealand*, 11 (1965), 276-81.

Congress to pass the necessary legislation to implement it fully because of opposition from sugar and rice planters.<sup>100</sup>

After two decades of repeated attempts and failures, the Hawaiian monarchy finally achieved its economic foreign policy goal and the merchants and planters were elated. The treaty sparked economic recovery on the island and led to increased sugar plantation speculation by foreign investors. More importantly for those concerned with a political alliance, the treaty strengthened the relationship between the Hawaiian Islands and the Californian coast.

The new era that Kamehameha IV spoke of in his coronation address had finally come to both nations. Hawaii had obtained the commercial treaty that would bring its economic advancement to completion while the United States worked through its internal division and began to embrace a more international foreign agenda. At the end of these two long decades, the relationship between the Hawaiian Islands the United States had grown closer, but it still remained an informal imperial relationship in which the Hawaiians believed they could maintain their independence. Repeated opportunities for the United States to take a more aggressive approach in this relationship failed each time, proving the nation still had progress to make in its own development. By the end of the 1880s, the nation was able to institute the remaining changes and transition into a first-tier nation and would have to face its own internal doubt about its new status. Ironically, events in Hawaii would force the Americans to deal with this debate, when an economic and political crisis brought the Hawaiian monarchy to its end.

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<sup>100</sup> *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 1 Sess., 2274-2275; "Convention between the United States of America and His Majesty the King of the Hawaiian Islands," in *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 164-167.

## Chapter 4

### “Clouds are Gathering and the Waves Grow Boisterous”<sup>1</sup>

As he sat in sullen silence “gazing into space” with the sun setting over the shores of Hawaii, a strangely sweet smile of resignation appeared on King Kalakaua’s face. After weighing the improbability of successfully refusing, he reached for a pen and affixed his signature to the document placed before him. That morning, on July 6, 1887, the king’s own cabinet and members of the Hawaiian League presented the monarch with a new constitution stripping him of his authority and placing power in the hands of the people. After hours of argument, protest, and inquiry, the king found himself in this futile position and signed into law a piece of paper marking yet another new era in Hawaiian history.<sup>2</sup>

The “New Era” envisioned by Kamehameha IV in his inaugural address to the people in 1855 had come to pass through a lucrative reciprocity treaty with the United States. This agreement sparked rapid economic growth in the kingdom, increasing its standing in the international economy. Sugar plantations began to show large profits, while investment in production and technology rose. Kalakaua instituted internal improvements of harbors and roads and eventually began to envision a more aggressive foreign policy agenda. Combined with the constitutional changes inspired by Lunalilo and completed by Kalakaua, the Hawaiian Kingdom

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<sup>1</sup> Honolulu *Saturday Press*, Feb. 11, 1882. This quote was part of an article discussing the ascension of Walter Murray Gibson to the head of the king’s cabinet.

<sup>2</sup> Clarence W. Ashford, “Last Days of the Hawaiian Monarchy,” 27 *HHS Report* (1919); *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, July 7, 1887.

seemed to be taking its next step up the international rung and embracing a truly westernized nation-state agenda.

The downside of great economic growth was the creation of an environment ripe for speculators and investors looking to increase their influence over the government. The prosperity generated by reciprocity drew to Hawaii several “bad *haole*” — referred to by Sanford B. Dole as “Shysters.” These men manipulated the political system for personal gain, causing resentment and frustration among *haole* and native residents alike.

The rapid increase in the islands’ economy also created an environment of graft and irresponsible spending. With the enhanced government revenues, Kalakaua instituted many needed projects that improved the islands’ transportation, health, and education, but occasionally he fell prey to irresponsible schemes aimed at increasing his own prestige at the expense of the crown’s purse. Native Hawaiian representatives often supported his projects, because they benefited those citizens who were not profiting from the new trade agreement, but most of the *haole* engaged in the sugar industry resented the king’s decisions.

From 1876 to 1887, these issues contributed to a highly partisan climate in Hawaii. The planter and merchant classes, which happened to be predominantly *haole*, found themselves under the political rule of the non-producing, predominantly native class. This set up a situation that ultimately led to a revolt against King Kalakaua. A group of economic elites forced the king to abrogate the 1864 constitution and sign into law an instrument that, ironically, placed political power in the hands of the children of the original collaborators of the 1840s.

All this spending and growth was reliant on the continuation of the reciprocity treaty with the United States, whose leaders began to question the advisability of renewing the agreement. With Reconstruction ended and the southern states returned to Congress, the United States began

to focus on rebuilding its economy and transforming its industry into the leading producer in the world. Great debates over the use of tariffs and reciprocity treaties filled the congressional records, and by the early 1880s, the Hawaiian treaty came under fire. The United States was in final stages of its ascent to world power and some in Washington no longer saw the need to embrace a close connection to the islands. There was only one incentive Hawaii could offer this rising nation that would appeal to its evolving status, something the United States was not sure it wanted: a naval base.

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In the first half of Kalakaua's reign, the legislature made several constitutional changes that opened the door to partisanship in Honolulu. The 1874 legislature amended the electoral restrictions implemented by the 1864 constitution, removing property qualifications for voting and office holding in the lower house.<sup>3</sup> This re-enfranchised all native Hawaiian males over the age of nineteen, most of whom held little or no property, and contributed to one of the largest political problems of the next decade. Because the native population outnumbered the *haole*, native representatives held most all of the seats in the legislature. Virtually none of them owned sugar plantations or had economic investments in industries related to the sale or transportation of the product. Sugar had become the main cash crop of the islands, making the archipelago's economy very similar to the ante-bellum American South; but in Hawaii, the planter elites were not in control of the government. This meant that the lower house, which was responsible for economic policy such as taxation and government expenditures, was comprised of men who did not have a vested interest in the main economic commodity. The plantation and business owning

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<sup>3</sup> Ralph S. Kuykendall, *Constitutions of the Hawaiian Kingdom: a Brief History and Analysis*, No. 21, Papers of the Hawaiian Historical Society (Honolulu, 1940), 42-43.

*haole* resented that they provided the main source of income and paid most of the taxes, but had no control over the collection and expenditure of those revenues.

The reciprocity treaty that went into effect in September 1876 compounded the political conflict. In the first four years of the treaty, Hawaiian sugar production more than doubled, and the value of the crop quadrupled. By 1885, sugar income had risen to \$8,356,061.<sup>4</sup> Some plantations recorded a 50 percent increase in profits in the first four years of the treaty. This earning potential led to the expansion of sugar production, doubling the number of plantations by 1892.<sup>5</sup>

This economic boom generated great wealth for only a small portion of the population, which created many problems for the kingdom. Native Hawaiian leaders were concerned about the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few *haole* plantations owners and began to discuss possible solutions. The *Hawaiian Gazette* suggested that the government lease or sell small tracts of one- to two-hundred acre plots to thousands of small farmers who could grow sugar cane. The farmers could then process the sugar in cooperatively owned mills or sell the sugar to private corporate refineries. This would ensure that Hawaii was not “absorbed by bloated monopolists.”<sup>6</sup>

The 1876 legislature agreed with the *Hawaiian Gazette* and created a commission to investigate and make recommendations for the best use of sugar producing lands. Their report, made by Henry A.P. Carter, John Kapena, and James Makee, suggested setting up a cooperative style labor system on the public lands in the Hilo district to provide opportunity to “parties of small means and to the native Hawaiians in the vicinity.”<sup>7</sup> Ultimately, these ideas failed because the expense in developing plantations and processing sugar cane was too costly for small farmers

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<sup>4</sup> Sylvester K. Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii, 1842-1898* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1954), 141.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> “The Central Factory System,” *Hawaiian Gazette*, Jan. 24, 1877; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 23, 1877.

<sup>7</sup> “Report of the Royal Commission of the Development of the Resources of the Kingdom,” quoted in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:50.

or the government to cover. The result was a concentration of sugar producing land in the hands of speculators and businessmen with the economic means to bear the expense: foreigners.

Americans and *haole* were also disappointed in the treaty's effect on the islands' population. Many American *haole* expected the reciprocity treaty to bring the United States and Hawaii closer together through economic investment on the islands. That proved true in a different way than hoped. The majority of the investment capital for the growth of the sugar industry did not come from Americans investing their private wealth in the archipelago, thus connecting more Americans to the success of the islands' economy. Instead, the money came from the profits of the existing plantations. Many *haole* investors took out high-interest loans from American banks to subsidize their expansion, leaving sugar producers indebted to U.S. financiers. Furthermore, by 1890, sugar had become Hawaii's main income, representing 95 percent of the island's exports. Ninety-nine percent of sugar exports went to the United States.<sup>8</sup> Through loans and exports, then, the Hawaiian economy was so reliant on the United States that it became an informal economic dependent, rather than a lucrative enterprise controlled by American citizens, and the American *haole* on the islands found themselves in the position of a colonial dependent rather than colonizer.

There was also a hope that the reciprocity boom would inspire American citizens to immigrate to the archipelago and fully Americanize the islands. This did not happen either. Only a few Americans went to Hawaii to engage in the sugar industry; most of the labor force was contracted from China and Japan. Secretary of State James G. Blaine suggested to Minister James M. Comly that he investigate the possibility of the Hawaiian legislature passing a homestead act, which would allow for a reduction in taxes for a period necessary to establish a

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<sup>8</sup> Thrum, *Hawaiian Annual*, 1890, 43.

productive plantation. He believed such legislation, combined with an organized immigration cooperative in the United States that could subsidize American settlers, would finally trigger the colonization process.<sup>9</sup> His plan never came to fruition.

This left the door open for speculators and unscrupulous men with money, or with means of acquiring capital, to take advantage of Hawaii and the monarchy. Unlike the “all-sided men” of the 1840s, these men were less reputable and often had questionable backgrounds. Many came to the islands for a specific purpose but stayed and ingratiated themselves with King Kalakaua, who often took their advice and followed their schemes to the detriment of his own political standing.

One of these individuals, the least offensive and dangerous to the king, was one of the few Americans to take advantage of the treaty and invest in the Hawaiian sugar industry. Claus Spreckels, a naturalized German-American robber baron, was known as the sugar king in San Francisco. He originally opposed the treaty in the 1860s, as it would create competition for his refining business, but in the mid-1870s, he examined the economic possibilities and decided to support its passage. As soon as Congress approved the appropriations necessary to put the treaty into effect, Spreckels went to the islands and contracted half of the crops in production in 1876 to refine in his factories in San Francisco. Spreckels normally purchased raw sugar from the East Indies, but with the reduced duty on Hawaiian sugar, he was able to produce the same quality of refined sugar at a reduced cost. Of course, he did not pass on that discount to the American consumers, a detail that would threaten the renewal of the treaty six years later.<sup>10</sup>

While on the islands contracting the sugar, he took advantage of the visit to ingratiate himself with the king and make plans for further investments. He made substantial loans to King

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<sup>9</sup> Blaine to Comly, Dec. 1, 1881, No. 114, vol. 2, Diplomatic Instructions, NA.

<sup>10</sup> Jacob Adler, “Water Rights and Cabinet Shuffles: How Claus Spreckels’ Hawaiian Career Began,” *The Business History Review*, vol. 34, no. 1 (Spring, 1960), 50-54.

Kalakaua and the Hawaiian kingdom for public works projects the two men discussed during a dinner meeting. These projects, which included harbor renovations and road improvement in Honolulu, were planned to improve the transportation of the new cash crop of the islands.

Spreckels then toured several locations on the archipelago and determined that he could turn a much larger profit if he vertically integrated his operation. He visited Maui and discovered large tracts of unused land that only needed irrigation ditches to produce large quantities of sugar. Two years later, he returned with an irrigation engineer and investment capital. He purchased 16,000 acres from a private citizen and leased another 24,000 acres from the crown in Maui to create his Spreckelsville plantation. Then in a controversial move, he applied for a grant to build a ditch to transport water from the northern slopes of Mount Haleakala to the sugar fields. He also requested a grant for all the water rights for \$500 per year. Two of the king's cabinet members, Minister of Interior J. Mott Smith and Attorney General Alfred Stedman Hartwell, refused the grant on the grounds that it would give him a monopoly on the water on the northern slope of Maui.<sup>11</sup>

These same men had just survived a vote of no confidence in the legislature brought against them by one of Kalakaua's most controversial supporters, Walter Murray Gibson. One of the most fascinating and divisive people to land in Hawaii, Gibson, was an American and ex-filibuster, who had survived a Dutch prison on Java in the East Indies before converting to Mormonism and becoming a missionary on the Island of Lanai in 1861. Three years later, he was excommunicated from the LDS Church for using mission funds to purchase nearly half of Lanai's free land for his personal use. He then moved to Honolulu and entered the political fray by serving in the House of Representatives in 1878 as the Royalist party member. Later, he

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<sup>11</sup> John W. Vandercook, *King Cane: The Story of Sugar in Hawaii* (New York: Harper and Bros., 1939), 68-70; Jacob Adler, *Claus Spreckels: The Sugar King in Hawaii* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1966), 49-50.

became publisher of the Hawaiian language newspaper *Nuhou* and then purchased the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*.<sup>12</sup>

Gibson brought the vote of no confidence against the ministers in Kalakaua's cabinet on the grounds that they were responsible for negotiating the reciprocity treaty, which the British had protested as a violation of their own treaty with Hawaii. Many of the native members of the Royalist party disliked the reciprocity agreement because of a stipulation in Article 4 which prohibited Hawaii from negotiation agreements for lease or purchase of Hawaiian territory with any other foreign power. They used the British protest as a pretext to challenge the ratification of the treaty, and when that failed, they targeted the ministers who influenced Kalakaua to sign the treaty. Regardless of the native protest, Gibson's resolution failed by a vote of twenty-six to nineteen, but King Kalakaua noted the Royalist party's discontent with his cabinet.<sup>13</sup>

Two weeks later, in the style of a true Gilded Age robber baron, Spreckels took the matter into his own hands. On July 1, he and his business associate G. W. Macfarlane met with King Kalakaua at the Hawaiian Hotel to discuss the matter of his cabinet refusing his water grant. At midnight, after extensive drinking, the king returned to the palace where he wrote letters to the four cabinet members, requesting their resignation. The next day he appointed a new cabinet who granted Spreckels his water rights. Shortly after the cabinet's dismissal, Kalakaua received a gift of \$10,000 from Spreckels and the leader of the Royal party, Gibson, received a "loan" of \$35,000.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Will Hoover, "Walther Murray Gibson," *The Honolulu Advertiser*, July 2, 2006; James Warren Gould, "The Filibuster of Walter Murray Gibson," *Hawaiian Historical Society 68<sup>th</sup> Annual Report* (Honolulu: Advertiser Publishing Ltd., 1960), 7-31. Before his arrival in Hawaii, Gibson attempted to start in several filibuster attempts in South America, almost fomented a revolution in the East Indies, and was imprisoned and almost executed by the Dutch.

<sup>13</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:198-200.

<sup>14</sup> Statement of William D. Alexander, *House Ex. Docs.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 47, 181-182 (hereafter cited as Blount Report); Comly to Evarts, July 8, 1878, No. 43, vol. 18, Dispatches, NA; Adler, *Claus Spreckels*, 49. I place the word loan in quotation marks because Gibson never repaid any money received from Spreckels.

The third controversial figure to gain undue influence over the king arrived in 1880 and caused such political controversy that two full cabinets were removed and three foreign representatives were almost recalled on his behalf. Celso Moreno was a naturalized American of Italian descent who, like Gibson, had a diverse and checkered past. Born in Italy, he graduated from the naval academy at Genoa before serving in the Crimean War. He then studied at the University of Genoa, graduating in 1854 as a civil engineer before buying a merchant ship and sailing from the Mediterranean to the Far East. He settled in Sumatra, married the sultan's daughter, and fell into trouble with the Dutch authorities. Fleeing prosecution, he headed to France where he was appointed as a French official to Tonquin China. While there, he became interested in a trans-Pacific cable project connecting the United States to China. He went to Washington shortly after the Civil War, having been naturalized shortly before, and lobbied for a congressional act in 1876 allowing him and twenty-five other investors to lay and maintain a cable from the American west coast.<sup>15</sup> Unable to gain financial backing in the United States, he returned to China where he met officials of the China Merchants' Navigation Company. They had a project to open a steamship line to Hawaii and needed an agent to represent them in Hawaii. Moreno, fluent in twelve languages, offered to represent them, in hope of acquiring backing for his project as well.<sup>16</sup>

Upon arriving in Honolulu, Moreno immediately renewed his acquaintance with the king, whom he had met during Kalakaua's visit to the United States in 1874, and within months he became a close confidant and advisor on several key legislative proposals. First, Moreno applied for the subsidy needed to start the steamship line to China. He gained Kalakaua's endorsement, but the legislature refused to approve the measure. Then he convinced the king to propose a bill

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<sup>15</sup> Many of the individuals listed in the act as partners of Moreno did not know their names were being used until after the act was published in newspapers.

<sup>16</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:207-209.

for Moreno and his associates to lay a trans-Pacific cable between Hawaii and China, with a bonus of \$1 million upon completion of the project. The political wrangling of Minister of the Interior Samuel Wilder defeated this bill. With both proposals, there was interest in instituting similar projects, but the government lacked the financial resources to cover such expenses, and few people within the government considered Moreno's claims legitimate.<sup>17</sup>

The cabinet members became concerned that Moreno was becoming too popular with the legislature, so they turned to Comly for help. The U.S. minister told the king of Moreno's questionable character and lack of credentials. To gain favor with the king and legislature, Moreno had presented the original congressional papers granting him the cable rights and claimed he was a close friend with President James Garfield. Comly showed Kalakaua a letter received from Garfield repudiating Moreno and challenging his character. Comly warned the king that he needed to protect himself and the legislators from Moreno's skillful deception.<sup>18</sup> Kalakaua was not swayed by the minister's evidence.

Shortly after the king's meeting with Comly, Moreno renewed his lobbying efforts by proposing two new ideas. First, he wanted to see the opium laws in Hawaii liberalized, eventually making Hawaii the opium processing and distribution center for the Pacific. He lobbied for a bill that passed on July 9 authorizing the licensure of two dealers to import and sell opium to Chinese immigrants only. The kingdom would sell the licenses for \$60,000 each. Moreno, not satisfied, pressed for another bill authorizing the importation, manufacture, exportation, and sale of opium. This would also grant one license on a two-year contract for \$120,000. Moreno argued that these measures would bring in much needed revenue for the king to pursue more internal improvement projects, such as the leper colony on Molokai, and to

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 3:209-211.

<sup>18</sup> Comly to Everts, July 5, 1880, No. 113, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA.

support the cable and steam-liner plans. Kalakaua backed these bills while they were under debate in the legislature, prompting several members to cast their votes in support. All four of his cabinet members adamantly opposed them.<sup>19</sup>

The public and the press criticized the king and legislature's actions and began to question Moreno and the lawmakers' motivations. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* believed that many of the votes were the result of bribery, calling Moreno an "impecunious adventurer." Comly confirmed the suspicion of bribery in a dispatch to Washington in which he asserted that Moreno used money obtained from Chinese merchants in Honolulu to bribe the Hawaiian members of the legislature. Comly also claimed Kalakaua was susceptible to bribes and controversial ideas like the opium bill because his income from the crown lands was less than he wanted to spend on public works and military. He also had a large personal debt from gambling and personal expenditures. The legislature controlled taxation revenues, but Moreno's plan allowed for the cabinet to control the opium license sales, which meant the king and cabinet could make money from bribes and kickbacks. Kalakaua supported the opium bill as a means of increasing his own income, but with all this public scrutiny, Kalakaua vetoed both opium bills.<sup>20</sup>

While the *haole* and Queen Emma's supporters appreciated the king's veto, the most egregious legislation was yet to come. Moreno arrived in Honolulu in November 1879, just as the campaigning began for the January 1880 legislative elections. Fifty candidates vied for the four seats in the Honolulu district, but the three main factions took the lead. The *haoles* ran Sanford B. Dole, William F. Green, and Henry Sheldon, while supporters of Queen Emma

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.; Comly to Evarts, July 31, 1880, No. 121, & Aug. 21, No. 122, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, July 10, 17, 31, Aug. 14, 1880.

<sup>20</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, July 13, Aug. 7, 1880; Comly to Evarts, Aug. 21, No. 122, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA.

backed Albert Kunuiakea, her cousin. Two men represented Kalakaua's Royalist party, the half-Hawaiian Robert Hoapili Baker and Edward K. Lilikalani.<sup>21</sup>

To gain the victory in a largely native Hawaiian constituency, Baker issued a manifesto two weeks before the election proposing that the government borrow \$10 million to pay for various governmental and public works projects. It was widely believed that the king wrote this manifesto under Moreno's direction. The plan designated half of the loan to create a military force with two forts and several warships to protect the islands. The government would use another third of the loan to purchase specie to create a national currency system. The king would use the remaining \$2 million to build hospitals, harbors, irrigation canals, and schools. Baker argued that this program could provide jobs for the natives, and security from foreign aggression. The ten million dollar loan plan encountered heavy criticism from the press, *haole*, and Emma supporters, who were outraged at the proposition of the government taking out such a large debt. Spreckels even warned the king that a loan of that size would require \$600,000 per year in interest payments, which the crown could not collect.<sup>22</sup>

The native voters, however, found the proposition appealing and Baker won a seat in the legislature along with Kunuiaka and two other natives. Only three *haoles* won seats in the 1880 legislature on the entire islands: Gibson, the American adventurer mentioned earlier; George Wilcox, a missionary's son; and James Woods, an English sugar plantation owner. These numbers show that the native voters were not willing to give the *haole* control of the government and were looking for legislators who would provide economic incentives for those who were not connected to the sugar industry. The only real power the *haole* possessed was through the

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<sup>21</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Jan. 10, 17, 24, Feb. 7, 1880; Comly to Evarts, Feb. 16, No. 93 & Apr. 10, No. 104, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

appointments in the cabinet, whose positions were vulnerable to removal by the legislature or the king.<sup>23</sup>

In the midst of the discussions over the opium legislation, Baker introduced the loan bill, sparking a heated debate. The bill was a reiteration of Baker's election proposal, allowing for the minister of finance to issue interest-bearing bonds to collect the \$10 million. These funds would aid in the construction of wharfs, schools, hospitals, railroads, and public buildings, and, more important, it would subsidize Moreno's foreign steam line. The cabinet members opposed this bill because, according to them, it was a government scheme to subsidize the poor at the expense of the planter class. Comly believed that this sizeable loan would be disastrous for Hawaii, as it would require greater taxes on the only sector of the economy that was growing. He assured the ministers of his support and told them that the U.S. government "could not allow American interests in these islands to be jeopardized and crippled by the creation of an unnecessary and foolish indebtedness."<sup>24</sup>

The minister of interior and premier of the islands, Samuel G. Wilder, opposed the loan bill as well. He agreed with Comly that the burden of repaying a large loan would fall onto the sugar industry and that the public works projects could be paid for by private development or crown land revenues. Wilder was the leader of the cabinet that granted Spreckels his water rights, and the premier supported that project because the ditch system provided benefits at Spreckels' expense. Wilder saw similar opportunities to get railroads built without tax dollars or government expense and believed that other needed projects could be funded in a similar fashion. Wilder defeated the loan bill, not due to the expense, but because it had exceeded the amount of riders allowed on a bill by the Hawaiian Constitution.

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<sup>23</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:209-212.

<sup>24</sup> Comly to Evarts, Apr. 10, 1880, No. 104, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA. A copy of the original bill can be found as an enclosure in Comly to Evarts, July 5, 1880, No. 113, vol. 19, Ibid.

When the 1880 legislative session ended on August 14, the cabinet members believed they could relax and work without fear of removal. Only two weeks earlier, they too had survived a vote of no confidence taken against them by the legislature. Gibson took up a bill proposed by Representative Kalua in an attempt to remove the cabinet in favor of himself and other supporters of the loan and Moreno plans. Comly believed they had the votes to remove the ministers, but two weeks before the ballot, Henry A. P. Carter met with Kalakaua and warned him that if the king removed the current cabinet, he would no longer represent him in foreign policy matters. Kalakaua needed Carter to continue with critical negotiations with England and Germany and wanted him to become the minister of foreign affairs, so he could not risk alienating Carter with this vote of no confidence. Kalakaua urged the legislature to keep the cabinet, which it did by a vote of thirty-two to ten. Once the cabinet members survived this attempt, they believed their positions were secure until the next legislative session began in 1882. They were wrong.

One hour after the 1880 legislative session ended, Kalakaua dismissed his cabinet without explanation and formed a new one under Moreno's leadership, to the great dismay of *haole* and native citizens alike. Carter had left a few days earlier to conclude his negotiations in Germany and therefore was unable to influence the king against this action. The only member of the cabinet the people thought suitable was John E. Bush, a half-Hawaiian former newspaper editor and royal governor of Maui, who was appointed minister of the interior. The attorney general appointee, W. C. Jones, was considered a mediocre attorney at best, and the minister of finance was Reverend M. Kuaea, the pastor of Kaumakapili Church with no governmental experience. The most offensive member was the minister of foreign relations and the premier,

Moreno, who was naturalized the same day of his appointment after residing on the islands for less than nine months.<sup>25</sup>

Reaction to the king's actions was not good. The foreign diplomats met immediately to discuss their response. The British and French representatives wanted to meet with the king and demand Moreno's dismissal. Comly agreed that Moreno should go, but told the two men that he could not participate in their meeting because of a standing U.S. policy of non-intervention in internal affairs. The three then agreed to use non-recognition as a form of protest against the new cabinet.<sup>26</sup>

The citizens of Hawaii also protested the appointments. The three female chiefs who had run against Kalakaua in the previous two election—Queen Emma, Ruth Keelikolani, and Bernice Pauahi Bishop— all publicly condemned the king's actions. The people agreed with them. Two days after the appointments, on August 16, they held a mass meeting of *haole* and native residents at the Kaumakapili Church,<sup>27</sup> where they passed a resolution protesting the king's actions. They appointed a committee to present their petition, but the king refused to see them.<sup>28</sup>

They scheduled another gathering two nights later, but before the meeting occurred, Moreno resigned his seat. Earlier that day, August 18, Kalakaua requested a meeting with Comly, who reiterated to the king that Moreno's credentials were less than legitimate and urged the king to remove him. Later that day, Moreno confronted Comly, who refused to back down, so Moreno resigned. Upon learning this news at the beginning of their meeting, the group of

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<sup>25</sup> *Hawaii Gazette*, Aug. 15, 1880, Supplement; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:214.

<sup>26</sup> Comly to Evarts, Aug. 21, 1880, No. 122, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>27</sup> This is the same church over which the new Minister of Finance, Reverend Kuaea, presided.

<sup>28</sup> W. D. Alexander, *History of later Years of the Hawaiian Monarchy and the Revolution of 1893*, (Honolulu: Hawaiian Gazette Co., 1896), 5-7; *Hawaiian Gazette* (Supplement) Aug. 25, 1880; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (supplement) Sept. 3, 1880.

about twenty-five leading businessmen of Honolulu, still not satisfied, wrote another petition asking for the resignation of the entire cabinet.<sup>29</sup>

Even though he resigned his seat, Moreno continued to fight back, engaging in a propaganda war to ignite race tensions. He claimed his goal was to restore native Hawaiian power to the government, including the cabinet. His supporters called a mass meeting for Friday, August 20, two days after the *haole* meeting. Several people made anti-foreign speeches, accusing the *haole* of attempting to seize the islands. The assemblage then passed resolutions condemning the *haole* meetings and expressing confidence in the king's rule. Many individuals at this meeting, and the Hawaiian language press, believed it the king's prerogative to make and dismiss his cabinet and that the constitution did not grant residents the right to criticize or object to such actions.<sup>30</sup>

While the public quarrelling continued, Kalakaua appointed John E. Bush as temporary foreign minister and premier and then sent Moreno as his envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the United States and Europe. Bush began the task of restoring the government's reputation while Moreno set out for Europe with three young members of the royal family. Bush wrote letters to the United States, England, and France requesting the recall of their representatives, claiming their interference in the Moreno affair had influenced the foreign residents to inappropriate actions. He then authorized the loan of \$5,000 to Gibson for the purchase of the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* as an official organ of the government. Gibson began printing pro-monarchy propaganda and using the newspaper to criticize the *haole* presence

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<sup>29</sup>Comly to Evarts, Aug. 21, 1880, No. 122, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA; William D. Alexander, "Politics of Kalakaua's Reign, up to the Constitution of 1887," file 1864-1893, box: Alexander, William Dewitt 1833-1913, William Dewitt Alexander Collection, Manuscript collection M003, Archives of Hawaii. (Hereafter Alexander Collection, AH).

<sup>30</sup>*Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Sept. 3, 1880, Supplement; *Hawaiian Gazette*, Aug. 25, 1880; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:213-219.

on the islands. This was all in an attempt to sway public opinion back in favor of Kalakaua, but it had little positive effect.<sup>31</sup>

When news of all this political drama arrived in San Francisco, Spreckels immediately returned to Honolulu to use his influence with Kalakaua. He was already concerned with Moreno's increasing sway over the king, so when he received word of Moreno's appointment, he arranged transportation to the islands and arrived on September 5. Spreckels warned the king that he had "surrounded himself with a precious set of fools; that everybody knew it except himself and that the whole thing was a laughing stock to all his enemies and the enemies of the country."<sup>32</sup> He encouraged the king to dismiss all the ministers and place responsible citizens in the cabinet.

With the increasing criticism from the people, and the pressure exerted by both foreign representatives and Spreckels, Kalakaua gave in and dismissed the entire cabinet. The new ministers were all *haole*. William L. Green as minister of foreign affairs had served as the first minister of interior and premier under Kalakaua, and had overseen the negotiation of the reciprocity treaty. Henry A. P. Carter, an American who helped negotiate the reciprocity treaty and was currently representing the king in Germany, had also served on the cabinet that was dismissed when Spreckels wanted water rights. He became minister of the interior. John. S. Walker was appointed minister of finance, a position he also held in the first Kalakaua cabinet. Finally, William N. Armstrong—the son of ABCFM missionary Richard Armstrong—returned from New England to be attorney general. Armstrong was born on the islands and was educated as a lawyer in the United States.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 3:221-223. Kalakaua, "Memorandum," Undated, file 1: Letters 1883-1894, M-157, Robert Wilcox Papers, AH (hereafter R. Wilcox Papers, AH).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 3:223.

<sup>33</sup> Comly to Evarts, Sept. 27, No. 131 & Oct. 25, 1880, No. 136, vol. 19, Dispatches, NA.

The new cabinet immediately began repairing the damage of the previous ten months. Green sent letters to Washington, London, and Paris explaining that Bush's letters of recall had been based on false accusations and asked the three governments to disregard the recall requests. He also stripped Moreno of his diplomatic commission and began to rebuild confidence with the three diplomats whose names had been smeared by Bush: Comly, British commissioner James H. Wodehouse, and French commissioner J. L. Ratard.<sup>34</sup> With this new cabinet in place, Spreckels returned to San Francisco and the *haole* community resumed its normal business under the assumption that the negative influences came from outside the palace. This would be a short reprieve.

The events of the first seven years of Kalakaua's reign established a pattern of competing interests fighting for control of the legislature and influence over the monarchy that continued until 1887 when the king was forced to sign into law a new constitution. Kalakaua continually fell under the influence of men who brought grand ideas of fortune and power, but who were not looking out for his or the nation's best interests. This situation inspired the citizens of Hawaii to revolt against the wild schemes and forced the king to reverse his position and remove his cabinets, only to fall under the spell again when the controversy died down. Each successive legislative election centered on these same issues: the taking of an enormous foreign loan, governmental expenditures and taxes, and the renewal of the reciprocity treaty. With each successive removal of a cabinet, the king's credibility waned, resulting in more *haole* and foreign interference.

From 1880 to 1887, Gibson became the primary target of the opposition party. During the 1882 legislative election campaigns, he used his newspaper to push an anti-*haole* campaign,

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<sup>34</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:223-225.

promising to remove the all-*haole* cabinet once in office. The constant battle over ministerial appointments began to devolve into a racial debate, with the *haole* and natives vying for control. The troubles gave rise to the “Hawaii for Hawaiians” party, ironically headed by Gibson, who, although an American, used the idea to gain the favor of native voters. Gibson won his seat.<sup>35</sup>

Before the legislative session even began, the campaign to remove the Green cabinet commenced. Personally despising Green and Carter, Gibson led the charge by criticizing the cabinet’s excessive expenditures in response to a recent small pox epidemic. The cabinet authorized \$100,000 to buy vaccinations and medical supplies for treatments. Gibson also criticized the inactivity in regards to renewing the reciprocity treaty which was up for renewal the next year. Finally, Gibson did not like the fact that the cabinet was all-*haole* and repeatedly made this point in the press. The constant barrage of media and personal attacks led to the ministers’ resignations on May 18, 1882. Carter was not in Hawaii during the entire process, having been sent on a diplomatic mission to Portugal to renegotiate a labor treaty. He returned in December, after his cabinet position had been reassigned.<sup>36</sup>

Gibson then encouraged Kalakaua to place him at the head of the new cabinet, serving as premier and minister of foreign affairs. The other cabinet positions went to Bush, who returned as minister of finance; Simon Kaloa Kaai, minister of the interior; and Edward Preston, attorney general. This new cabinet was described as a “Young Hawaiian Party” with extreme nativist tendencies and less than stellar abilities. Kaai was called an alcoholic who drank himself to death and Bush was accused of being unscrupulous and unreliable, but both were now in the cabinet

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<sup>35</sup> *Hawaiian Gazette*, Sept. 14 & Sept. 28, 1881; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Aug. 27 & Dec. 10, 1881. Interestingly, Gibson was an Italian immigrant to the United States with no genetic connection to Hawaii, but he was able to use his advocacy of Hawaiian nationalism to manipulate the native perception to the point that he was often referred to as Hawaiian.

<sup>36</sup> Alexander, “Politics of Kalakaua’s Reign,” file 1864-1893, Alexander Collection, AH; Comly to Frelinghuysen, Feb. 13, 1882, No. 209, vol. 20, Dispatches, NA.

because they were of Hawaiian descent. The real power of this cabinet was Gibson, a close confidant of Kalakaua.<sup>37</sup>

One of the first measures the new cabinet and legislature enacted was a lease of crown lands to Spreckels. He had already gone to Princess Ruth Keelikolani, one of the remaining members of the Kamehameha line, and thus one-half owner of the crown lands, and purchased her share for \$10,000. The controversy that followed was twofold. First, the land he purchased had an estimated value of \$750,000, but Ruth believed it to be worthless because it had no irrigation systems. Second, it was not clear if Ruth had the right to sell the crown lands in the first place. There was a continuing debate over whether individual royals held the crown lands in fee simple, or if the land was held in a perpetual estate for the crown. The Hawaiian Supreme Court determined in 1864 that the lands were the possession of the monarchial government, and therefore not privately held. Spreckels challenged this ruling in court, but to no avail. He then went to Green's cabinet with a bill allowing him to purchase the land. When the ministry refused to submit it with their approval to the legislature, he joined Gibson's propaganda campaign and pushed Kalakaua to remove them. When the four finally resigned their seats in May 1882, the new Gibson cabinet approved the sale and used their influence to gain the votes in the legislature. After Spreckels gained his land, he became one of the strongest supporters of Gibson, often loaning him and the king money, which neither ever repaid.<sup>38</sup>

For the next five years, Gibson, Spreckels, and Kalakaua controlled the government and made many controversial economic and political moves that ultimately brought their downfall. All three were interested in improving their own standings, but their goals often worked in

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<sup>37</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, May 27, 1882; Editorial, May 31, 1882, Letter of Z.S. Spalding to William Green, reprinted in *Hawaiian Gazette*, June 7, 1882; Comly to Frelinghuysen, June 5, 1882, No. 221, vol. 20, Dispatches, NA; Alexander, "Politics of Kalakaua's Reign," file 1864-1893, Alexander Collection, AH.

<sup>38</sup> Jacob Adler, "The Maui Land Deal: a Chapter in Claus Spreckels' Hawaiian Career," *Agricultural History*, vol. 39, no. 3 (July, 1965), 156-158.

congruence with each other. Kalakaua wanted to restore monarchical power and revive native Hawaiian nationalism. Gibson wanted power, and by assisting Kalakaua in his efforts, was able to gain the favor of the king, and thus control of the executive branch. By 1887, Gibson was not only the premier and minister of foreign affairs, but he was also appointed commissioner of the crown lands in 1882, president of the Board of Education in 1883, and the secretary of war and navy in 1886. Spreckels used his financial resources to keep the king and premier under control by offering “loans” to convince the pair to terminate the reckless legislation and spending when it threatened his agenda. All three men became political targets of the native opposition and *haole* residents.<sup>39</sup>

Gibson managed to institute several “schemes” through the 1882 legislature that were highly offensive to most of the *haole*. A bill repealing the prohibition of liquor prompted extensive backlash from the missionary community. Legislation allowing the king to appoint and remove a district attorney at his will offended many foreign residents and representatives. The most controversial move was the reintroduction of the loan bill, reduced to two million dollars in its final form. Out of this money, \$30,000 was appropriated for Kalakaua to hold an official coronation ceremony, which he did not have when he became king due to the violence of the Queen Emma faction. This bill upset the landholders and entrepreneurs involved in the sugar industry, because they feared an increase in taxes to pay back the loan.<sup>40</sup>

Before the foreign community could call for a vote of no confidence in the cabinet all but Gibson resigned. Kaai had to leave the office in February 1883 because of his declining health due to alcoholism, and Preston resigned over his annoyance at the king’s policies. Bush began

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<sup>39</sup> Merze Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom: A Political History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), 62-63.

<sup>40</sup> Daggett to Frelinghuysen, Sept. 20, 1882, vol. 20, Dispatches, NA; Alexander, “Politics of Kalakaua’s Reign,” file 1864-1893, Alexander Collection, AH; Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 64-66.

quarrelling with Gibson, who accused him of awarding public works contracts with “irregularity,” he was encouraged to leave his position. By July 1883, Gibson was the sole remaining cabinet member, serving *ad interim* in all four ministerial seats because he and the king found it difficult to convince anyone to serve under Gibson. He eventually talked Charles T. Gulick, nephew of a former missionary, into becoming minister of the interior, and Paul Neumann, poker-playing companion of Spreckels and personal attorney of the king, as attorney general. Each received a “loan” from Spreckels.<sup>41</sup>

The increasing government debt became the focus of the 1884 legislative elections. In the two years of the Gibson cabinet, the government paid to refurbish the king’s palace, threw an expensive coronation ceremony, commissioned a large statue of Kalakaua, and granted scholarships to cousins of the royal lines, all at taxpayer expense. This extravagant spending alarmed the planters and merchants on the islands who tended to pay the majority of the taxes and who were concerned that the reciprocity treaty had still not been renewed in Washington.

To this point, native Hawaiians had dominated the legislature, but with the Royalist party under the control of Kalakaua and Gibson, many native voters turned on their party and placed several *haole* in the legislature. Nine months before the elections, members of the *haole* community met and formed a committee to direct the campaign against the Royalist party. They visited the different islands and enlisted the help of prominent native leaders who disliked the Gibson regime. The committee lined up both native and *haole* candidates they felt were qualified to be in the legislature and strong enough to oppose the powerful Gibson. They also launched a massive newspaper campaign calling for economy with public funds, governmental development of the natural resources, better sanitation and health efforts, and a closer consideration of labor

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<sup>41</sup> Alexander, “Politics,” 16-17.

needs.<sup>42</sup> The election results placed nine *haole* and thirteen independent party members in the legislature. Among them were Sanford B. Dole, William O. Smith, and the brothers Frank, Cecil, and Godfrey Brown— all later instrumental in overthrowing the monarchy.<sup>43</sup>

The focus of the 1884 session was economics. In April, the finance committee submitted its general report, revealing the disturbing finances of the Gibson regime over the previous two years. Dole immediately called for a vote of no confidence against the Gibson cabinet.<sup>44</sup> Two days later, residents of Honolulu held a mass meeting and adopted a petition requesting the king to dismiss the cabinet on allegations of illegal activities. That same day the legislature began a heated debate over the bill of no of confidence, which failed by a vote of twenty-five to twenty-one. The four cabinet members each had a vote. Because the removal effort failed, two weeks later the legislators voted to censure the cabinet.<sup>45</sup>

The legislature then turned its attention to solving the budgetary problems and stabilizing the economy. The anticipated expenditures for the following two years far exceeded the government's income, so the king issued a special message recommending a reduction. This gained him great favor and saved the Gibson cabinet from another vote of no confidence. To assist the economic growth of the islands, the representatives proposed several measures that include passing a currency act, chartering a bank, and authorizing the construction of street railways in Honolulu. While the *haole* members were preoccupied with discussions on these measures, the natives passed a budget that still exceeded the yearly income by \$1.5 million. This

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<sup>42</sup> Throughout the 1880s there was a major debate about how to address the need for laborer on the plantations and how to slow the decline of the native population. The government eventually negotiated treaties with Japan and China to import contract laborers to work the plantations. For a detailed description of these treaty negotiations see: Morgan, *Pacific Gibraltar*, 37-49; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:116-141.

<sup>43</sup> Daggett to Frelinghuysen, Oct. 12, 1883, No. 90; Sept. 20, 1883, No. 11; Dec. 16, 1883, No. 107, vol. 21, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>44</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, June 19, 20, 1884; Daggett to Frelinghuysen, June 30, 1882, No. 168, vol. 21, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>45</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:273.

action sparked increased concern over the fate of the treaty. It seemed like a risky venture spending government funds based on tax dollars collected in an economy entirely reliant on an agreement that had not been renewed and that could result in a great economic crisis.<sup>46</sup>

This budget caused concern in Washington as well, because the Senate was in the middle of a debate over the renewal of the reciprocity treaty that was past its seven-year guarantee. U.S. Minister Rollin M. Daggett wrote the state department that this budget was “an extraordinary exhibit of reckless legislation” because it authorized two times more expenditures than revenue and allowed the cabinet discretion in the appropriation of funds. With members of the U.S. Congress and the American press questioning the validity of a treaty that created no economic benefit for the United States, this budget fueled to the opposition’s arguments against the treaty.<sup>47</sup>

Gibson also met with criticism from the *haole* citizens over his treaty policy. Gibson wrote Elisha Allen, Hawaiian minister to the United States, that he should not renew the treaty without gaining a reduction in the grade of sugar allowed from Hawaii and the removal of Article 4, which stipulated that Hawaii could not engage in similar arrangements with foreign powers. Gibson’s policy rested on rumors in Washington that the tariff on sugar could be terminated altogether. By 1886, there was a growing debate in the United States over the use of the protective tariff. Its use since the Civil War had resulted in a revenue surplus and the Democratic party wanted to see a reduction to relieve the burden on the agricultural producing states. Gibson told Allen that if the Democrats managed to get their tariff reduction, he did not want to be under a treaty agreement that gave the United States influence over the islands’ foreign policy without offering economic advantages in tariff discounts. Many foreign residents

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<sup>46</sup> Daggett to Frelinghuysen, Aug. 31, 1884, No. 189, vol. 22, Dispatches, NA; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (daily), Aug. 25, 1884.

<sup>47</sup> Daggett to Frelinghuysen, Aug. 31, 1884, No. 189, vol. 22, Dispatches, NA.

who knew that the renewal was under heavy debate in Washington, feared the consequences if the United States decided to terminate the agreement, and felt that Gibson should be offering increased incentives instead of making greater demands.<sup>48</sup>

The close of the legislative session in August did not end the opposition to the Gibson/Kalakaua regime. During the next year, a partisan battle raged in the press against the cabinet, claiming the king had fallen under the influence of two corrupt men. Lorrin Thurston became editor of the *Daily Bulletin* and used his position to criticize Gibson and Spreckels.<sup>49</sup> He reminded readers that Spreckels had been a benefit to the economic growth of the islands, but that his “undue influence in the affairs of the government” was a threat to the nation. Thurston also criticized Spreckels for supporting Gibson for his own personal gain.<sup>50</sup>

The Reverend Sereno Bishop joined Thurston in his censure of the king and cabinet. Bishop was the son of missionaries, an ordained minister, local teacher, and editor of the missionary newspaper the *Friend*. He wrote a long editorial for the *Hawaiian Monthly* describing the political development of the islands and the current partisan predicament. He argued that no other nation had a state in which the foreign individuals controlled the economic resources while the natives retained control of the government. Bishop warned that such a circumstance could not continue indefinitely and predicted that the monarchy would soon end if the corruption continued. He envisioned a new republic rising in its place.<sup>51</sup>

The backlash against Kalakaua and Gibson continued through the remainder of 1885, leading to a renewed effort by the Independent party to gain control of the legislature and remove

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<sup>48</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:382-384; Allan Nevins, *Grover Cleveland: a Study in Courage* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co), 1932), 280-296; Douglas A. Irwin, “Higher Tariffs, Lower Revenues? Analyzing the fiscal Aspects of “The Great Tariff Debate of 1888,” *The Journal of Economic History*, vol. 58, no. 1 (Mar., 1998), 59-72.

<sup>49</sup> From May 1- August 30, 1884, Lorrin Thurston, the second generation Hawaiian born missionary grandson on both sides of his family, served as editor before returning to his law practice and politics.

<sup>50</sup> *Daily Bulletin*, July 8, 9, 21, 29, 30, Aug. 9, 1884.

<sup>51</sup> *Hawaiian Monthly*, Nov. 1884, 241-243.

Gibson from power. For the election of 1886, a group of leading residents formed a “committee of thirteen” to head up the election campaigns of anyone opposing the Royalist party. Among the more notable members were William Castle, Dole, Thurston, and George Wilcox—all members of a later committee that removed Liliuokalani from the throne. The group collaborated with the native independents, including Joseph Nawahi, G. W. Pilipo, and John W. Kalua— all later becoming great adversaries of the Republic of Hawaii leadership under Dole. This group of unusual allies had two main goals: unseat the Gibson regime and regain control of government spending.<sup>52</sup>

The campaign became a bitter fight in which the newspapers and the king became involved. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* labeled the independents as resentful of foreigners trying to gain control of Hawaii and end its independence. The newspaper warned the natives to vote for the Royalist ticket unless they wanted to sell their ancestral bones to a foreign power. The king joined in with the *Advertiser* by taking a personal tour of the kingdom to campaign against the native independents who allied themselves with the *haole*. The opposition countered these accusations by arguing that they only wanted good constitutional government, free from a corrupt and arbitrary dictatorship. They denounced the race baiting of the *Advertiser* and accused Kalakaua of using bribes and intimidation to manipulate the foreign vote. One newspaper claimed that demagogues tricked the natives into voting for Royalists, while another accused the government of using the “unparalleled power of the constitution” to manipulate the decision. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* countered by saying that the foreign residents objected to the constitution because it granted the power to the native people and not the “transient” *haole*.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 280-283.

<sup>53</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (daily), Feb. 4, 1886, Mar. 1, 1886; *Daily Bulletin*, Feb. 8, 1886; *Hawaiian Gazette*, Feb. 16, 1886; Lorrin Thurston, *Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution*, (Honolulu: Advertiser Publication Co., 1936), 52-62, 101-114.

On February 3, 1886, the Gibson administration won the election, inciting further allegations of corruption. Regardless of the accusations, the results of the election proved crucial to the event that followed. First, several key members of the *haole* community—Castle, Thurston, Smith, and Dole—managed to take seats in the legislature and use their positions to gain support for their opposition to the cabinet. At the same time, Gibson viewed the successful election as a mandate for his policies and began implementing even more controversial measures.<sup>54</sup>

The first piece of legislation Gibson proposed caused great concern. On May 15, he introduced a bill authorizing a \$2 million loan from a London firm to recall all bonds and to pay off existing royal debts. The official reason for the loan was to begin several internal improvement projects and to cover the expenses in the new labor contracts with Japan. The real reason for this loan was that Kalakaua was in debt and wanted to repay the \$700,000 he owed to Spreckels. Kalakaua was tired of the implications that he was under the control of the sugar king and thought that by relieving himself of all debt he could distance himself from the controversial figure. It was also a concern of the king's opposition that Spreckels' profiting from the reciprocity treaty was one of the largest threats to the much-needed renewal.<sup>55</sup>

Debate over the budget and loan bills exposed the *haole* and Spreckels' alarm with the economic decisions. Representatives Dole and Thurston led the charge in the chamber, criticizing the extravagance of the crown and cabinet and questioning every expense. Spreckels was equally concerned, realizing that a loan meant the king could not repay his existing debt, and that more loans could threaten the stability of the sugar market, in which he was heavily invested. When the opposition members of the legislature could not gain the upper hand,

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<sup>54</sup> Gibson to Hoffnung, Mar. 3, 1886, No. 2, Letter Book 63, FO & EX, AH.

<sup>55</sup> Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 70-71.

Spreckels used his influence over the king to force the removal of the cabinet in June. The new cabinet retained Gibson as premier and minister of the interior. The other cabinet appointments prompted great uproar and were nicknamed the “Spreckels Alien Cabinet.” The new minister of foreign affairs was Robert J. Creighton, a former San Francisco newspaper editor encouraged by Spreckels to move to Hawaii and take the editorship of the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*. Paul P. Kanoa, the former governor of Kauai, became minister of finance. John T. Dare, former Assistant District Attorney of San Francisco, who came to the islands two months earlier as Spreckels’ private lawyer, was appointed attorney general.<sup>56</sup>

Satisfied that the new cabinet would safeguard his interests, Spreckels returned to San Francisco while the legislature completed their budget debate. The native-controlled body passed a \$4.5 million budget, \$1 million over the expected revenues and loan amounts combined. Several weeks later the loan bill passed, placing the crown in debt to a British firm and angering Spreckels enough to cut all his ties with Kalakaua.<sup>57</sup>

The final controversial piece of legislation passed during the 1886 session was the opium bill. A similar measure had been introduced in every legislature since 1878, but all either failed or were vetoed. The practice of smoking opium arrived with the first Chinese immigrants in 1856 when the crown attempted to control the distribution of the drug through licenses to Chinese distributors. By 1874, with native use increasing, the legislature enacted a law prohibiting the importation and sale of opium. This approach had no effect on the illegal trafficking, so most native Hawaiian representatives returned to the idea of licensing and taxing the drug. The 1886 bill allowed for the minister of interior to sell one license for \$30,000, which permitted the

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<sup>56</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:292.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 296-298.

holder to import and sell opium to Chinese residents only. All independent representatives voted against the act, but it passed on the Royalist vote and Kalakaua signed it into law the next day.<sup>58</sup>

By the end of the 1886 legislative session, the political climate in Hawaii had reached a highpoint. The Gibson regime had managed to gain the loan bill, an inflated budget, and the opium bill that had failed many times before. The Independent native party and the *haole* were unhappy with most of these measures and faced a year under another Gibson cabinet. The situation would come to a head less than a year later.

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While the monarchy fell under the influence of questionable men and partisanship began to threaten the islands' stability, Washington had to deal with its own backlash resulting from the reciprocity treaty. Opposition to the agreement started shortly after its adoption. In 1879, Senator Randall Lee Gibson of Louisiana introduced a resolution to terminate the agreement because it hurt the sugar and rice interests in his state. From this point on, the treaty came under the fire of several different factions in the United States.<sup>59</sup>

During the 1880s, a battle developed among the three major sugar-producing areas in the United States: the refining groups of the east coast, the southern gulf coast producers, and the west coast refining industry dominated by Spreckels. With Reconstruction completed, and southern producers fully represented in Congress again, these southerners started challenging legislation that endangered their economic growth. They felt threatened by the west coast refining industry, which seemed to profit from the cheap importation of raw sugar from Hawaii.

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<sup>58</sup> William R. Castle, *Shall Opium Be Licensed? Opium in Hawaii* (Honolulu, May 7, 1884), 1-6; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (daily), Oct. 2, 12, 13, 14, 16, 1886.

<sup>59</sup> *Cong. Record*, 45 Cong., 3 Sess., 185; and *Cong. Record*, 46 Cong., 1 Sess., 1055.

The southern producers found their biggest allies in the eastern refiners then gearing up for a battle with the west coast. Starting in 1879, Henry Alvin Brown began a campaign against the treaty and the west coast refiners. Brown was a former Treasury Department agent and customs official in Boston who retired to become a private investigator. He produced several pamphlets in which he argued that the treaty had not reduced the cost of sugar to the American consumer; rather, it had allowed California refiners to purchase duty free raw sugar and refine it at a cheaper rate to increase their profit. He also maintained that the unbalanced trade included in the treaty produced a cash payment to the king at the expense of the U.S. treasury. Brown then made the accusation that a large percentage of the sugar imported from Hawaii was actually produced in China and illegally shipped through Hawaiian ports. This argument became popular among many anti-treaty factions.<sup>60</sup>

Brown had little effect when he first published his pamphlets, but by 1881, other forces picked up his arguments and initiated a full crusade. The San Francisco *Chronicle* began a campaign against the treaty, and Spreckels in particular, claiming he manipulated the passage of the treaty for his own economic gain. Reciprocity, the *Chronicle* asserted, enabled Spreckels to build a monopoly of the sugar industry in the western half of the United States at the expense of consumers.<sup>61</sup> The *Chronicle* not only addressed economic issues with the treaty, but also started refuting the political argument made to support that passage in 1875. It maintained that annexation would only make it easier for Spreckels' "sugar ring" to monopolize the entire industry. Annexation would also open the complex issues over governance of an island territory, including what status the Hawaiian Islands would receive and what rights the natives would be

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<sup>60</sup> Henry Brown, *Sugar Frauds and the Tariff* (Saxonville, Mass.: 1879), 8-28; see also, *Revised Analysis of the Sugar Question* (Saxonville, Mass: 1879), 59; and *Condensed Summary of the Existing Condition of the Sugar Tariff Question* (Washington, 1881), 15-17.

<sup>61</sup> San Francisco *Chronicle*, Oct. 11, 1881- Feb. 17, 1882. The *Chronicle* ran articles attacking the treaty and Spreckels in almost every daily edition from October 1881 through the following February.

granted under such an arrangement. The paper focused on the difference in the races and the fact that there was a leper colony full of sick people that would have to be incorporated into the union. Other newspapers around the country picked up the *Chronicle's* editorials and endorsed their sentiments.<sup>62</sup>

This public movement led several members of Congress to challenge the treaty. In December 1881 and January 1882, two joint resolutions were introduced in the House of Representatives and one in the Senate calling for termination of the treaty.<sup>63</sup> As the 1883 renewal date approached, Congress was bombarded with petitions from southern states, sugar producers, the chamber of commerce in New York, and the board of trade in Philadelphia requesting the repeal of the treaty. The House Committee on Foreign Affairs held a special hearing and dozens of representatives from sugar producing states as well as Henry Brown testified. The prevailing argument against the treaty was the accusation of illegal importation of non-Hawaiian produced sugar and rice. Brown elaborated by claiming the treaty was also encouraging the enslavement of Asian workers in Hawaii and depriving consumers and the national treasury of much needed revenue.<sup>64</sup>

In an attempt to counter the negative opinions, Hawaiian representatives testified at the hearings in February and March. Elisha H. Allen, the former U.S. consul who helped negotiate the treaty, appeared before the committee as the Hawaiian minister to Washington. He denied the accusations of illegal importation of Chinese sugar through Honolulu and explained that the labor system in Hawaii was in no way debasing the natives. Allen claimed that the only opposition to this treaty came from the eastern sugar producers and that it was beneficial to the

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<sup>62</sup> Donald Marquand Dozer, "The Opposition to Hawaiian Reciprocity, 1876-1888," *Pacific Historical Review*, vol. 14, no. 2 (June, 1945), 161-163.

<sup>63</sup> *Cong. Record*, 47 Cong., 1 Sess., 108, 421, 424.

<sup>64</sup> Dozer, "The Opposition to Hawaiian Reciprocity," 165-167.

majority of Americans. His claims were supported by George Boutwell, former Massachusetts senator and secretary of the treasury, who added that the treaty contributed greatly to the security of the Pacific, which outweighed the loss of revenue under the treaty.<sup>65</sup>

After hearing positive and negative testimony from citizens in the United States and Hawaii, as well as receiving reports from the secretary of the treasury, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs made a recommendation. Due to the suspected violations of the importation clauses, the committee recommended an amendment to the treaty to ensure against abuses. The committee also agreed that the complete abrogation of the convention was not in the best interests of the United States because of American interests in the Pacific.<sup>66</sup> The political argument in favor of the treaty remained the focus of Congress.

President Chester A. Arthur also received petitions from the eastern sugar refiners and responded by asking the new tariff commission to conduct hearings on the matter. It focused on the allegations of illegal importation of foreign sugar and on the loss of revenue in the United States treasury. The commission took the testimony of merchants in Boston, St. Louis, and Philadelphia as well as sugar and rice producers in Louisiana, which mostly centered on the Spreckels monopoly. Despite the scathing testimony, the commission's final report found no evidence of illegal importation and determined that the lost revenue did not outweigh the political gain; therefore, the committee recommended the continuation of the treaty.<sup>67</sup>

Senator Justin S. Morrill of Vermont responded to these reports by introducing a joint resolution to terminate the treaty. He argued that the political advantage gained by the treaty had been overstated because an economic alliance would not keep the islands from falling to the

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> *House Report*, 47 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 1860, 2.

<sup>67</sup> "Report of the Tariff Commission, Appointed under Act of Congress Approved May 15, 1882," *House Misc. Doc.* 47 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 6.

strongest naval power in the event of a war. Viewing the treaty from a purely financial point, the loss of tax revenue and the competition with American producers made the treaty illogical. Morrill's resolution was referred to the Committee on Finance, of which he was chair. The committee's subsequent report reiterated most of the arguments found in Henry Brown's pamphlets. The senators recommended that the president give the Hawaiian government the required notice of termination at the end of the seven-year agreement.<sup>68</sup>

Defying the opposition to the treaty, President Arthur endorsed renewal of the treaty and instructed Secretary of State Frederick Frelinghuysen to negotiate its extension. In December 1884, the secretary and Hawaiian representative Henry A. P. Carter negotiated a renewal without modifications. Allen had been ordered by Gibson in Hawaii to secure the elimination of the 4<sup>th</sup> article prohibiting Hawaii from entering into similar agreements with foreign powers.<sup>69</sup> Gibson later wrote Carter requesting that he also negotiate a reduction in the grade of sugar Hawaii could export. Carter believed the renewal was more likely to gain approval without removing the only incentives for the United States. Frelinghuysen had a similar dilemma when he received an inquiry from Senator John F. Miller, head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, on whether the renewal could include an enlarged list of American products and a provision for a coaling station in Hawaii. While Frelinghuysen liked both propositions, he also agreed with Carter that a straight renewal of the existing treaty was the most likely means of securing the measure. A non-modified treaty went to the Senate with the president's endorsement on

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<sup>68</sup> *Cong. Record*, 47 Cong., 2 Sess., 1003-1005; *Senate Report*, 47 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 1013.

<sup>69</sup> Elisha Allen would have been the one negotiating the renewal, but he died on January 1, 1883 and was temporarily replaced by Carter who was on his way to Europe.

December 6, 1884, but that body took no action during the entire session of 1885 while the treaty languished in Foreign Relations Committee.<sup>70</sup>

Three months later, Grover Cleveland became president and his new secretary of state, Thomas Bayard, took up the treaty negotiations with Carter. Rumors of an amendment to the treaty, providing for the exclusive right to establish and maintain a coaling station at Pearl River, sparked concern with Carter who wrote Gibson that he was attempting to counter this proposal. Carter's fears became a reality in April 1886. The Senate committee on foreign relations favorably reported the treaty out of committee with a recommendation to amend the agreement to include a lease of Pearl Harbor. Several proponents of the bill argued that the value of the coaling station far outweighed the financial loss in reciprocity and the president agreed.<sup>71</sup> In his annual message to Congress on December 6, 1886, Cleveland urged the extension of the treaty with the inclusion of the Pearl Harbor amendment.

Bayard disagreed with the amendment and sent the president a note arguing that gaining an exclusive right to the harbor would infringe upon Hawaiian agreements with foreign countries, and could lead to international complications. Furthermore, he warned that his recently negotiated most-favored-nation treaties with Britain and Germany could give those nations a pretext to assert a similar right in Hawaii. Finally, he contended that having a coaling station in Hawaii would be difficult to defend without a large navy, which the United States did not possess.<sup>72</sup>

Notwithstanding Bayard's warnings, the motion to extend the reciprocity treaty with a Pearl Harbor amendment passed in the Senate on January 20, 1887. Opponents of the bill failed

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<sup>70</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion*, 168-169; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 381-383. Elisha Allen would have been the one negotiating the renewal, but he died on January 1, 1883 and was temporarily replaced by Carter who was on his way to Europe.

<sup>71</sup> *Cong. Record*, 49 Cong. 1 Sess., 3657, 4447; *Sen. Doc.*, 56 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 231, Part 8, 244.

<sup>72</sup> Dozer, "The Opposition to Hawaiian Reciprocity," 178.

in their attempt to stop the treaty by claiming that the bill must pass through the House as well because it involved a modification of the existing tariff policy, but events in Hawaii threatened to unravel the whole agreement.

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In January 1887, many of the dissatisfied *haole* formed the Hawaiian League to press for reforms in the constitution that would limit the king and cabinet's power. They adopted a constitution already written by Thurston with the object of gaining "a constitutional, representative government, in fact as well as in form, in the Hawaiian Islands, by all necessary means." They wanted a new cabinet, finally removing Gibson from the government. They called for several amendments to the constitution, placing all power in the legislature, and reducing the power of the king's cabinet to an advisory position. An executive "committee of thirteen" was named to direct the activities of the organization and all members agreed to keep the league's existence secret. They kept no records of these meetings and the names of the thirteen committee members were well guarded. In testimony before Congress several years later, it was revealed that Dole, Thurston, Castle, and Clarence W. Ashford were all members. By June, the organization had four hundred and two members, all *haole*.<sup>73</sup>

The Hawaiian League did not believe Kalakaua would not agree to their demands willingly and some members believed force might be necessary. They took measures to arm themselves in the event that a show of force was needed. The San Francisco *Chronicle* reported that the customs house had abnormally large shipments of firearms, claiming about nine hundred

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<sup>73</sup> Lorrin Thurston, *Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution*, Andrew Farrell ed. (Honolulu: Advertiser Publishing Co., 1939), 129-154; Sanford B. Dole, *Memoirs of the Hawaiian Revolution*, Andrew Farrell ed. (Honolulu: Advertiser Publishing Co., LTD., 1939), 44-58.

rifles and large quantities of ammunition had been shipped to various Honolulu firms including E.O. Hall & Sons, Mrs. Thomas Lack, and Castle & Cooke.<sup>74</sup>

The Hawaiian League also made an alliance with the Honolulu Rifles, which was created in the spring of 1884 as a semi-military as well as a social organization. The Rifles were established with the approval and support of Kalakaua and the cabinet, and were recognized as an official volunteer military company of the kingdom. It was an all *haole* organization. Originally not very popular, after Volney V. Ashford was elected captain in July 28, 1886, the volunteers became a well-trained military force numbering over 200 men. Ashford was a Canadian with denizen papers who served in the Union army during the Civil War and rose to captain in the Canadian army before moving to Honolulu in 1885 with his brother to establish a law practice.<sup>75</sup>

The rise in popularity of the Rifles coincided with the creation of the Hawaiian League, with which they were heavily connected. Volney V. Ashford, commander of the Rifles, was one of the founding members of the Hawaiian League and when the organization determined a need for military backing, many of the Rifles became League members. Conversely, many of the young men who joined the Hawaiian League subsequently enlisted in the Rifles. What is evident is that, while the Rifles remained a recognized part of the kingdom's militia, most of its members were loyal to the Hawaiian League.<sup>76</sup>

While the League completed its formation and gathered its members, Kalakaua and the Gibson cabinet continued to make decisions that weakened their public support. In the spring of 1887, rumors began circulating that one of the king's registrars had taken bribes for the new opium license, causing a firestorm of controversy for the Gibson cabinet. Junius Kaae reportedly

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<sup>74</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:349.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:350-2; Thurston, *Memoirs*, 141-142.

<sup>76</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:352.

accepted a \$71,000 “present” from a Chinese rice-planter named T. Aki for the right to purchase the sole opium license. Before receiving the papers, another Chinese businessman offered a larger “gift” and he received the right instead. When Aki requested a return of his bribe, Kaae refused. The story broke in the press on May 17 when the *Hawaiian Gazette* printed twelve affidavits associated with the case. Kalakaua told U.S. minister George W. Merrill, recently appointed by President Cleveland, that he knew nothing about the incident, but officially the king and cabinet remained silent.<sup>77</sup>

The same day the opium story broke in the press, a drunken brawl involving officers of Kalakaua’s newly acquired naval vessel, the *Kaimiloa*, further embarrassed the king. Following the large victory in the 1886 elections, Kalakaua and Gibson decided that they had a mandate from the natives to implement a more aggressive national policy. Kalakaua not only wanted to maintain Hawaiian independence, but also wanted to see the island nation take a step up in the international hierarchy by assuming a leadership role in the Pacific. Gibson supported this idea, which fitted well into his previous ambition to claim possession of the Dutch West Indies. The pair decided to embark on an imperial foreign policy by establishing a Polynesian federation under Kalakaua’s leadership. The idea first appeared in late 1879 and early 1880 when Gibson and Moreno proposed it to the press and king. Both men had previously been filibusterers and adventurers and both envisioned the Hawaiian Islands as the center of a Pacific empire—of course with themselves in prominent political positions. In this vein, Kalakaua took a world tour in 1881, aimed at promoting Hawaiian relations and trade, and at establishing his reputation as a world leader. He also created the first navy of the Hawaiian Kingdom by purchasing the British steamer *Explorer* in January 1887 and refitting it with six small cannons and two Gatling guns at

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<sup>77</sup> Alexander, *History of Later Years*, 19; *Hawaiian Gazette*, Feb. 1, 15, 1887; Merrill to Bayard, June 6, 1887, No. 124, vol. 23, Dispatches, NA.

great expense to the taxpayers of Hawaii. It was the officers of this ship, scheduled to leave the next day for Samoa to press Hawaii's offer of annexation, who made headlines in the press.<sup>78</sup>

The ill-advised foreign policy agenda and the opium licensing scandal garnered much negative attention in the press. Articles ranging from skepticism over the ability of the cabinet to outright denunciation of all government policies filled both the English and native language newspapers. The *Hawaiian Gazette* observed that the king's policies were uniting all the classes in a common belief that "an end must come to the present era of extravagance, corruption, and incompetence." The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, one of the kingdom's greatest supporters, even suggested, "it is time to turn over a new leaf and unite in promoting the common good." U.S. minister Merrill and his British counterpart Commissioner Wodehouse both expressed concern for the future of the monarchy as the tensions in the press rose.<sup>79</sup>

With this intense press coverage and the maneuverings of the Hawaiian League becoming less secret, by June 26, 1887, rumors began to spread that a group of disgruntled citizens intended to oust the government, including the king. The next day, on June 27 at 9:00 a.m., the king met with Merrill for advice. The American minister informed him that most of the people's grievances concerned the expenditure of public funds, especially the expense of sending a mission along with a navy to the Samoan islands. The minister further explained to the king that the group demanded the removal of his present cabinet. The next morning, June 28, the king met with his cabinet and they all formally resigned their posts.<sup>80</sup>

Many of the newspapers were still not satisfied with the resignations, fearing that a future cabinet would be equally problematic. They began calling for an end to Kalakaua's reign. The

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<sup>78</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:308-339.

<sup>79</sup> Merrill to Bayard, May 31 & June 6, 1887, No. 124, vol. 24, Dispatches, NA; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Apr. 18, 1887; *Hawaiian Gazette*, Apr. 5, 1887.

<sup>80</sup> Kuykendall, 357-8; Merrill to Bayard, No. 135, July 30, 1887, vol. 13, Dispatches, NA.

same newspapers also kept reporting new arms shipments arriving and the speed with which they were all sold, indicating that regular citizens were not appeased by the cabinet's removal and that many citizens feared an armed rebellion.

In this climate, the Hawaiian League determined it was time to act and called a public meeting for June 30, causing excitement among the citizens and concern for the monarchy. When Kalakaua learned of the broadsides advertising the event, he asked the Honolulu Rifle Association to patrol the city and protect the government buildings in case of an emergency. The king believed the Rifles were under his control, but unfortunately for him, they were directly under control of the Hawaiian League. Ironically, the public meeting was actually held in the armory of the Honolulu Rifles.<sup>81</sup>

Dole called the meeting to order and then turned it over to Peter Cushman Jones as presiding officer. Thurston read a resolution written by the "committee of thirteen," which contained several demands on the king. It called for him to dismiss his cabinet and allow four of the committee members to assist him in assigning a new cabinet. It demanded Gibson's removal from all offices and Kaai's dismissal as Registrar of Conveyances. They requested that the king return all bribe money obtained in the sale of the opium license and that he pledge to refrain from interfering in future legislative elections.

Kalakaua attempted to head off any revolutionary movements in the meeting by sending a letter to Charles Bishop saying he would allow Green to create a new cabinet. Many people were still not satisfied and began calling for a completely new constitution. Thurston said they had two options: they could work through the legislature to pass a new constitution, which would

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<sup>81</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:359. Kalakaua's decision to have the Honolulu Rifles patrol the streets played perfectly into the "committee of thirteen's" plans. They had determined they needed the city streets to be under the control of their armed men before taking any extreme action, but could not figure out how to accomplish that without committing treason.

take over a year, or find a quicker means. Only one person, Paul Isenberg, declared that the only legitimate and legal way to obtain a new constitution was through the legislature. He was overruled. Most men at the meeting wanted immediate action, including the manager of the Honolulu Iron Works, Alexander Young; E.M. Walsh, a Maui plantation manager; and Clarence W. Ashford, a lieutenant in the Honolulu Rifles. When the resolution to create a new constitution and present it to the king was finally put to a vote, it passed unanimously.<sup>82</sup>

At the conclusion of the meeting, several members of the committee took the resolution to the palace and presented it to Kalakaua for his consideration. They gave him twenty-four hours to reply in writing. The next morning, while the king was weighing his options, another shipment of guns arrived on the *Mariposa* and *Australia*, while a division of the Honolulu Rifles, under the Volney V. Ashford's direction, arrested Gibson and his son-in-law Fred Hayeselden and threatened to hang them.<sup>83</sup>

Kalakaua became concerned for his well-being and requested a meeting of the foreign representatives. The British, French, Japanese, Portuguese, and U.S. representatives met with him at noon. He informed them of Gibson's arrest at the hands of the king's volunteer forces and then requested that the foreign representatives allow him to place protection of the islands under their combined control. All agreed that they could not accept such an offer and assured the king that if he gave in to the demands of the people and allowed them to form a new cabinet of their choosing, the situation would quiet down. The group then left the king to determine his fate.<sup>84</sup>

Merrill and Wodehouse attempted to use their influence to calm the people of Honolulu. As the pair made their way back to their respective offices, they explained to the people that the

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<sup>82</sup> Thurston, *Memoirs*, 145-147, 158-161; Dole, *Memoirs*, 49-55; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* (weekly), July 4, 1887; *Hawaiian Gazette*, July 5, 1887; *Daily Bulletin*, July 1, 1887.

<sup>83</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:363. Luckily for Gibson, Lorrin Thurston headed off Ashford and talked him out of lynching Gibson. Thurston believed the men deserved a trial.

<sup>84</sup> Merrill to Bayard, July 30, 1887, No. 135, vol. 23, Dispatches, NA.

king had agreed to a new cabinet and that he was willing to address their concerns. The governor of Oahu asked Wodehouse to bring British troops ashore, but the commissioner declined and assured the governor that the king was safe.<sup>85</sup>

Merrill's response was in line with Bayard's reaction to the situation. In his instructions to the minister, he said that, when taking into consideration the international rivalries and disturbances in the Pacific, he deeply regretted the turmoil in Honolulu, but reminded the minister that it was the policy of the government to abstain from interfering in domestic issues. He emphasized that it was the duty of the government to protect the interests of American citizens, and because the existing treaty fostered a close commercial relationship between Hawaii and the United States, the "obstruction to the channels of legitimate commerce under the existing treaty must not be allowed."<sup>86</sup> He therefore left a vague opening for Merrill to call American troops ashore if necessary. Merrill believed there was no need for that extreme action and left the men of the *U.S.S. Adams* in the harbor. As a precaution, the *U.S.S. Adams* and *U.S.S. Vandalia* remained in Honolulu harbor through September.

Within an hour of his meeting with the foreign representatives, Kalakaua signed the resolution and accepted Green's picks for a new cabinet. Green became Minister of Finance, Godfrey Brown Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thurston Minister of Interior, and Clarence W. Ashford Attorney General. These men became the Reform Cabinet. All but Thurston were British, but the entire business community was pleased with the choices.

The new ministers ordered the guards holding Gibson and his son-in-law to remand the two to the civil authorities, where they were arrested on charges of embezzlement of public funds. Attorney General Ashford permitted them to be placed under house arrest at Gibson's

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<sup>85</sup> Merrill to Bayard, July 5, 1887, No. 126, vol. 23, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>86</sup> Bayard to Merrill, July 12, 1887, No. 52, *FRUS 1887*, 580.

home, and on July 11, the charges against both men were dropped for lack of evidence. Gibson boarded a ship for San Francisco, to seek medical attention for ill health. He died on January 24, 1888, in San Francisco from tuberculosis.<sup>87</sup>

The same evening the Reform Cabinet was named, the Hawaiian League went to work on a new constitution. The cabinet members presented it to Kalakaua on July 6. He listened without expression as they read the text, sat silently for several minutes, and then began to argue with the men over several sections he disliked. The debate lasted the rest of the day. At the end of the evening, upon weighing the improbable success of a refusal, he relented, reached for a pen, and attached his signature. The chief justice of the Hawaiian Supreme Court was then called into the room and the king and his new cabinet all took an oath of loyalty to the new constitution.<sup>88</sup>

The constitution of 1887 shifted the governmental power out of the hands of the monarchy and placed it under the control of the business sector. This move revised the 1864 constitution, which had made the king a figurehead similar to the monarch of England, and placed all executive power in the hands of the four-member cabinet, who could only be removed by a vote of no confidence by the legislature. It stripped the king's authority as commander-in-chief by requiring legislative approval of any military operations. Membership in the House of Nobles was no longer a lifetime appointment but would be an elected position with a six-year term.

Voting requirements also changed. A person no longer had to be a subject of the kingdom. The individual had to be a male resident of Hawaiian, American, or European descent, with fully paid taxes, who took an oath to support the constitution and laws of Hawaii. Thus this new qualification did not include Asians, and it did not require an oath of loyalty and a

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<sup>87</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3: 365.

<sup>88</sup> Clarence W. Ashford, "Last Days of the Hawaiian Monarchy," 27 *HHS Report* (1919); *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, July 7, 1887.

renunciation of foreign citizenship. The 1864 constitution had required a residency of five years prior to an election and signed naturalization papers to vote. Under the new constitution, a constituent must have completed only a one-year residency immediately preceding the election— unless voting for nobles, which required three years—and taxable property in the country valued at no less than \$3000.<sup>89</sup>

Americans living in Hawaii expressed concern about the new voting laws. Many of these U.S. citizens resided in the archipelago, but refused to become naturalized or denizen citizens to gain voting rights, but under the new constitution, they only had to take an oath to uphold the constitution. These individuals consulted with Merrill, who wrote Bayard to determine if taking such an oath negated their U.S. citizenship and therefore their privileges of protection under the American flag. After much debate in Washington, policymakers decided that, because the last sentence of the oath read, “Not hereby renouncing, but expressly reserving all allegiance and citizenship now owing or held by me,” that a U.S. citizen could take the oath and maintain American citizenship. They also determined that U.S. citizens did not relinquish their nationality by enlisting in a foreign army—in response to question from several members of the Honolulu Rifles.<sup>90</sup> This new interpretation differed greatly from the original understanding of Daniel Webster in the 1840s and perhaps reflected the changing attitude in the United States toward a new world role.

After securing a new constitution, the Reform Cabinet began the process of reducing expenditures and eliminating unnecessary offices before addressing the next item of business:

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<sup>89</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 369-370. A copy of the constitution can be found as an attachment in Merrill to Bayard, July 11, 1887, No. 127, vol. 23, Dispatches, NA and in *FRUS 1887*, 574-579.

<sup>90</sup> Merrill to Bayard, July 25, 1887, No. 134, vol. 23, Dispatches, NA; J.H. Putnam to Jas. D. Porter, Aug. 1, 1887, No.125, Porter to J. H. Putnam, Aug. 18, 1887, No. 63, Putnam to Asst. Sec. of State Adee, Dec. 5, 1887, No. 133, Asst. Sec. of State Rives to Putnam, Jan. 5, 1888, No. 76, *FRUS 1895*, Part II, 849; Bayard to Merrill, Sept. 20, 1887, No. 61, Instructions, vol. 2, USDS, NA.

finalizing the reciprocity treaty with the United States. Because of the Pearl Harbor amendment attached by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Kalakaua had refused to ratify the agreement in April. Gibson instructed Carter to obtain assurances in writing that the amendment would not grant the United States any rights over the sovereignty of the islands and that access to Pearl Harbor would only last as long as the treaty was in effect. Carter held dozens of meetings with the secretary of state in a futile attempt to gain such a letter, but by the revolution in July, he had still not attained the document.

Carter wrote the new foreign minister, Godfrey Brown, requesting the ratification of the treaty as the U.S. Senate proposed, but he was told that the government would have to wait until the scheduled elections of September 12, 1887. While waiting for the results of the election, Carter managed to gain a written statement from Bayard declaring that the United States would not use Pearl Harbor to infringe on the sovereignty of the islands. With this letter, and the victory of the Reform party candidates in the legislative elections, the cabinet met and agreed to the amended reciprocity treaty.<sup>91</sup>

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With this renewal of the reciprocity treaty, and the victory of the Reform party in the September elections, the *haole* members of the Hawaiian League believed they were finally in control of the government and their own economic stability. These men began to make changes to the government and its finances that they believed would ensure the long-term success of the islands. Most of the men responsible for the revolution in 1887 never intended to end the independence of the Hawaiian Islands; they believed that the existing government was a

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<sup>91</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii*, 175-181.

detriment to that independence. Some of those men would change their minds over the next six years.

Much has been written about the forced promulgation of the new constitution of 1887. The members of the Hawaiian League viewed their actions as a necessary extralegal affair, comparable to the issuance of the Magna Charta or the American Declaration of Independence. Native Hawaiians, however, perceived this new constitution in a very different way. Most of them referred to it as the “Bayonet Constitution,” believing that the king had signed only at the point of a gun. The king’s own sister, Liliuokalani, saw it as “a conspiracy against the peace of the Hawaiian kingdom.” She claimed that Kalakaua agreed to sign the document because he had learned of traitors in the cabinet who planned to assassinate him if he refused.<sup>92</sup> While there is no evidence to back the queen’s claim, the belief that the king’s life was in jeopardy drove many native Hawaiians to reject the constitution and fight against further American encroachment.

The disagreement over the new constitution led to the formation of a new opposition party, headed by the leading native Hawaiian politicians and business interests. Hawaiian nationalism gained importance and partisanship grew to a new heights. Over the next six years, this political challenge would stall progress in the legislature, lead to a deadly rebellion, and eventually bring the end of the Hawaiian monarchy.

While events in Hawaii devolved into a political battle, the United States continued its trade relationship with the archipelago, unsure whether it wanted to continue with this unprofitable exchange. Arguments increased over the strategic importance of a post in the Pacific and whether the United States was ready physically and financially to take on such a

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<sup>92</sup> Liliuokalani, *Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen* (Rutland, VT: Charles E. Tuttle Company, Inc., 1964), 177-181.

responsibility. Finalizing its own rise to world power status would answer that question, but until then, the United States waited for the actions of Hawaii to bring the issue to Washington's door.

## Chapter 5

“It is Living on a Volcano; There is No Telling When it Will Explode”<sup>1</sup>

Standing in the door of William O. Smith’s law office, temporarily serving as the Committee of Safety’s headquarters, Sanford Ballard Dole nervously studied four Hawaiian police officers watching him from across the street. Having formally resigned his position as a justice of the Supreme Court only hours earlier, he wondered why these men had not already arrested him on suspicion of conspiring against the crown. As he worried what would happen once the police detained him, a shot rang out one block away. The officers immediately ran toward the sound, leaving Sanford to signal the rest of the committee hiding in the back room that it was time to go.<sup>2</sup>

The group of twenty men marched up Merchant Street, straight for the government buildings where they intended to depose the queen and establish a new government. The streets contained people either dashing to the scene of the gunfire or closing up their shutters and doors out of fear. The men found the government buildings virtually deserted, with the exception of the departmental clerks. The queen’s four ministers were at the police station consulting with Marshal Charles B. Wilson on the next course of action to take against the committee members, completely unaware that the group was on the move. Members of the Honolulu Rifles

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<sup>1</sup> Thurston, *Memoirs*, 253.

<sup>2</sup> Dole, *Memoirs*, 78-80.

Association were supposed to march from the armory to help the conspirators take the offices forcibly if necessary, but they had not yet arrived.

Without waiting for military assistance, Committee of Safety chairman Henry E. Cooper climbed to the front steps of the building, faced the royal palace, and read a proclamation deposing Queen Liliuokalani and establishing a provisional government. During the reading, approximately thirty to forty members of the Drei Hundert, a German company of the Honolulu Rifles Association, arrived in support of the Committee of Safety. Only a few dozen passersby comprised the crowd who witnessed the ending of a monarchy and the creation of the new government.

While these last moments of the monarchy seem anticlimactic, the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy was actually a four-day event rife with conspiracy, intrigue, and manipulation on the part of both the Committee of Safety and the monarchy. This was the result of a long partisan struggle between factions in Honolulu. One was the Reform party that created the 1887 constitution and had since dominated many of the legislative assemblies. Another faction, the National Reform party, opposed the constitution and wanted a restored monarchy under the 1864 constitution. Lastly, the Liberal party, which understood the motivations behind ending monarchical control in 1887, but disliked the political power that the constitution granted to foreign residents and wanted to see a republic formed under the leadership of native Hawaiians. In the middle stood Liliuokalani, who wished to please her people, preserve the peace, promote Hawaiian nationalism, and maintain the islands' independence and economic stability.

For two years, Queen Liliuokalani maneuvered through this partisan predicament, but on January 14, 1893, the Hawaiian legislature was set to end its session and Liliuokalani saw a

chance to make a move and restore her monarchical authority. She officially prorogued the very contentious session at noon in a ceremony few legislators attended. Two hours earlier, the queen informed her newly appointed cabinet<sup>3</sup> that she intended to promulgate a new constitution that afternoon and wanted them to attend the ceremony and endorse the document with her. The ministers discussed the situation and decided they could not approve the queen's plan. While Liliuokalani went to the prorogation ceremony, three of the four ministers rushed to the offices of fellow partisans to warn them of the afternoon's impending event. This meeting ignited the fuse that destroyed the Hawaiian monarchy three days later.

The key to understanding the coup is to realize that this was not a major move made by Washington to take possession of the smaller island nation for America's own strategic gain. Nor was this an inside conspiracy of a rogue U.S. minister and his American cohort. The coup was the result of an internal political and personal struggle between several factions on the islands, all vying for control of the government. The prevailing faction, known as the Committee of Safety, manipulated the Hawaiian royals into believing that they had the backing of the American minister, but Washington was not responsible, or even aware of the plan, before the queen's removal.

The true cause of the coup was sixty years of constitutional and economic changes in Hawaii that produced a political system rife with factionalism and political infighting. Just as Madison cautioned against in Federalist No. 10 when the United States developed its democracy, the Hawaiian Islands embraced a westernized form of constitutional monarchy, along with the development of factions vying for control of the government, which posed a serious problem to

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<sup>3</sup> The Parker-Colburn cabinet as it became known had only been appointed the day before due to a partisan wrangling that removed the previous cabinet on a vote of want of no confidence before the legislature adjourned for over a year.

the stability of the nation.<sup>4</sup> The Kamehamehas welcomed these democratic changes as a means of entering the international political and economic body, which in the beginning seemed to have a positive effect on the growth of the islands into a second-tier nation. But as the native population became more familiar with the new political system and began to engage as constituents, the faction that helped establish this system of government started to lose control and influence over the legislature and monarchy. The 1887 constitution was a reaction to this phenomenon, restructuring the electorate to allow the economic elites of the islands to reassert control. Native backlash against this minority faction produced new political parties, leading to such partisan factionalism that the nation's development came to halt. In response, Liliuokalani attempted to reassert her authority as monarch, spurring several of the factions to attempt her removal. In the end, the children of the original collaborators who assisted Kamehameha III in creating this political system won the fight and overthrew the monarchy.

This group had the backing of a very small portion of the population. A large percentage of the people were dissatisfied with some aspect of the government and wanted to change it to their own liking, but very few wanted what the Committee of Safety did once it removed the queen. The newly formed provisional government immediately sent representatives to the United States to propose annexation, sparking backlash in both nations and forcing the United States to confront its expansionist past once again.

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To understand how this chain of events began, it is important to return to the promulgation of the 1887 constitution that Liliuokalani intended to abrogate. When the Hawaiian

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<sup>4</sup> James Madison, "The Federalist No. 10," *Federalist Papers* (Westminister, MD.: Bantam Dell Publishing Group, 1982), 50-58.

League forced the new constitution on Kalakaua, its efforts started a new era of partisanship in Hawaii that grew in intensity to the point that legislative progress came to standstill. Different groups within Hawaii began to vie for control of the government, and political intrigue became so common that it threatened to become the national pastime. When the king died in 1891, his sister Liliuokalani found herself in the middle of this firestorm. Many citizens hoped she would take a submissive role and allow the factions within the legislature to govern, but the queen was determined to rule and not just reign. When it became clear to all the parties that Liliuokalani intended to make her own decisions, factionalism intensified against her, resulting in repeated threats to her crown.

With an election on September 12, 1887, the Reform party believed it had a mandate for its constitution and could implement the remaining reforms they needed to stabilize the government and economy; but this victory did not create the perfect political environment party envisioned. Native nationalists were upset that the Pearl Harbor amendment attached to the new reciprocity treaty threatened the sovereignty of the nation. Asian residents resented their exclusion from the franchise in the new constitution.<sup>5</sup> Some Royalists were disappointed that Kalakaua seemed weak against the foreign factions and looked to replace him with his younger, more obstinate sister Liliuokalani. Then there were radical members of the *haole* reform movement who did not believe the new constitution went far enough and wanted to eliminate the monarchy and build a republic. These different factions began creating political parties to push their agendas in the electorate, while some individuals considered more revolutionary tactics.

During the 1887 election, the first two political factions surfaced. The Reform party's main political issue was responsible government rule. These men represented the business

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<sup>5</sup> Article 59 of the Bayonet Constitution lists "Hawaiian, American or European birth or descent" as a qualification for voting, thus excluding anyone of Japanese or Chinese origin. Hawaiian Kingdom Constitution of 1887, AH. A digital copy can be found at: [AlohaQuest.com/archive/constitution\\_1887.htm](http://AlohaQuest.com/archive/constitution_1887.htm)

interests of the island, including sugar planters, lawyers, and merchants. Their platform promised to abolish all unnecessary offices in the government, liquidate the national debt, and reduce taxes. They also wanted to channel existing tax revenues into internal improvements, while employing a rigid economy in government. Most important, their platform called for the preservation of the kingdom under the 1887 constitution, which they defended as a good framework for government. The Reform party candidates conceded the need for some amendments, but they argued that because the constitution had deprived no Hawaiian of voting rights, there was no need to alter the franchise. They claimed that the property qualifications for nobles were not racially discriminatory, but rather economic condition, which affected all nationalities alike.<sup>6</sup>

The opposition, which had yet to create a formal party, held a meeting and wrote its own platform. Its members asserted that there were many defects in the new constitution, which required amending. Among those issues was the enfranchisement of foreign nationals. They wanted foreigners to forswear all allegiance to their countries and take the oath of allegiance to the Hawaiian government as a prerequisite for holding any office and voting. Their platform included several other points. First, they wanted to preserve the independence of the kingdom as a constitutional monarchy. Second, they called for the reassessment of taxes, so that they fell as lightly as possible on the mass of the people. Third, they wanted to suspend further immigration of foreign laborers to Hawaii until unemployment stabilized. Finally, they looked to ensure that the people elect the principal officers of the government, except for cabinet ministers and judges who would be appointed by the monarch.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> "Speeches," *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Sept. 12, 1887.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:407-409; *Hawaiian Gazette*, July 26, 1887; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Aug. 15, 1887.

The Reform party had an overwhelming victory in the 1887 election. Looking at the election data closely, however, reveals that the independent native candidates actually received more votes than they polled in the 1886 election. What made the difference for the Reform party was the foreign vote enfranchised by the new constitution, which gave them the numeric advantage. When looking at this data it becomes evident that the native Hawaiian population strongly opposed the Reform party and a new constitution.<sup>8</sup>

At the special session of 1887, the legislature and cabinet reversed many acts of the 1886 Gibson controlled legislature. They repealed the opium act, the military bill, which created Kalakaua's one-ship navy, and the laws prohibiting natives from leaving the islands.<sup>9</sup> The Reform party controlled legislature then passed an act making it easier to naturalize foreigners. Other measures passed by the new legislature but vetoed by the king included the abolition of the office of governor, restrictions on the liquor license to the District of Honolulu, and placing the internal police and marshal under the control of the attorney general.<sup>10</sup>

One of the most contentious arguments in the cabinet was over the fate of the military. Minister Godfrey Brown was adamant that the ministers disband the Honolulu Rifles and form a formal military with a system of conscription. He did not trust Volney Ashford, head of the Honolulu Rifles, and wanted the military to be under the leadership of the cabinet. By December 22, 1887, Brown recognized the futility of his arguments against the attorney general, Volney's brother Clarence Ashford, and tendered his resignation to the king. He explained to the British

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<sup>8</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3: 409-10.

<sup>9</sup> One of the measures implemented to reverse the population decline of the native Hawaiians was to prohibit anyone of Hawaiian descent from migrating to other countries.

<sup>10</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:410-411.

commissioner and the American minister that he had resigned because he did not agree with the radical views of the new cabinet members.<sup>11</sup>

Another controversy arose over whether the king had the right to exercise the veto without the consent of his cabinet. Article 48 of the constitution granted the king the power of veto over all legislation, but Article 78 required that any act performed by the king must have the “advice and consent of the Cabinet.”<sup>12</sup> When the king wanted to veto the five pieces of legislation mentioned above, several cabinet members disapproved. Because the legislature did not have the two-thirds vote to override the veto, they challenged Kalakaua. The king turned to the Supreme Court which came to a split decision. There were only four judges on the Supreme Court, the fifth having recently passed away. To break their tie, the justices asked for advice from all members of the bar, only to see another split decision. The cabinet had to remedy the even number on the Supreme Court and discussed two options. They could nominate a fifth judge to replace the recently deceased member, or reduce the size of the court to three members by firing one. The legislature, controlled by the Reform party, wanted Bickerton, a staunch Royalist, removed from the court. When Sanford B. Dole was nominated as a fifth judge, Kalakaua objected because Dole openly opposed the use of the veto. In a compromise between the cabinet and king, Justice Bickerton retained his seat and Dole was given the fifth slot. The reform party believed that with Dole on the court the king’s right to a personal veto would be overruled. However, on February 2, 1888, in a 4 to 1 decision, the court upheld the king’s veto.<sup>13</sup>

During the veto and Supreme Court controversies, the press released twelve affidavits from court cases brought against the king and Gibson cabinets prior to 1887, which inspired two

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<sup>11</sup> Merrill to Bayard, July 2, No. 192, July 30, 1888, No. 200, vol. 24, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>12</sup> Hawaiian Kingdom Constitution of 1887, AH.

<sup>13</sup> Ethel M. Damon, *Sanford Ballard Dole and His Hawaii* (Palo Alto: Pacific Books, 1957), 206-207; Merrill to Bayard, Dec. 15, 1887, No. 158, Dec. 20, 1887, No. 161, & Dec. 24, 1887, No. 162, vol. 23, Dispatches, NA.

separate plots to remove the king and replace him with his sister Princess Liliuokalani. The first came from the Hawaiian League and its leader Lorrin Thurston, who believed Liliuokalani more logical and capable than her brother and thus more willing to allow the legislature to govern. He sent two members of the legislature, Representative James Dowsett, Jr. and Noble William R. Castle, to ask Liliuokalani if she would take the throne if the king abdicated. She responded yes, but only if his abdication was absolutely necessary, which she did not believe. They dropped the conversation temporarily.<sup>14</sup>

The second plot came from native Hawaiian leaders and their partisans who wanted to replace Kalakaua because they felt he was yielding too readily to the pressures of reformers and believed Liliuokalani would be stronger against the *haole*. Two members of this group, Robert W. Wilcox and Charles B. Wilson, also approached Liliuokalani. Wilcox was a member of the royal family who had received a partial education at an Italian university through a royal scholarship before the Reform cabinet ended the program.<sup>15</sup> Wilson was the husband of Liliuokalani's lady in waiting and would become the marshal of the islands under Liliuokalani. She told them that if Kalakaua willingly abdicated in her favor, she would take the throne.<sup>16</sup> Neither plot went farther than a discussion at that point.

The native Hawaiian opposition reacted by forming the *Hui Kālai'aina*, the first *Kanaka*<sup>17</sup> political party, dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the monarchy. Up to 1,500 people attended the first meeting where they elected as president John Eiluene Bush, a half-native Hawaiian and editor of a Hawaiian-language newspaper. The party platform called

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<sup>14</sup> Tate, *The United States and Hawaiian Kingdom*, 9.

<sup>15</sup> Mister to Wilcox, July 28, 1887, file 1: Letters 1883-1894, R. Wilcox Papers, AH.

<sup>16</sup> Ernest Andrade Jr., *Unconquerable Rebel: Robert W. Wilcox and Hawaiian Politics, 1880-1903* (Niwot: University of Colorado Press, 1996), 74-76.

<sup>17</sup> The term *Kanaka* was used to refer to native and part native Hawaiians, if those of mixed race favored their Hawaiian heritage over their foreign.

for the preservation of the monarchy and most important, full suffrage in the election of all government officials and a requirement that all foreigners relinquish allegiance to their native countries prior to receiving voting rights or holding office.<sup>18</sup> This platform directly challenged the new voting restrictions and property qualifications in the Bayonet Constitution, which restricted the majority of Hawaiians from voting. Finally, the party called for a new constitution that restored the 1864 form of government.<sup>19</sup>

Some members of the *Hui*, however, were not willing to wait for the long political process. Many members disliked the actions of the Reform party and assumed its ultimate goal was to destroy the autonomy of the islands. Some of these individuals took a cue from the Hawaiian League and determined that the best way to address their grievances was to use force to compel the king to dismiss the Reform cabinet and promulgate another constitution that reestablished monarchical authority.

Robert Kalanihiapo Wilcox, one of the more radical members of the *Hui*, began organizing a coup. As a descendant of the Kamehameha line, Wilcox had studied military tactics in Italy on a Royal Scholarship, with the assumption that he would return to a position in the military or engineering corps. When the Reform party took control of the legislature, it cut his funding, forcing Wilcox to return to Hawaii jobless. Wilcox planned to overthrow the king, who he believed was weak against the *haole*, and crown Liliuokalani who would help restore the former constitution and native rights.<sup>20</sup>

On July 30, 1889, Wilcox and his company of eighty men marched on Iolani Palace, armed with rifles, pistols, and a new constitution. They entered the palace grounds, took four

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<sup>18</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, September 12, 1887, *Hawaiian Gazette*, September 13, 1887. John Eiluene Bush is the former cabinet member John E. Bush, who was now emphasizing his Hawaiian heritage by using his full middle name.

<sup>19</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 448.

<sup>20</sup> Andrade *Unconquerable Rebel*, 14-27, 42-44.

small cannons from storage and positioned them at the four gates of the compound, and then occupied the government buildings across the street. Wilcox testified that he had been assured the king would sign the new constitution so he sent the royal carriage for the king to join them, but Kalakaua was at his boathouse in the harbor engaged in one of his days-long poker and drinking parties. The cabinet members, the marshal of Honolulu, and the commander of the volunteer battalions mobilized forces and stationed troops around the buildings. Fighting broke out soon after, and at some point a makeshift bomb exploded on the roof of a bungalow occupied by the conspirators, resulting in the death of six insurgents.<sup>21</sup> Later that day, American troops from the *U.S.S. Adams* were brought ashore as a precautionary measure and to keep peace during the night. They returned to the *Adams* the next morning without incident.<sup>22</sup>

By that evening, the rebellion was over. The insurgents were surrounded, with seven dead, twelve wounded, and seventy arrested. Most of the captives testified against the leaders in exchange for light sentences.<sup>23</sup> Wilcox was the only native Hawaiian tried. Originally charged with treason, it became evident that conviction was unlikely, and he was indicted instead on conspiracy charges which held a lighter sentence. Even though evidence, and Wilcox's own testimony, made his guilt look overwhelming, the all-native jury acquitted him by a vote of nine to three.<sup>24</sup> The editor of the *Friend* said of the trial, "to the minds of most Hawaiians, whatever is done by the king and for the king, is legitimate, and cannot be treasonable."<sup>25</sup> The whole incident made Wilcox a local hero and garnered him a legislative seat one year later.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 59-63; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:421-27.

<sup>22</sup> Merrill to Blaine, Aug. 1, 1889, No. 225, vol. 24, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>23</sup> Alexander Statement, Morgan Report, 285-286; Merrill to Blaine, Aug. 1, 1889, No. 225, vol. 24, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>24</sup> *Daily Bulletin*, Oct. 21, 22, 23, 29, 30, 31, Nov. 1, 1889; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Oct. 22, 23, 24, 29, 30, 31, Nov. 1, 1889.

<sup>25</sup> *Friend*, Dec. 1889, p. 99.

As a result of Wilcox's failure, the *Hui* returned their efforts to strictly peaceful protests and politics. As the election of 1890 neared, the *Hui* found an ally in the Mechanics' and Workingmen's Political Protective Union, an organization of *haole* workers angry with policies ensuring low wages, labor immigration, and property qualifications for voting.<sup>26</sup> The two groups met in November of 1889 and created the National Reform party, to challenge the Reform party in the upcoming 1890 elections. The new party ran on a platform that pleased its diverse group: the liberalization of voting qualifications, the preservation of the islands' independence, and the removal of the Reform cabinet. Its campaign focused on race, with Bush and Wilcox often reverting to anti-*haole* speeches. The word "missionary" became a slur made against the Reform party. In the end, the National Reform party gained a slight majority in the legislature for the 1891 session.

The new legislature, controlled by the National Reform party, immediately went to work on the two items that concerned it the most: removal of the Reform cabinet and the installation of a new constitution. Due to internal discord between Attorney General Clarence Ashford and the other three cabinet members, the legislature was able to claim that this infighting between ministers prohibited their productivity. They called for a vote of no confidence, and removed the Reform cabinet. They then turned their attention to the most important item on their agenda: amending or creating a new constitution.<sup>27</sup>

Because of the mishap with the Wilcox rebellion, the National Reform party wanted to promulgate a pro-Hawaiian constitution through proper legal means. In July, a committee of twenty-six members—including founding member John Bush and Joseph Nawahi—decided to present the king with a petition calling for a constitutional convention. On August 14, 1890, in a

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<sup>26</sup> Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 224-9.

<sup>27</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:448- 452.

great display of pomp and pageantry, they marched to the palace behind the Royal Hawaiian Band, dressed in full suits, top hats, and white gloves to present their petition. The king received them publicly and sent the petition with his endorsement to the legislature.<sup>28</sup>

This development alarmed the Reform party and foreign representatives. They all believed the 1887 constitution was the best form of government and viewed this movement by the native members of the National Reform party as a rebellious act. Upon the urging of many foreign residents of Honolulu, U.S. minister John L. Stevens and British commissioner Wodehouse decided it was their duty to inform the king of their concerns with this measure and told him they feared the possibility of armed reaction by residents if he pursued it. The two men then informed the commander of their respective naval ships in Honolulu harbor to be ready for action in the event of hostilities.<sup>29</sup>

The heated public debate that ensued was filled with threats of violence. Wilcox was quoted during a legislative debate as threatening another revolution with “the streets being made sticky with blood” if the demands of the people were not met. He claimed that buildings in Honolulu would be blown up and that he would take a hand in removing the king if needed. Finally, the bill went before the legislature on September 23, 1890, and after a three-day debate on the chamber floor, it failed by a vote of twenty-four to sixteen.<sup>30</sup>

One week later, President Benjamin Harrison signed the McKinley tariff into law and threw Hawaii’s economy into a downward spiral. The bill removed the duties on all raw sugar above No. 16 Dutch Grade—the sugar Hawaii sold to the United States under the reciprocity treaty—and created a two-cent bounty for American sugar planters. Hawaii no longer had an

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 460-463.

<sup>29</sup> Stevens to Blaine, confidential, Aug. 19, 1890, No. 30, vol. 24, Dispatches, NA; Admiral George Brown to Secretary of Navy, Sept. 19, 1890, printed in *House Ex. Doc.* 53, Cong., 2 Sess., No. 48, 471-472; Steven’s testimony in Morgan Report, 524.

<sup>30</sup> *Daily Bulletin*, Sept. 29, 30, Oct. 1, 1890; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Sept. 30, Oct. 1, 2, 1890.

advantage over other sugar producing nations, which resulted in the price of raw sugar dropping 40 percent. Even though the law did not go into effect until April 1, 1891, the consequences were felt quickly in Hawaii as plantation owners cut wages and employees to preempt their losses. The legislature responded, debating the option of abrogating the treaty and looking for a similar arrangement with one of the British colonies in the Pacific, namely Australia or New Zealand. This idea was rejected and instead, just before ending the 1890 session, the legislature passed a resolution to renegotiate the reciprocity treaty, which would expand Hawaiian duty-free products to compensate for the lost advantage of the sugar bounty, or to gain complete free trade on all products. Hawaiian minister Carter thought free trade unattainable, but immediately spoke with Secretary of State Blaine about the possibility of a permanent trade agreement that could include Pearl Harbor. In April, Carter sent the new minister of foreign affairs a copy of the proposed treaty he worked out with Blaine, but the cabinet decided to wait and see what the effects on the sugar industry would be after the initial shock wore off.<sup>31</sup>

With this highly partisan climate still smoldering, and the reciprocity treaty in limbo, the legislature prorogued in November and the king left for California on the *U.S.S. Charleston* for health reasons. He publically stated that he was going to make a personal appearance in Washington on behalf of the treaty negotiation, and he did manage to meet with Carter in San Francisco to discuss the matter, but on January 20, 1891, King Kalakaua died. Nine days later, his sister, Liliuokalani, became queen.

Lydia Liliuoloku Kamahaheha Paki Dominis was the younger sister of Kalakaua. Known as Lydia to close family and friends, and Liliuokalani to the people, she was considered by most to be an improvement over her brother. She was educated at the Chiefs' Children's

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<sup>31</sup> Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 114-115; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 466-467.

School where she gained fluency in the Hawaiian and English language. Liliuokalani was a religiously pious woman who took a special interest in charities assisting children and the poor. She was a poet and composer of music, the most famous of which was the song “Aloha Oe.” Although married, Liliuokalani was childless, but had a close relationship with her younger sister Likelike and took a great interest in Likelike’s daughter Kaiulani, who was named Liliuokalani’s successor.<sup>32</sup>

Most citizens of both factions held a good opinion of Liliuokalani when she ascended to the throne. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* described the queen as “a lady of culture in shrewd observation, with abundant good sense.” The paper predicted she would have “a long, peaceable, and happy reign” as long as she remembered “to reign, and not to govern.”<sup>33</sup> The editor of the *Friend*, Sereno E. Bishop, said of Liliuokalani that she “enjoys a high degree the affection of her Hawaiian subjects, and their confidence in her attachment to their welfare.” Of her personally, he said, “Her gentle and gracious demeanor, her good sense, her fine culture, have always commanded the high regard of the foreign community.”<sup>34</sup> Charles Bishop, a childhood friend and husband of Liliuokalani’s foster sister Bernice Pauahi, offered Liliuokalani some advice that was both a reflection of his appreciation of her, and an opinion of what the monarchy should become under the queen. He believed the “moral influence which you can exert upon the community, and especially upon your own race, is of much more importance than anything you can do in the politics for business or the country.”<sup>35</sup>

Regardless of the people’s admiration for her character, they were concerned over what she would do as a monarch. She was known for her great interest in the welfare of the native

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<sup>32</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 480.

<sup>33</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Feb. 5, 1891.

<sup>34</sup> *The Friend*, March, 1891, 17.

<sup>35</sup> C. R. Bishop to Queen Liliuokalani, Mar. 5, 1891, Liliuokalani collection, AH.

Hawaiians and her advocacy of reviving the Hawaiian culture and restoring the prestige of the monarchy. Liliuokalani took pride in being part of the *Ali'i* class. She had been open about her opinion that her brother was weak in 1887, and often proclaimed her displeasure with the constitution, which many people assumed she would restore to the 1864 version. Minister of Finance George Brown claimed that Liliuokalani “showed an evident reluctance” to swear an oath of loyalty to the new constitution when sworn in. “The queen,” he believed, “is unfortunately surrounded by questionable people.”<sup>36</sup> Others shared Brown’s concern that the queen might try to reclaim monarchial privilege. Claus Spreckels considered Liliuokalani a “shrewd, sensible woman [who] understands the conditions upon which she is permitted to rule.” He did not think it likely that she would attempt any radical measures.<sup>37</sup> Charles Bishop counseled her in a letter that in the Hawaiian political system “the ministers have the responsibility, annoyances and blame—and usually very little credit. Let them have them, and do not worry yourself about them. You will live longer and happier and be more popular by not trying to do too much.”<sup>38</sup> All these comments displayed a concern that, even though they thought Liliuokalani a respectable, proper woman who would not threaten their established constitutional rule, they all worried that she might.

The foreign representatives were equally apprehensive about the new queen. Stevens wrote to Blaine that he and British commissioner Wodehouse shared a concern for the individuals around Liliuokalani. When he and Admiral George Brown were introduced to the new queen, Stevens expressed his concerns directly to Liliuokalani in a speech that resembled a lecture. He thanked her for taking the loyalty oath to the constitution and congratulated her on

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<sup>36</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:474. For Liliuokalani’s account of her taking the oath see: Liliuokalani, *Hawaii’s Story by Hawaii’s Queen* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1898), 209-210.

<sup>37</sup> San Francisco *Examiner*, Jan. 25, 1891 quoted in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3: 481.

<sup>38</sup> C. R. Bishop to Queen Liliuokalani, Mar. 5, 1891, Liliuokalani collection, AH.

“making Your reign a strictly constitutional one.” He reminded her that by respecting the legislature and allowing it to govern, “Your Majesty places Yourself in the exalted rank of the best Sovereigns of the world.”<sup>39</sup>

Most native Hawaiians seemed very receptive to Liliuokalani. Those individuals surrounding the queen, who Stevens and others found “questionable,” were some of the more prominent native Hawaiians, including Robert Wilcox, John Bush, and Charles Wilson. What the *haole* and foreign elements did not realize was that Liliuokalani did not intend to be controlled by native men any more than she would by the *haole*, and most of these individuals would soon revolt against her as well.

One of the first things Liliuokalani did after taking the oath was to request the resignation of Kalakaua’s cabinet so that she could name her own. She maintained that their positions ended with the king’s death, but the ministers refused to resign on the ground that the constitution only provided for their removal by a vote of the legislature. The ministers appealed to the Supreme Court, which found in favor of the queen, agreeing that, upon the death of the king, the ministers were obligated to tender their resignation. The cabinet members then obliged the queen and surrendered their positions.<sup>40</sup>

With a victory in the courts, Liliuokalani appointed a new cabinet, which disappointed many of the National Reform party members. As the new minister of foreign affairs, she named Samuel Parker, a part-Hawaiian rancher who was a favorite of the natives and friendly to the United States. Charles N. Spencer was renamed minister of the interior, the only holdover from Kalakaua’s cabinet. Herman A. Widemann, minister of finance, was a German immigrant with plantation interests, who had been a member of the first cabinet of Kalakaua and a prominent

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<sup>39</sup> Stevens to Blaine, confidential, Feb. 22, 1891, No. 20, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>40</sup> Liliuokalani, *Hawaii’s Story*, 217-219; Stevens to Blaine, confidential, Feb. 22, 1891, No. 20, Apr. 4, 1891, No. 23, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

member of the legislature. The attorney general was William Austin Whiting, an American lawyer of good standing who had resided in Honolulu for years.<sup>41</sup>

This new cabinet contained none of the founding members of the National Reform party, who were greatly upset by Liliuokalani's choices. By April 2, 1891, Bush began to turn on the queen. Using his Hawaiian language newspaper, *Ka Leo o ka Lahui*, he began criticizing Liliuokalani and her new cabinet, warning her that the people might replace the monarchy with a republican form of government. He also tried to discredit the queen's choices by attributing her problems to being a woman. "Her majesty means well," Bush declares, "but she unfortunately is a woman and in a position that never was ordained from the creation for other than a men, or one of a masculine nature."<sup>42</sup>

Native Hawaiian members of the *Hui*, including Bush and Wilcox, began to believe that a republican form of government would be best, as long as native Hawaiians alone held the franchise. They formed the National Liberal party in late 1891 and drafted a platform claiming the current constitution lacked the consent of the governed. They employed the language of the American Founding Fathers, calling for "inalienable rights to life, to liberty, to property, the pursuit of happiness and to self-protection against arbitrary concentration of power."<sup>43</sup> The party used this language as a tool against allegations of native ignorance and inability to self-govern, by showing their understanding of the ideals of democracy and liberty.

The Liberal party began to attack the government. Its supporters called for an adjustment of the Supreme Court and a completely new privy council and civil service. They also wanted Hawaiian ministers Henry A. P. Carter in Washington and David A. McKinley in San Francisco

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<sup>41</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:476.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 485.

<sup>43</sup> "Principles of Government and Constitution," *Ka Leo a ka Lahui*, Sept. 30, 1891, cited in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:515.

recalled because the representatives supported renewing the reciprocity treaty with the United States by offering more incentives.<sup>44</sup> The most important change the Liberal party advocated was the dissolution of the monarchy and the creation of a republic under native Hawaiian rule. In *Ka Leo o ka Lahui* on June 4, 1891, Bush wrote, “we’ve gradually been forced to recognize the fact, as the pope of Rome has, that a republican form of government is best for the intellectual, spiritual and material prosperity of the nation. While all the world has moved we do not want to see our people holding aloft the hollow shams and dragging solid shackles of the monarchy.”<sup>45</sup> It appeared that this native faction in Hawaii was also embracing an international conception of the nation-state and viewed the continuation of the monarchy, which they regarded as being controlled by the foreign faction, as a threat to the continued growth of the nation.

During that same summer, rumors started circling around Honolulu that the queen’s health was failing, sparking another round of speculation and concern about the security of the islands if the throne became vacant again.<sup>46</sup> Blaine, also in ill health, wrote President Harrison that the question of Hawaiian annexation might arise soon and that the British were using their influence over Princess Kaiulani to gain favor. He suggested the dispatch of another ship to Honolulu, which arrived in September. Even though Liliuokalani resented the presence of the U.S. navy in her harbor, she tolerated it because of a pending discussion in Washington over the reciprocity treaty.<sup>47</sup>

The fears over Liliuokalani’s ill health were misunderstood. On August 27, 1891, the queen’s husband, John Owen Dominis, died from a long illness that the queen had been nursing

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<sup>44</sup> Interestingly, David McKinley was the oldest brother of President William McKinley, under whose presidency Hawaii was annexed.

<sup>45</sup> *Ka Leo a ka Lahui*, June 4, 1891, cited in Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3: 485.

<sup>46</sup> Liliuokalani to Cleghorn, Sept. 18, 1891 and Liliuokalani to Kaiulani, Oct. 21, 1891, Folder 13, Letter July-Dec. 1891, M-164, Cleghorn Collection, AH.

<sup>47</sup> Stevens to Blaine, Sept. 3, 1891, No. 31, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA; Blaine to Harrison, Sept. 16, 1891, Harrison to Blaine, Sept 18, 1891, *The Correspondence between Benjamin Harrison and James G. Blaine*, Albert T. Volwiler ed. (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Historical Society, 1940), 186-191.

him through. While exhausted and mentally fatigued, the queen was otherwise healthy and still capable of ruling. She took great offense to the rumors of her impending death, but ignored the threats while she grieved for her loss. Once it became apparent that the queen was going to continue ruling, the intrigue subsided, and for a few months, Hawaii seemed at ease.<sup>48</sup>

Then, on November 1, Carter passed away in New York following a long illness. This American-born naturalized Hawaiian had spent most of his adult life serving the Hawaiian monarchy as its most able and prolific diplomat under every monarch since Kamehameha IV. Carter had been in Washington negotiating the renewal of the reciprocity treaty and his efforts were still ongoing, so the queen appointed a new minister in his place, Dr. J. Mott Smith, an American-born dentist who held plantation investments and the minister of finance position. Smith's instructions were to complete the negotiations, which he did within a few weeks.<sup>49</sup>

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As mentioned earlier, in April 1891, the McKinley tariff went into effect and the Hawaiian legislature asked the minister in Washington to negotiate a new treaty rectifying some of the damage. Carter found Blaine receptive to the idea and the two worked out a rough draft agreement to present to their respective governments. Blaine's willingness to engage in the discussion reflected his opinion about the tariff and the use of reciprocity to further American foreign policy interests.

The use of the tariff in the United States had been a point of political contention since the founding of the nation. During the Civil War, the North enacted a high protective tariff to foster industrial growth. This was an important part of the United States developing its control of

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<sup>48</sup> Liliuokalani to Kaiulani, Oct. 21, 1891, Folder 13, Letter July-Dec. 1891, Cleghorn Collection, AH.

<sup>49</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:491-492.

technology, one of the steps toward reaching a first-tier status. By the 1880s, however, that protective wall had created a surplus in governmental revenues, leading to a debate over the utility of using a high tariff at the expense of the agricultural sectors of the economy. In the 1888 elections, the tariff became a significant issue, with the Republicans supporting a high tariff and promising to reduce the large revenue surplus. The McKinley tariff was the consummation of this promise to repeal the duties on sugar and admit it free of taxes. This measure would reduce the revenue and the cost to American consumers by allowing the United States to import sugar from any foreign producer at the cheapest price. It also created a bounty on U.S. produced sugar, making the cost even less expensive.

Blaine disliked the McKinley tariff immensely and fought against its passage. Blaine was a Republican who embraced the idea of the United States taking its place in the first-tier nations of the world. A champion of the Monroe Doctrine, he believed the British were both the United States' biggest threat and their best example of international success. He advocated a stronger, more cohesive foreign policy agenda that would push the United States into the first-tier along with England.<sup>50</sup>

To accomplish this, the United States needed to stabilize its monetary system and nurture its growing industry to compete with the first-class economic systems. For years, Blaine was a true Republican who supported high protective tariffs, government sponsored internal improvements, and the expansion of a strong navy. He also took an interesting position on the gold and silver debate, which was prominent throughout the Gilded Age. He disagreed with his party on its strictly gold stance, believing that it caused inflationary problems that prohibited investment. At the same time, he opposed the idea of unilaterally monetizing silver at the

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<sup>50</sup> Mike Sewell, "Political Rhetoric and Policy-Making: James G. Blaine and Britain," *Journal of American Studies* 24 (April 1990), 61-84; Edward Crapol, *James G. Blaine: Architect of Empire* (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 2000).

historical ratio of 16 to 1. He warned that this would hurt the nation's credit and leave the United States vulnerable to the advances of England and Europe, just like the second-tier Latin American countries whose monetary systems were based on silver.<sup>51</sup> For Blaine, then, the tariff and silver issues of the Gilded Age had as much to do with completing the transition to a first-world nation as they did with internal political stability.

This is where the McKinley tariff and the reciprocity treaty with Hawaii came into conflict. While serving as secretary of state under James Garfield, Blaine recognized the utility of reciprocity treaties in fostering closer political connections with second and third-tier countries. The success of the Hawaiian treaty of 1875 reaffirmed that belief. Blaine had even sponsored an international conference with the Latin American nations in 1889-1890 to discuss reciprocal trade agreements. The conference recommended that the American nations begin negotiations on treaties of mutual tariff concessions as a way of uniting the western hemisphere. For these reasons, Blaine opposed the McKinley tariff because it did not include a provision requiring nations importing duty-free products into the United States to reciprocate with the importation of American products duty-free into their countries. This took the political advantage out of trade agreements, keeping these sugar producing countries from negotiating agreements with mutual concession that could create a dependency on the United States. Blaine pushed for an amendment to the tariff bill, and received it. From that point on, he and his successor in the state department, John Watson Foster worked to negotiate reciprocal agreements with Latin American and European countries on the basis of the McKinley tariff amendment. Blaine felt

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<sup>51</sup> James Gillespie Blaine, "Remonetization of Silver," *Political Discussion: Legislation, Diplomatic, and Popular, 1856-1886*, Feb. 7, 1878 (Norwich, Conn.: The Henry bill Publishing Company, 1887), 163-175; Burlin, *Imperial Maine*, 163-165.

that success in these negotiations brought the United States closer to achieving his goal of first-tier status.<sup>52</sup>

When Hawaiian minister Carter approached Blaine for a new treaty, he was more than willing to reaffirm that relationship. Stevens had already sent Blaine a long, detailed dispatch favoring a treaty. He described the Americanization of the Hawaiian economy and reflected on the adverse effects of the McKinley tariff on U.S. interests. He cautioned that a treaty was “absolutely necessary to save these islands from grave disaster and secure the American interests and influence here.” Stevens then warned that failure to improve trade relations could result in Americans departing the islands to seek better opportunities on the west coast, leaving the Hawaiian Islands to the European countries. Stevens viewed this as a dangerous idea for the United States because “it is becoming more and more obvious that these islands are to be of commanding importance in the near future to American trade in the North Pacific.”<sup>53</sup> Stevens’ opinions on the importance of maintaining the close relationship through reciprocity reflected not only his affinity for the Americans living on the islands, but also his understanding of the United States’ future standing in the world system, and the importance of a possession in the Northern Pacific to that status.

With Blaine’s belief in reciprocity, Stevens’ endorsement, and Smith’s persistence, the pair was able to negotiate a treaty, which contained several modifications. Hawaii gained a few more items on its duty-free list including Hawaiian fruits and wood, and in exchange, the United States received the right to develop a naval station at Pearl Harbor. Article III granted Hawaii the right to terminate U.S. access to the harbor if it did not begin the improvement within five years

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<sup>52</sup> John Watson Foster, *Diplomatic Memoirs*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1909), 2: 2-17. Both Blaine and Foster worked to establish reciprocity treaties with the Latin American countries, and especially Cuba and Puerto Rico. Foster worked as a private citizen on many of these agreements, but became the secretary of state after Blaine resigned for health reasons.

<sup>53</sup> Stevens to Blaine, Sept. 5, 1891, No. 32, vol. 25, Dispatches, NA.

of the ratification. Finally, it recommended that the president and queen urge their respective governments to lay a trans-Pacific cable, which would enable better communication between the nations.

Blaine presented the treaty to Harrison on November 18, 1891, but the president held on to the treaty indefinitely, stalling the process. Harrison told Blaine that he had not decided on the degree he was willing to extend trade relations with Hawaii, and by the fall, he had political factors to consider. The Democratic party had begun to challenge the reciprocity policy that Blaine and Foster were pursuing. Harrison held on to the treaty to see how the political issue weighed out. By February 1892, he told Blaine that he would not present the treaty to Congress because he did not think it would pass.<sup>54</sup>

Even though the treaty negotiations failed to gain an agreement, the attempt reveals the differing needs and desires of the two nations. Individuals in Hawaii desired a reciprocity treaty, preferably in perpetuity, and possibly with the United States' agreeing to lay an oceanic cable and cover the expenses of developing Pearl Harbor. The United States had been willing to approve the original treaty because of political advantages from the connection, but many in Washington were not willing to continue the costs of maintaining such a connection until the United States decided whether it wanted to embrace a more engaged policy in the Pacific Rim. Pearl Harbor was advantageous only if Congress appropriated the money to create a navy large enough to utilize it, which was not the case. As Smith waited for something to happen in Washington, political agitation in Hawaii began anew.

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<sup>54</sup> Foster, *Diplomatic Memoirs*, 2: 13-17; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:491.

February 1892 marked another legislative election in Hawaii, and the result was the most contentious session in Hawaiian history. The Reform party ran on the promises of securing the reciprocity treaty and restoring the failing economy. The National Reform party maintained its position as the pro-monarchy party, supporting constitutional amendments to restore the queen's power and a native majority. The Liberal party ran on the idea that both opposing parties were wrong, and that there needed to be an end to the monarchy and a republican form of government established under native rule. The Reform party gained seventeen seats, the National Reform party won eighteen, the Liberal party took fourteen, and three independents took place in the legislature. This gave no party a majority, and created the perfect situation for a combination of interesting coalitions that shifted on a day-to-day basis. The result of the election made it clear that the Hawaiian Islands were divided over the future course for the government.

Once it began to look like no one would gain control of the government, several factions decided to organize plans for the queen's removal. Wilcox and the Liberal party led the first group. In early spring, before the legislative opened session, he began working on a plan to remove the queen and establish a republic, disfranchising everyone except native Hawaiians. He gave a stirring speech before a meeting in April, urging the crowd to end the monarchy because the queen no longer took interest in the native needs. The marshal of the islands, Charles B. Wilson, a close friend of the queen and former cohort of Wilcox, became concerned with his actions and the rumors of an impending coup, and assigned several native officers to secretly join his party and report on any plots. In May, Wilcox proclaimed in a meeting that it was time to abandon the monarchy and establish a new republic. The undercover officers warned Wilson, who promptly arrested Wilcox and seventeen others who attended the meeting—including the ex-Attorney General Clarence Ashford, and his brother Volney Ashford, the former head of the

Honolulu Rifles— and charged them all with treason. After a few weeks of legal wrangling, all the men were released for lack of evidence and Wilcox returned to his legislative seat.<sup>55</sup>

As rumors of this plot unfolded, many people, both native and foreign, began to express concern over the safety of the Islands. Wilson ordered the palace and government building to be surrounded by sandbags in case the Wilcox faction attempted to storm the buildings again. Newspapers ran stories questioning the stability of the monarchy, and worrying about the future of the government. Stevens wrote Washington for instructions in the event the monarchy was threatened. He requested that a U.S. ship remain in the harbor indefinitely. He received no instructions.<sup>56</sup>

While this conspiratorial plot unfolded, several members of the Reform party developed another plan. Growing rumors of the Wilcox scheme and the rising fear that the queen was going to restore the 1864 constitution led Henry E. Cooper, an American lawyer, to suggest that the *haole* leaders organize a group to devise a plan to take control of the islands if a movement against the crown or constitution began. Cooper discussed the idea with Thurston, proposing that the best course of action was annexation to the United States. To succeed, they would have to wait until the opportune moment. They agreed that the group should remain small and secret to avoid detection by Wilson. Later, the two men, along with twelve others, secretly met in Thurston's office and formed the Annexation Club, to prepare a quick response in the event of any move against the constitution, with the goal of obtaining annexation to the United States.

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<sup>55</sup> Stevens to Blaine, Feb 8, 1892, No. 46 & March 8, 1892, No. 48, vol. 25, Dispatches, NA; Brown to Sec. of Navy, Mar. 28, 1892, No. 90, printed in *House Ex. Docs.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 48, 480; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Mar. 29, 30, Apr. 1, 8, 1892.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

This group had an advantage over the Wilcox faction in that it remained secret and never made public statements about its existence or agenda.<sup>57</sup>

The first part of the annexation plan was to assess the probability of the United States responding positively to an offer if made. To that end, Thurston could use his position as a commissioner for the Hawaiian exhibit of a new cyclorama of the Kilauea volcano at the upcoming 1893 World's Columbia Exposition in Chicago to make a trip to the United States without drawing attention to himself. He and another commissioner scheduled the trip to make preparations for Hawaii's exhibit. He arrived in Chicago in April, handled the exposition arrangements quickly, and then made a quiet trip to Washington. He met with Mott Smith who introduced him to Senator Cushman K. Davis, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and James H. Blount, chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Blaine arranged for Thurston to meet with Secretary of the Navy Benjamin F. Tracy who showed great interest in the proposition, but President Harrison refused to meet with him, fearing that his lack of credentials as an official representative of Hawaii could cause complications. Harrison did authorize Tracy to tell Thurston that, if the natural course of events in Hawaii led to a proposal of annexation, his administration would be receptive.<sup>58</sup> Thurston returned to Honolulu in mid-May, just in time for the opening of the 1892 legislative session on May 28.

Shortly into the session, the legislature and queen received several petitions from the *Hui Kalaiaina* organization, requesting a constitutional convention and a new constitution. The National Reform party also continued to push for constitutional reform. In July 1892, a group of *Kanaka* voters sent Liliuokalani a petition pleading for the suspension of the Bayonet Constitution. She also received a petition from women who were excluded from voting which

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<sup>57</sup> Thurston, *Memoirs*, 229-230.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 230-234; Blount testimony, Morgan Report, 386.

read, “humbly, the people of your own land... ask with great desire that action should be taken in your authority as queen of the Hawaiian government, that a new constitution be immediately acquired for our land and our people.”<sup>59</sup> Liliuokalani, however, was unable to fulfill their request because she was locked in a partisan battle over cabinet appointments throughout the entire 1892 legislative session.

During the first two months of the session, the Reform party worked to gain enough votes to remove the Parker cabinet, which Thurston feared would oppose annexation. In August, he managed an unimaginable alliance with the Liberal party, and their combined members forced through a vote of no confidence. Both party leaders believed they could use this opening to place their supporters in the cabinet, but Liliuokalani appointed her own favorites. Over the next several months, she appointed four new cabinets members, all voted out by the Liberal/Reform coalition. In frustration, the queen agreed to allow a member of the Reform party to compose a new cabinet. George Wilcox, no relation to Robert, appointed Peter Cushman Jones as minister of finance, Mark Robinson as minister of foreign affairs, and Cecil Brown as attorney general. All were pro-American and heavily favored the Reform party agenda. With their appointments, the Reform party’s coalition with the Liberal party ended and the controversies calmed down for a short time.<sup>60</sup> There were only three main issues discussed in the sessions— revisions to the constitution, the proposed opium bill, and a new lottery act. Accusations of bribery and intimidation were made against all faction, most of them legitimately.<sup>61</sup>

But the Liberal faction was not satisfied with the appointments and waited for its chance to move. In the first two weeks of January, while the legislature was increasingly tired and continually absent, the members found their opportunity. On January 4, Stevens left Honolulu on

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<sup>59</sup> “Native Women’s Petition”, Folder 145, box 18, Liliuokalani Papers, AH.

<sup>60</sup> Liliuokalani Statement, Blount Report, 394-296; Tate, *The United State and Hawaiian Kingdom*, 124-126.

<sup>61</sup> Tate, *The United States and Hawaiian Kingdom*, 121-124.

a ten-day cruise on board the *U.S.S. Boston*, believing the political turmoil temporarily settled. That same day John Bush brought a vote of no confidence against the Wilcox cabinet, which failed. What happened after that is up for debate. On the 4<sup>th</sup>, several prominent Reform party legislators left the building and did not return for the remainder of the session. Then the legislature began passing controversial legislation. On January 10, Representative White brought the lottery bill out of committee with a report signed by five members recommending its passage. Several opponents of the bill were absent that day, even though they had been forewarned that it was going to be brought up. After the second reading, the bill passed.<sup>62</sup> Accusations appeared in the *Bulletin* against the lottery bill, claiming it was “railroaded through the house this morning” and forcing a heated discussion the following day in the legislature. After a debate of several hours, with the addition of several amendments, the bill passed by a vote of 23 to 20.<sup>63</sup>

While the legislature deliberated on the lottery bill, political intrigue removed the Reform cabinet. On January 12, Representative J. N. Kapahu introduced a resolution of want of confidence. In a debate that lasted only an hour, most speakers admitted that the ministers were able to carry out their job, but doubted that they would carry out the wishes of the queen. When it became clear that the measure would pass, the Wilcox cabinet resigned and the queen appointed new ministers, including Samuel Parker as minister of foreign affairs, John F. Colburn as minister of the interior, William H. Cornwell as minister of finance, and Arthur P. Peterson as attorney general. Their appointments were announced in the legislative session that afternoon to a very sparsely populated house.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3: 579.

<sup>63</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Jan. 7- 12, 1893.

<sup>64</sup> Legislative reports and editorial comments in *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Jan. 13, 1893; *Daily Bulletin*, Jan. 12, 13, 1893; Liliuokalani statement, Blount Report, 395-397.

Two days later, on Saturday morning, January 14, the legislature held a short session in which it was announced that the queen had signed the opium and lottery bills. During that morning, the queen rewarded Representatives Joseph Nawahi and William White by making them Knights Commanders of the Order of Kalakaua.<sup>65</sup> Shortly after noon, in a ceremonial procession, the queen prorogued the 1892 legislature.

There were two points of debate over these last two weeks of the session. The first was the conspicuous absence of the six prominent members of the Reform party. Some believed that the men purposely left the legislature to enable the Liberal and National Reform parties to gain control and encourage the queen to make a rash decision regarding the constitution. This would then give the Annexation party an “event” justifying a move against the monarchy and a request for annexation. Whether their plot was that cleverly designed remains unproven, but the men’s absence did allow the opening that led to the events of January 14.

The second point of contention was over the discussion between the queen and the Parker cabinet just prior to the appointments. Liliuokalani told Congressman James Blount that all four men were informed of her intentions to promulgate a new constitution and were even given a copy to read prior to agreeing to take a seat in the cabinet. The four men denied knowing anything about her plan prior to the morning of January 14.<sup>66</sup>

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Whether or not they knew in advance, on January 14, Liliuokalani prorogued the legislative session, announced her intentions to promulgate a new constitution that afternoon, and inadvertently started the sequence of events that led to her overthrow. What actually happened in

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<sup>65</sup> *Daily Bulletin*, Jan. 13&16, 1893; “An Insult to Common Sense,” *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Jan. 14, 16, 1893.

<sup>66</sup> Liliuokalani, Blount Report, 397-398; Parker testimony, *ibid.*, 439.

the following days, and who participated on what side of the drama, is not a clear-cut story. Testimony of hundreds of individuals in Honolulu paints a blurry picture that leaves room for speculation and conjecture. The following account rests on the events described in most of the testimony.

After the January 14, 10:00 a.m. meeting between the queen and her cabinet, Minister of the Interior John F. Colburn left the queen's palace and made his way to the law office of Alfred S. Hartwell, where he met and discussed the situation with Lorrin Thurston and his law partner William O. Smith. Shortly into the meeting, Attorney General Arthur P. Peterson, the second cabinet minister, joined the group and was advised by the three attorneys to resist the queen's constitutional agenda. They agreed that the two ministers would stand in opposition to her effort, but refuse to resign their seats to keep the queen from replacing them with ministers who would support her constitution. The two ministers then returned to the legislature for the prorogation.<sup>67</sup>

That same morning, between 10:30 and 11:00 a.m., Stevens returned from Hilo on board the *U.S.S. Boston*, completely unaware of the event unfolding in the government. The night before, he had received news of the lottery bill's passage and the ousting of the Wilcox cabinet. Upon arriving, he returned to the legation, leaving Captain Wiltse with the *Boston* in the harbor. By noon, representatives of both the queen and the annexationists had approached both men, inquiring about the United States' intended response to the morning's events. Stevens' assured everyone that the U.S. forces would be used to protect American lives and property. After these encounters, Stevens returned to the harbor to find that Wiltse had already ordered his troops to prepare for a landing if anyone threatened American property.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Statement of William O. Smith, Blount Report, 489; Judd Statement, Morgan Report, 443; Colburn to Blount, Apr. 15, 1893, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 489; Lorrin A. Thurston, *Memoirs*, 445.

<sup>68</sup> Lieutenant Commander W. T. Swinburne Testimony, Morgan Report, 463-467.

Justice Hartwell, member of the Supreme Court and one of the members of the Annexation party, then arrived at the legation to ask Stevens if he would go with the English commissioner to talk with the queen and discourage her plan. Stevens agreed, went immediately to Wodehouse, and the two together went to seek the audience of the queen. They were unable to meet with her, but instead met with the rest of her cabinet. The foreign representatives warned the ministers that the queen should abandon any idea of promulgating a new constitution for fear it could spark violence similar to the 1874 riot after Kalakaua's election.<sup>69</sup>

Following this meeting, Stevens returned to the legation and the cabinet ministers rushed to Iolani Palace to attend the meeting the queen had called to announce the new constitution. While the guests waited in the throne room, the queen met with her cabinet to try to persuade its members to sign the new constitution, which they declined to do. Peterson asked the queen to wait for two weeks, during which time they would read the new constitution and consider the changes. Liliuokalani agreed and went to the throne room to tell her guests that she had intended to promulgate a new constitution but that her ministers convinced her to wait for a future date. The queen then went to the balcony and told the people gathered outside the palace of the turn of events, and asked them not to be angry because she would grant their constitution on "some future day."<sup>70</sup>

At the same time the queen was making her announcement to the guests at the palace, members of the opposition gathered at Smith's law office. Around 4:00 p.m., two of her cabinet ministers, Colburn and Peterson, joined the group to describe the events that had just transpired. Uncertain as to whether the queen would yield to the advice of the cabinet, or uphold her

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<sup>69</sup> Crister Bolte statement, Blount Report, 270-272; Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:584.

<sup>70</sup> Neumann to Parker, Feb. 21, 1892, vol. 4, microfilm: Notes From the Hawaiian Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1841-1899, M T160, roll 4, USDS, NA (hereafter cited as Hawaiian Legation, NA); H. Waterhouse Statement, Blount Report, 47-48; J. B. Castle, *ibid.*, 494; Colburn Statement, *ibid.*, 30-35; Cornwell statement, *ibid.*, 27-30; Thurston, *Memoirs*, 255-283.

promise to the crowd that the constitution would be promulgated soon, the men decided to appoint a committee of thirteen to draw up a plan and coordinate any action needed to deal with the situation. They called themselves the Committee of Safety. Most of these men were members of the Annexation Club.<sup>71</sup>

The Committee of Safety was comprised of all *haole* residents. Four members were Hawaiians born of American descent: Smith, Thurston, Castle, and Albert S. Wilcox. William C. Wilder, an American, Charles Bolte, a German, and Henry Waterhouse, a British-Tasmanian were all naturalized Hawaiian citizens of many years. Henry E. Cooper, F. W. McChesney, T. F. Lansing and J. A. McCandless, were Americans who had recently become denizens by taking an oath to support the constitution. Finally, the Scotsman Andrew Brown and the German H. F. Glade were recent immigrants without citizenship.<sup>72</sup>

In a meeting, these thirteen resolved that the queen's actions were revolutionary and passed a motion to form a provisional government. A rumor suggests that the original motion also declared that the new government's sole intent was to gain annexation to the United States, but no records were kept at these meeting and made the rumor unverifiable. Several members remained in the office to begin composing a new republican constitution.

Following this meeting, three members went to Stevens to ascertain the United States' stance on the matter. According to Thurston, the queen's representative had already approached Stevens for support in her position. Stevens had informed her that he would offer support within his authority, but that he believed the queen's actions were revolutionary. Stevens told Thurston that he thought the committee's position correct and that he would not give the queen support. He then said he would recognize the Committee of Safety as possessing the authority of

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<sup>71</sup> Thurston, *Memoirs*, 249-250; Castle, Smith, & Cooper, joint testimony, Blount Report, 493-497.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

government as long as it had the support of the responsible citizens.<sup>73</sup> Stevens later denied telling Thurston he would recognize them.

Later that evening, following the meeting with Stevens, a group from the Committee of Safety met at Thurston's house. A. S. Hartwell, Sanford Dole, F. W. Wundenberg, and Charles L. Carter, all of whom were not members of the original thirteen, were also invited. According to Smith's testimony to Blount, Thurston told the group that the troops on board the *Boston* were ready to land at any moment to prevent the destruction of American life and property and that Stevens had assured him that he would recognize whatever *de facto* government was in possession of authority. It was then decided that the men would draft the papers needed to create a provisional government. Dole agreed to help write the declaration, but said that he was not prepared to take part in any movement to depose the monarch.<sup>74</sup>

Upon leaving this meeting, Thurston and Smith met with Stevens. They pressed him on what the United States would do if they were arrested and the monarchy resorted to extreme and violent measures against them. The men were concerned about the danger in their actions and the threat of violence if they failed. Stevens assured them that he would use whatever means were in his power to protect American life and property but that he could not recognize any government until it was actually established. American troops, if landed, would not take sides, but would only protect life and property.<sup>75</sup>

This meeting is important to the rest of the story. Several key members of the *haole* community were apprehensive about moving against the queen, especially Dole. Others either feared that the minister might have to bring troops ashore to stop them from overthrowing the

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<sup>73</sup> Thurston to Foster, Feb. 21, 1893, vol. 4, Hawaiian Legation, USDS, NA; William O. Smith testimony, Blount Report, 497.

<sup>74</sup> Smith testimony, *ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

queen or that Marshal Wilson would arrest them and they would hang for treason. Stevens' answers in his meeting with Thurston and Smith had a large impact on the commitment of these men. When examining the conflicting testimony, it is probable that Stevens told Thurston that he could not assist in any action against the queen, but would bring troops ashore to contain the breakout of violence. The minister also told him that he would recognize any *de facto* government that had possession of the government building, but not until then. Thurston needed the rest of the group to believe that the U.S. minister was on their side, so he told the gathering later that night that Stevens promised to bring troops ashore, leaving the members to read into that statement what they wanted.<sup>76</sup>

The next morning, Sunday, January 15, Thurston called on two of the cabinet members, Colburn and Peterson, to discuss the decisions of the Committee of Safety. Thurston informed the ministers that the committee believed Liliuokalani would keep her promise to promulgate a new constitution and the committee was ready to declare the queen in revolution and remove her from the throne. Thurston asked the two ministers if they were in a position to take control of the queen, or if they were willing to act in accordance with the committee.<sup>77</sup> Colburn and Peterson claimed that during this meeting, Thurston told them Stevens had agreed to land troops in support of the movement if a proclamation creating the provisional government came from a government building in town.

The two cabinet members responded that they would take the matter under advisement. They were trying to buy themselves time. The royal government had been made aware of the existence of this plot to overthrow the queen, but had not collected enough evidence to make

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<sup>76</sup> Thurston Affidavit, Morgan Report, 596-603; McCandless Testimony, *ibid.*, 617-618; Stevens testimony, *ibid.*, 528-538.

<sup>77</sup> Thurston to Foster, Feb. 21, 1893, vol. 4, Hawaiian Legation, USDS.

arrests. Wilson wanted to swear out warrants of arrest for the ringleaders, but the cabinet and particularly Attorney General Peterson objected, so he waited and sent men out to investigate.<sup>78</sup>

After this meeting, Colburn and Peterson consulted the other two cabinet members and they all decided to discuss the matter with all the factions. They met first with several members of the community known to be unconnected to the Committee of Safety. These men advised the ministers that the queen and the cabinet should issue a proclamation assuring the community that Liliuokalani would not arbitrarily promulgate a new constitution and that any further modifications of the current document would take place through proper constitutional channels. The cabinet members agreed and began composing the proclamation. The next morning, Monday, January 16, the queen issued the statement and held a meeting with foreign representatives, assuring them that the crisis had passed. The cabinet then met with Stevens who advised them he would not take sides with the queen. Finally, they met with key members of Liliuokalani's government, including Wilson, Attorney Paul Neumann, E.C. Macfarlane, Robert Wilcox, Charles T. Gulick, Dr. George Trousseau, and Antoine Rosa to gauge their opinions. Wilson wanted to impose martial law and arrest the members of the Committee of Safety, but Neumann and Peterson feared that action might precipitate a conflict. Instead, they decided to call a mass meeting for the following day.<sup>79</sup>

The same day, January 15, the Committee of Safety met at Castle's home to discuss the next step. They too decided to hold a public meeting the next day. During this meeting, they also discussed the organization of a provisional government with Thurston as the head. He objected to such a nomination because he believed his business dealings would call him away too often

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<sup>78</sup> Colburn Statement, Blount Report, 28-34; Statement of A. P. Peterson, *ibid.*, 466-470.

<sup>79</sup> Colburn Statement, Blount Report, 28-34; W .O. Smith, *ibid.*, 497-498; C. B. Wilson, *ibid.*, 565; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Jan. 16, 1893. The proclamation was published in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* and the *Daily Bulletin* Jan. 17, 1893

and, more important, he insisted that he was seen as too radical and that a provisional government needed someone more moderate or conservative.<sup>80</sup>

On Monday morning, the Committee of Safety met again at Thurston's home to make plans for their public meeting. Wilson interrupted them pulling Thurston aside and warning him to call off the mass meeting and end the plot against the queen. One account of this meeting claims that Wilson offered a guarantee that the queen would not renew her actions against the constitution even if he had to arrest her. Thurston did not believe the guarantee sufficient and told him the committee intended to settle the matter. The committee did agree to send a delegation to talk to the ministers upon their request, but the discussion was futile.<sup>81</sup>

The committee then wrote a letter to Stevens which they agreed should be delivered before the mass meeting with the stipulation that it not be used unless further notification after the meeting. The letter stated, "We, the undersigned, citizens and resident of Honolulu, respectfully represent that, in view of recent public events in this kingdom, culminating in the revolutionary acts of queen Liliuokalani on Saturday last, the public safety is menaced and lives and property are in peril, and we appeal to you and the United States forces at your command for assistance." It went on to claim that the queen, "with the aid of armed force and accompanied by threats of violence and bloodshed from those with whom she was acting, attempted to proclaim a new constitution." The document then asserted that her actions had created a sense of terror in the islands. They declared themselves "unable to protect ourselves without aid, and, therefore, pray for the protection of the United States forces."<sup>82</sup> Several private citizens, unattached to either the Annexation Club or the Committee of Safety also informed the minister that the

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<sup>80</sup> Thurston, *Memoirs*, 252 – 253; Thurston Affidavit, Morgan Report, 596-603.

<sup>81</sup> W. O. Smith, Blount Report, 499-500, C. B. Wilson, *ibid.*, 66; Thurston, *Memoirs*, 253-256.

<sup>82</sup> Affidavit of the Committee of Safety, Blount Report, 590.

tension in Honolulu was causing them great concern. Stevens always responded with the accepted reply that he would bring troops ashore to protect American lives and property.<sup>83</sup>

On Monday afternoon, business in Honolulu was at a standstill. At 2:00 PM, the Committee of Safety called its mass meeting to order in the Honolulu Rifles' armory. The chair of the committee, William Wilder, told the audience the reason for the meeting was the same as 1887. Thurston reported on the events leading to the meeting and then called for a resolution to condemn the actions of the queen. He then called for a resolution empowering the Committee of Safety to "devise such ways and means as may be necessary to secure the permanent maintenance of law and order and the protection of life, liberty, and property in Hawaii." Following Thurston, six more speakers railed against the queen's actions, with only one proposing to address the issue through constitutional methods. The other speeches emphasized the revolutionary attempt of the queen's actions and the idea that she could no longer be trusted. Thurston's resolution passed unanimously and the Committee of Safety was given the power to do what it thought best.<sup>84</sup>

At that same time, at Palace Square, the Royalist meeting was called together by the "Committee of Law and Order." This meeting was attended by anywhere from 500 to 1000 native Hawaiians. The queen's supporters conducted the meeting, including Antoine Rosa, Robert Wilcox, Bush, and Nawahi. They decided to be extremely cautious and to avoid further inflaming the situation. The crowd resolved to accept Liliuokalani's assurance that a new constitution would come, but only through legal means. The *Daily Bulletin's* account of this

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<sup>83</sup> A. B. Atherton Affidavit, Morgan Report, 595; William D. Wilcox, *ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Jan. 17, 1893; *House Ex. Doc.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 48, 125-129, as enclosure with Stevens to Foster, No. 79, Jan. 18, 1893; also in *Sen. Ex. Doc.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 76, 16-20; "How we Revolute," *Daily Bulletin*, Jan. 17, 1893.

meeting noted that Wilcox, after blaming the cabinet for the trouble, said that, “any man that would speak against a woman, especially a queen, is an animal, and a fit companion for a hog.”<sup>85</sup>

At the same time of this meeting, Henry E. Cooper approached Captain Wiltse of the *Boston* for assistance with troops. Wiltse had already anticipated the request and had his troops on standby.<sup>86</sup> He had arranged with the American consul general to alert him of an outbreak of violence, lowering the flag on the American consulate to half-mast if other forms of communication were cut.<sup>87</sup>

At 3:00 p.m., Stevens went aboard the *Boston* to request that the troops be brought ashore as a preemptive measure, only to find that Captain Wiltse had already ordered them to disembark at 5:00 p.m., in accordance with his 1887 instructions from Secretary of State Bayard. He had commanded his executive officer to, “assist in preserving public order,” while remaining neutral in the conflict. Stevens agreed with the decision and left the boat to secure accommodations for the troops.<sup>88</sup> Both mass meetings ended without incident.

Shortly after the mass meeting, the Committee of Safety met again to create a provisional government. Its members realized the need for the support of foreign communities and were not ready to proceed at that point. They agreed to ask Stevens not to bring troops ashore until the following morning, giving the committee members time to finalize their plans and create their new government. Smith and Thurston went to the American minister to inform him of the

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<sup>85</sup> Popular Meeting,” *Daily Bulletin*, Jan. 17, 1893; W. D. Alexander testimony, Morgan Report, 297.

<sup>86</sup> Lt. Lucien Young testimony, Morgan Report, 333-334; Lt. Commander Swinburne testimony, *ibid.*, 467; Lt. De Witt Coffman, *ibid.*, 498-499.

<sup>87</sup> Testimony of the *Boston*'s paymaster, I. G. Hobbs, Morgan Report., 368, 538.

<sup>88</sup> Testimony of the *Boston*' officers, Lt. Lucien Young, Morgan Report, 335-338, Lt. Commander Swinburne, *ibid.*, 467 – 470; J.B. Atherton's affidavit, *ibid.*, 595; Stevens to Foster, January 18, 1893, No. 79, *FRUS 1894, Appendix II*, 386-387; Thurston, *Memoirs*, 269-271; *Pacific commercial advertiser*, Jan. 17, 1893.

decision. Stevens told them that he had already taken precautionary measures and ordered the troops to be landed.<sup>89</sup>

One hundred and sixty two men landed at 5:00 p.m, fully equipped for battle. They marched down the main streets of Honolulu, making stops at the legation and consulate. A few marines were stationed at the consulate on Merchant Street, another small group was left to protect the legation at Nuuanu and School Street, and the rest marched past the palace on King Street where they waited a short while before heading to the estate of J.B. Atherton. At 10:00 p.m., they moved to Arion Hall located alongside the government building, where Stevens arranged their accommodations for the night. Stevens' critics point to this as evidence of a conspiracy by claiming that he paraded the troops through town as a display of the American presence before placing the troops next to the government buildings where they would have quick access when the coup began. Stevens denied the charges by claiming that the men were marched through the streets to assess the situation and make their presence known in an attempt to convince those citizens considering violence to reconsider their plans. He also argued that the stationing of the troops had nothing to do with the coup; this was the only place he could find with large enough accommodations, having first tried the old armory on the waterfront and the music hall.<sup>90</sup>

At 8:00 p.m. that same night, the Committee of Safety held an organizational meeting at Henry Waterhouse's residence. Thurston, Castle, and Wilder, were not in attendance, having taken ill like Stevens throughout the day, but new members Alexander Young, John Soper, Cecil Brown, and J.B. Castle were present. They established an advisory and executive council for a

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<sup>89</sup> *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 966; Thurston, *Memoirs*, 267-269; Wundenburg statement, Blount Report, 49; Swinburne statement, *ibid.*, 57.

<sup>90</sup> Testimony of the Boston's Officers, Lt. Lucien Young, Morgan Report, 335-338, Lt. Commander Swinburne, *ibid.*, 467 – 470; J.B. Atherton's affidavit, *ibid.*, 595; Stevens to Foster, Jan. 18, 1893, No. 79, *FRUS 1894, Appendix II*, 386-387; Thurston, *Memoirs*, 269-271; *Pacific commercial advertiser*, Jan. 17, 1893.

new provisional government and created a financial committee to secure additional arms. It was decided to ask Dole to serve as president and Soper to command the military forces. Dole was hesitant to accept the nomination. He proposed that they remove the queen, and place Kaiulani on the throne under a regency. No one supported this idea. Dole then asked for time to think on it. The next morning several people approached him, including Thurston, urging him to take the position. Dole reluctantly accepted.<sup>91</sup>

At 10:00 a.m. the next morning, January 17, Dole went downtown to deliver a letter to Stevens, written by Thurston, setting forth their intended plan and asking for recognition. Stevens' only reply was, "I think you have a great opportunity." Dole then went to Smith's office, where the Committee of Safety was meeting, accepted the offer, and turned in his resignation as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court to the queen's cabinet.<sup>92</sup>

Once Dole accepted the position, things moved quickly. Samuel Damon joined the movement as the new vice president, Soper was confirmed as military chief with the rank of colonel, procurement of weapons was sped up, and Wilder was sent to check on the *Claudine's* availability for a trip to San Francisco. They also planned to ensure that no inter-island steamers were allowed to leave until the following day.<sup>93</sup>

Throughout the night of the 16th, while the American troops slept in Arion hall, Wilson's police force patrolled the city to watch the stores that sold arms and ammunition. All government weapon supplies were stored at the attorney general's office in the government building with an armed guard. The next morning, however, Peterson ordered the removal of a guard on the grounds that everything appeared quiet, and Wilson agreed removing the extra guards at the

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<sup>91</sup> Dole, *Memoirs*, 96-102; Soper Testimony, Morgan Report, 450-453; Hartwell testimony, *ibid.*, 520-530.

<sup>92</sup> Dole, *Memoirs*, 65-72; Soper affidavit, Morgan Report, 450-451, 569, 590; Blount report to Gresham, June 17, 1893, No. 10, *FRUS 1894, Appendix II*, 564, 1042; "General Soper tells of Revolution Days," *Star-Bulletin*, Sept. 5, 1 1923; P. Taylor interview with Dole, *Honolulu Advertiser*, Jan. 14, 1923; Alexander, *Later Years*, 53-55.

<sup>93</sup> Committee of Safety Affidavit, Jan. 4, 1894, Morgan Report, 569, 590.

police station. At 11:00 a.m., Wilson became alarmed by a report of a gun shipment being loaded down town. He alerted Captain Nowlein, commander of the queen's troops and household guards, and attempted to contact the cabinet for authorization to act against the Committee of Safety. He was unable to get the cabinet to respond until after 2:00 p.m., at which point Attorney General Peterson refused to grant him permission to act.<sup>94</sup>

As the Committee of Safety met at Smith's office that morning, the queen held her own meeting with the cabinet, where she was informed of the possible arms shipments. The ministers offered to meet with the foreign diplomatic and consular corps to request assistance on the queen's behalf, but the only nation with a ship in the harbor was the United States and Stevens did not attend the meeting due to illness. The queen, upset by this, sent a note to Stevens assuring him that she intended to uphold the present constitution and requested his assistance in the event of a riot. She received no reply, so the entire cabinet went to the American legation to appeal for aid to sustain the queen. Stevens, being ill, would only agree to speak with Peterson and Parker, who told Stevens that as representatives of the legitimate government, they were requesting him to use force to save the queen. Stevens asserted that the troops had landed solely for the purpose of preserving American property. With this less than promising response, the cabinet members went to the police station to consult with Wilson.<sup>95</sup>

At 2:30 p.m., after the completion of all the preparations establishing a new provisional government, the Committee of Safety left the Honolulu Rifles armory for Smith's office to prepare for the final move. Then a strange string of events followed. All during that morning, Wilson's police had John Goode under surveillance. He was the ordinance officer for the

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<sup>94</sup> Wilson statement, Blount Report, 569-570.

<sup>95</sup> C. J. McCarthy to C. B. Wilson, Jan. 16, 1893, M-45, Dole Collection, AH; Wilson statement Blount Report, 569-570; Colburn statement, *ibid.*, 34; Cornwell statement, *ibid.*, 28-29; Peterson statement, *ibid.*, 469; Parker statement, *ibid.*, 440; Stevens testimony, Morgan Report 547-549.

Committee of Safety and had been busy collecting arms and ammunition from various stores to use against the queen. In a very coincidental moment, as Dole stood in the doorway watching the police officers assigned to follow him, Wilson's police officers decided to move on Goode as he was leaving E. O. Hall & Son's store with a wagonload of ammunition. In the chaos, Goode shot a police officer who was attempting to board his wagon, causing chaos in the streets and drawing attention away from the conspirators.<sup>96</sup>

The remainder of the afternoon's events was greatly contested because of the testimony on the timing of the following. As the Committee of Safety entered the government buildings, the queen's ministers were still at the police station discussing their next move without Stevens' assistance. The provisional government sent them a letter immediately after reading their proclamation, demanding the queen's surrender. The marshal and cabinet decided to draft a new message, explaining the situation, as they understood it, and requesting that the minister not recognize the newly proclaimed government a few blocks away. Their letter, sent at 2:45 p.m. according to the ministers, asserted that the unknown conspirators had proclaimed a provisional government by "pretending that your excellency, on behalf of the United States of America, had recognized such a provisional government." They requested assistance in preserving the peace.<sup>97</sup>

Later that afternoon they received a letter from Stevens, explaining that he had already recognized the Committee of Safety as the *de facto* government. The queen's ministers later insisted that they intended to repress the revolt, but were kept waiting too long by Stevens to act. Sometime between 4:20 and 5:00 p.m., Stevens sent Dole a note announcing his recognition of the provisional government.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> J.A. McCandless testimony to Morgan describes the shooting, Morgan Report, 624-625. The officer was only superficially wounded in the shoulder and recovered in a few days.

<sup>97</sup> Carter, Blount Report, 56-57; Colburn, *ibid.*, 174.

<sup>98</sup> Damon testimony, *ibid.*, 43-44.

At this point, Parker and Cornwell turned their attention to getting the queen's cabinet members to concede, and to remove Wilson from the police station. Wilson refused to relinquish his post without a written order from the queen. The four ex-ministers returned to the government building where they urged members of the provisional government to give up quietly, but they insisted that the queen must be consulted first. The ministers then went to the palace to inform the queen that she had been deposed and to assist her in formulating any protest she would like to make. She was advised to yield to superior forces to avoid bloodshed and to appeal to the United States government in Washington for redress.<sup>99</sup>

Liliuokalani reluctantly agreed, and issued a statement relinquishing the throne under protest. She did not yield to the newly created government under Dole's leadership, but rather "to the superior force of the United States of America, whose minister plenipotentiary, His Excellency John L. Stevens, has caused the United States troops." She issued the statement to avoid possible loss of life and relinquished her authority temporarily "until such time as the government of the United States shall, upon the facts being presented to it, undo the action of its representatives and reinstate me in the authority which I claim has the constitutional sovereign of the Hawaiian Islands."<sup>100</sup> Dole accepted her protest around 7:00 p.m.

This is where the timelines becomes blurred and the legality of several individuals' actions come into question. The cabinet members claimed they received Stevens' note shortly after 3:00 p.m., but the provisional government's version placed his recognition after 4:30 p.m. This time difference is important when assessing whether the queen's actions were precipitated on the understanding that the U.S. minister was assisting the rebels.

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<sup>99</sup> Carter, *ibid.*, 56-57; Colburn, *ibid.*, 174; Damon, *ibid.*, 43.

<sup>100</sup> Stevens to Foster, enclosure, Jan. 18, 1893, No. 79, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

Once the Committee of Safety had taken the government building, it proclaimed the overthrow. At about 2:45 p.m., it immediately applied to Captain Wiltse of the *Boston* for recognition. The Committee members claimed to be in control of the government buildings, and had a military force in support. Wiltse responded that he would not recognize them until they had control of the archives and the treasury, along with the police station, barracks, and the armed forces, which were still under Wilson's control.<sup>101</sup>

To circumvent all this, Dole sent a note to Stevens at the American legation, who was very ill at the time. Stevens had been keeping track of the day's events through his daughter while lying on a couch. Dole's note explained that a provisional government had been proclaimed and was now in possession of all the government buildings and forces. He requested official recognition by the United States "to afforded the moral support of your government and, if necessary, the support of American troops to assist it in preserving the public peace."<sup>102</sup>

Stevens sent an aide to see if the interim government truly had possession of all the buildings. The aide confirmed that they did, but without investigating whether the provisional government truly had control of the capitol, including the police and military forces. He also failed to consult Wiltse, who would have discouraged the proclamation. Subsequently, Stevens issued a note which read: "A Provisional government having been duly constituted in the place of the recent government of Queen Liliuokalani, and said Provisional government being in full possession of the government buildings, the Archives and the Treasury and in control of the Capital of the Hawaiian Islands, I hereby recognize said Provisional government as did the Facto government of the Hawaiian Islands."<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Lt. Lucien Young testimony, Morgan Report, 324-330; Swinburne testimony, *ibid.*, 57.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Enclosed in Stevens to Foster, No. 79, Jan. 18, 1893, Dispatches, NA.

Having gained official American recognition, the provisional government sent a committee composed of Dole, Charles Carter, and Samuel Damon to the palace to announce to the queen that she was deposed and to demand the surrender of the station house and her forces. The queen was unaware that Wiltse had already told the revolutionaries that he intended to remain neutral, so the perception of Stevens' proclamation was sufficient to give her pause. Carter argued that if she temporarily abdicated, Washington would give the case a careful hearing, and any peaceful submission would aid her cause.<sup>104</sup>

Finally, at 7:00 p.m. on January 17, 1893, Queen Liliuokalani reluctantly surrendered to the provisional government and ordered Wilson to relinquish the police stations and his troops. One telling sentence in her terms of surrender sums up the entire event: "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."<sup>105</sup> The queen actually held the strategic advantage before her surrender, but the revolutionaries convinced her that refusing abdication would result the use of American troops against her small military forces. In reality, they did not have these forces, nor would Washington have given permission for more troops to arrive. But the perception was enough to convince the queen to abdicate to the U.S. government and to appeal to the president for assistance.

Many Americans saw this statement as proof that Stevens had facilitated the overthrow of the queen, but in actuality, it proves only that the queen perceived that Stevens and the American forces assisted in the overthrow. What actually facilitated the overthrow was the deception on the part of Thurston, Dole, and the provisional government; the lack of communication and

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<sup>104</sup> Paul Neumann affidavit, Blount Report, 172-174; E. C. MacFarlane, *ibid.*, 171-172; Carter, *ibid.*, 56-57.

<sup>105</sup> Stevens to Foster, Jan. 18, 1893, No. 79, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

investigation on the part of Stevens; and the precautionary nature of Captain Wiltse. As for Stevens' actions, his preconceived notions about the nature of the monarchy, his predetermined belief in the eventual annexation of Hawaii, and his unfortunately timed illness, led to his inadvertent participation in the coup. While not completely devoid of culpability, he did not initiate or participate in the overthrow. Regarding the American troops, their physical presence on the island had far more impact than the guns they carried at their sides.

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Liliuokalani's reign ended without bloodshed or property damage but it signaled the collapse of the Hawaiian kingdom and the beginning of an unclear future. When Kamehameha III embraced the idea of a westernized constitutional political system and an international, capitalist based economy, he did so as a means of ensuring Hawaii's independence as a nation-state. Ironically, those changes created the political environment that ultimately destroyed that independence. Allowing the citizens of Hawaii, whether native or foreign, to participate in the government created a highly partisan climate, pitting native against *haole*. Entering into the international economic system produced great wealth that was unequally distributed into the hands of *haole*. This combination created a volatile situation in which the monarchy ultimately lost. Many historians have blamed this evolution on U.S. imperial aggression, but until 1893, it was not the actions of the American nation, but the personal interests of a variety of private citizens from several countries who determined the events in Hawaii.

That assessment, however, would soon change. Two days after the coup, four members of the provisional government boarded the *Claudine* for San Francisco, carrying instructions to

make their way to Washington and negotiate the annexation of Hawaii to the United States. Their arrival in the capital set off a five-year debate over the future of American foreign policy and the role that the United States would take internationally.

## Chapter 6

### “And That Little Roll Can Change the Destiny of a Nation”<sup>1</sup>

When the *Claudine* arrived in San Francisco bay on January 28, 1893, it carried explosive news that swept the papers for weeks. The New York *World* wrote that “Hawaii is Free,” and the *Washington Post* proclaimed, “Hawaii Breaks Away, Liliuokalani’s Coup d’états Proves a Boomerang.” The *Sun* announced that “Hawaii Asks to Come in, Revolution Successful, She Seeks, Annexation,” while the Atlanta *Constitution* questioned, “Shall We Annex our Anxious Neighbor?”<sup>2</sup>

The Hawaiian revolution caused a great commotion in the United States and marked the end of an evolutionary process that spanned sixty years in Hawaii. The arrival of the Hawaiian envoy in Washington with its proposal for annexation also marked the beginning of a discovery process for the United States, forcing Americans to face their new position in the world system and determine how they wanted to use that new responsibility.

The United States confronted the decision to annex a territory for the first time since the ante-bellum period and had to decide if it, as a nation, wanted to embark on an imperial policy or resist the temptation and maintain its informal connection with Hawaii. Questions surrounding the participation of the American minister in the coup left many in the United States wondering

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<sup>1</sup> Foster, *Diplomatic Memoirs*, 173. John Foster helped negotiate the 1897 treaty of annexation after which he rolled up the draft in a small compass with a rubber band and handed it to Associate Secretary of State William R. Day who responded, “And that little roll can change the destiny of a nation.”

<sup>2</sup> *New York World*, Jan. 29, 1893; *Washington Post*, Jan. 29, 1893; *Atlanta Constitution*, Jan. 29, 1893.

about the validity of the offer in the first place. Others were concerned about the implications of taking on a foreign island, removed from the American continent and full of native peoples of a vastly different culture and political system. These decisions would reflect on the nation's attitude as a first-tier nation and could possibly alter the traditional value system that the Founding Fathers had established.

On the other side, the coup against the monarchy and the annexation proposal marked the end of the sovereignty Kamehameha III worked so hard to achieve. The efforts to establish the Hawaiian Islands as an independent nation-state with a westernized political system ultimately created in the archipelago a partisan climate that threatened the independence established by that system. With an annexation treaty in their hands, the revolutionaries were bringing to an end the collaborationist relationship formed by their parents' generation.

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On January 18, 1893, the provisional government of Hawaii began an eighteen-month reign, whose purpose was to gain annexation to the United States. From that point on, most of the political wrangling shifted from Honolulu to Washington where three different groups of individuals attempted to persuade the United States to assist their efforts.

The interim government immediately sent commissioners to Washington to begin negotiations of annexation. The head of the commission was Lorrin Thurston, leader of the coup. He took with him William Castle, a close friend and lawyer; James Marsden, an English noble and sugar investor; William Wilder, the owner of the *Claudine* which carried them; and Charles L. Carter, the son of Henry A. P. Carter, the deceased Hawaiian minister.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dole to President Harrison, Jan. 18, 1893, with attachments, vol. 4, Hawaiian Legation, NA.

Liliuokalani hoped to send representatives on the same ship. The provisional government had closed Honolulu Harbor to ensure that the first news of the revolution to leave the islands came directly from their commissioners. Liliuokalani wrote a letter to Dole on January 18 asking permission to use the same ship as the commission to send her own envoys of Paul Neumann and Prince David Kawananakoa.<sup>4</sup> Her request was denied, so she wrote President Benjamin Harrison a letter instead, claiming she was forced to abdicate by a group of her subjects aided by the U.S. minister. Assuming he was acting in accordance with his instructions, she feared that resisting could result in “violence, bloodshed, and the destruction of life and property.” Liliuokalani then asked Harrison to correct this injustice, not for herself, “but for my people who have hitherto always enjoyed the friendship and protection of the United States.” She asked him to make no decisions until her cause could be heard.<sup>5</sup> The next ship was scheduled to leave the islands on February 2.

While the commissioners were in Washington, the provisional government started instituting policies in an attempt to construct an illusion of popular will. It began by bolstering its legal standing on the islands. They sent notifications of the change in government to Hawaiian’s seventeen representatives abroad, looking to receive official recognition from all foreign nations with whom Hawaii had relationships. To ensure control of the islands, the provisional government activated the Hawaiian National Guard until a new police force could be recruited, and they disbanded the royal household guard to make room for these new recruits. As a means for inventing a new national identity, they outlawed the royal standard, removed the coat of arms from newspaper columns, and replaced the gold crown insignia on the cap of all officials. All governmental employees were required to take an oath of allegiance to the provisional

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<sup>4</sup> Liliuokalani to Dole, Jan. 18, 1893, file 23: 1893 Local Officials, President & Ministers of Foreign Affairs, box 40, FO & EX, AH.

<sup>5</sup> Liliuokalani to Harrison, Jan. 18, 1893, vol. 4, Hawaiian Legation, NA.

government, and all day on the Saturday after the coup, the royal Hawaiian band gave a concert at Emma Square.<sup>6</sup>

The next step was to ensure against any retaliatory violence or rioting. The provisional government declared martial law on January 17 and suspended the writ of habeas corpus until February 5. Neither measure was needed. Major Soper closed all saloons on January 17, but was able to reopen them within three days. The schools were suspended during the coup, but reopened on the 19<sup>th</sup>. The *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* and the *Hawaiian Gazette* began publishing articles extolling the virtues of the interim government, discussing the benefits of annexation, and promising the Hawaiian people that they would benefit from the change in government.

On the surface, it appeared that Hawaiians accepted the new provisional government because there was little disruption in everyday life and no violent protest or action. However, beneath the surface was dissent. By February 1, all sixteen members of the Royal Hawaiian band were discharged for refusing to take the oath of allegiance. The *Daily Bulletin* became highly critical of the provisional government, and the Hawaiian language newspapers began printing strong anti-provisional government sections in the English language. In an editorial on January 18, the *Daily Bulletin* said, “martial law in a situation of this kind is a ridiculous and absurd proceeding and does not reflect credibility on the part of those who design it or who still keep it enforced.”<sup>7</sup>

Rumors of planned violence against the new government began to swirl shortly after the commissioners left on the *Claudine*, causing many in Honolulu to look for a better assurance of security. The threats and gossip became so bad that the volunteer forces worried about being

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<sup>6</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:606.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 3:606-607.

assigned to the government buildings and Dole and his wife grew afraid to sleep in their own home. In response, on January 31, the advisory council decided to request that Stevens provide protection until the completion of negotiations. In so doing, the executive committee admitted that the provisional government was “unable to satisfactorily protect life and property, and to prevent civil disorder.” Stevens agreed and raised the flag of the United States over the government buildings of Honolulu on February 1, stationing marines from the *U.S.S. Boston* as guards and firing a salute from the harbor to alert citizens to the change in status. Once the American forces appeared fully in control, martial law was revoked and the writ of habeas corpus restored. Foreign elements seemed happy, but the Hawaiians were not.<sup>8</sup>

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While the provisional government attempted to establish authority over the islands, Washington’s focus turned to the annexation proposal. When the *Claudine* arrived in San Francisco in late January 1893 with news of the revolutions, the press began a barrage of commentary on the coup and proposed annexation. The *Kennebec Journal* saw the event as “no surprise” and argued that the nation needed to annex the islands immediately. The *New York Times* speculated that it was the queen’s fault, while the *Tribune* believed that with this news, American isolation would “give way to the necessities of our increasing commerce.” The *New York Sun* prophesied that Hawaii would not be the last independent nation to apply for annexation.<sup>9</sup> These newspapers reflected the expansionist views that inspired President Harrison and Secretary of State Foster in Washington.

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<sup>8</sup> Sanford to George Dole, Feb. 1, 1893, Dole collection, AH; Lt. Commander Swinburne, Morgan Report, 472-473; Stevens to Foster, Feb. 1, 1893, No. 82, No. 83, Stevens to Wiltse, Feb 1, 1893, enclosure, Hawaiian Provisional Government to Stevens, Jan. 31, 1893, enclosure, Stevens to Foster, Feb. 1, 1893, No. 84, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>9</sup> Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 113-114.

Eager to assess the international reaction to a possible annexation before the Hawaiian representatives arrived in Washington, Foster took advantage of the “Diplomatic Day” festivities on February 2, 1893, to hold informal conversations with foreign representatives. None of the diplomats had official responses, but answered to the best of their abilities. The Japanese minister told Foster that, because of the approximate 15,000 Japanese workers on the islands, his government took great interest in Hawaii, but favored American annexation over European. He asked to be kept informed on the progress of the commissioners’ mission. The French minister believed his people would be favorable to American annexation. The Russian minister told the secretary that he had sent his government a dispatch expressing his belief that American annexation was favorable and that both countries should pursue interests in the Pacific in unison. The German minister said those at home had always considered Hawaii a “Quasi Protectorate” of the United States. The British minister made no comment on the matter.<sup>10</sup>

When the five commissioners arrived in Washington, it seemed the path was clear for them to meet with Hawaiian minister Mott Smith and Secretary of State Foster. The commissioners requested that the Harrison administration formally confirm Stevens’ recognition of the provisional government. They presented the secretary with a lengthy explanation of the overthrow, which was accredited to the queen’s aborted attempt to promulgate a new constitution. The Committee of Safety had determined that it was no longer possible to maintain the public peace and protection under the monarchy and the only way to ensure security was through the assistance of the U. S. government or some other foreign power.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Confidential Memo, Secretary of State Foster, February 2, 1893, vol. 4, Hawaiian Legation, NA.

<sup>11</sup> Kuykendall, “Negotiation of the Hawaiian Annexation Treaty of 1893,” *51<sup>st</sup> Annual Report of the Hawaiian Historical Society for 1942*, 5-64; Charles H. Hunter “Statehood and the Hawaiian Annexation Treaty of 1893,” *ibid.* 1950, p. 5-11; Castle to Dole, Feb. 25; Bishop to Thurston, Feb. 27; Thurston to Dole, Mar. 10; Dole to Thurston, July 7, 1893, file: Annexation, box 53, Series, 404, FO&EX, AH.

The commissioners presented Foster with their proposal for annexation. The Hawaiian government would relinquish sovereignty, allowing cane planters to share in the bounty on sugar, but the new territory would retain its immigration and labor contracts and all its government land and property. In exchange, the United States would assume Hawaii's national debt, improve and use Pearl Harbor, lay a submarine cable to the Pacific Coast of Hawaii, and provide financially for Liliuokalani and Princess Kaiulani. Foster, however, knew that these points would never pass the Senate.<sup>12</sup>

Foster advised the Hawaiian commissioners to discard most of their requests in order to get the treaty through Congress before Harrison left office. He convinced the commissioners to drop the bounty on sugar because of tension over the issue. Washington would appoint all island officials, including the legislature, to avoid complicated elections on the islands in accordance with the U.S. Constitution and statutes. The Hawaiian system of laws would continue with the exception of revenue, shipping, and postal laws, which would fall under the U.S. system. The United States would take possession of all public lands and property, but revenues from them would be reserved for the islands. The Chinese Exclusion Act would be extended to the islands but the labor system could remain intact. There would be no mention of coaling stations and oceanic cables to avoid complications with appropriations from the House of Representatives.<sup>13</sup>

President Harrison had little to do with the negotiations. He supported the treaty, but in a private letter on February 3, he admitted, "I'm sorry the Hawaiian question did not come six months sooner or sixty days later, as it is embarrassing to begin without the time to finish. Still we may be able to mark out some policy that will be safe and that my successor will follow." As a means of circumventing opposition in Congress, he suggested a plebiscite on the islands to give

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<sup>12</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:608.

<sup>13</sup> Foster Report & Treaty in, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 197-203.

the transaction the “semblance of having been the universal will of the people.”<sup>14</sup> Foster dissuaded the president from supporting this idea, pointing out the complications and suggesting that removal of the sugar bounty and reciprocity issues from the treaty would eliminate most of the opposition.<sup>15</sup> Harrison agreed with Foster.

The treaty was completed on February 14, and Harrison sent it to the Senate the next day with his full support. In his accompanying message, the president claimed that it was not the policy of his administration to subvert the sovereignty of a nation, but that it was evident that the Hawaiian Islands could no longer sustain themselves under the monarchy. More important, “it is essential that none of the other great powers shall secure these islands.”<sup>16</sup>

Many members of the Senate were receptive to the treaty. Republican senator from New Hampshire, W.E. Chandler, had already introduced a resolution asking the president to negotiate with the provisional government, and Senator John Tyler Morgan of Alabama introduced a bill containing a plan to govern Hawaii once annexed. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee, under Morgan, promptly endorsed the treaty, but it never came to a vote because Harrison was leaving office and the Democrats in the Senate wanted to wait for direction from President-elect Grover Cleveland.<sup>17</sup>

In the meantime, the queen’s envoy reached Washington to protest the treaty. Liliuokalani commissioned Paul Neumann as minister plenipotentiary with her power of attorney, even though she was not head of the state and could not technically send someone in an official capacity. E. C. Macfarlane was also sent to represent Kaiulani’s interests. He was unable to see Cleveland, who was in New York, but Neumann was able to speak with Foster on

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<sup>14</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 3:615.

<sup>15</sup> Harrison’s Messages, Foster’s Report, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 197-205.

<sup>16</sup> Harrison’s message, *ibid.*, 197-198.

<sup>17</sup> Senator Morgan, bill (S. 3845), Feb. 8, 1893, *Congressional Records*, 24 Cong., 2 Sess., 1314.

February 21 and presented a petition on the queen's behalf. He told Foster that many Hawaiians favored annexation but opposed the provisional government. Neumann asked for restoration of the queen under an American protectorate, but if not feasible, annexation was possible if adequate financial provisions were made for the queen and the princess. He also asserted that, without Stevens and the troops from the *Boston*, the queen would still be on the throne.<sup>18</sup>

Both men appealed to the American public by criticizing the provisional government and its actions. Macfarlane was able to get the Royalist version of the revolution in the *New York World*. In the story, he claimed that the provisional government tried to prevent the queen's side from being heard, that it had confiscated crown lands for personal gain, and that most natives opposed annexation. It seemed clear that both Neumann and Macfarlane were attempting to delay the vote until Cleveland took office.<sup>19</sup>

Once Foster signed the treaty and sent it to the Senate, two of the Hawaiian commissioners departed for home, Carter went to New York to influence the newspapers, Thurston headed to the Columbian Exposition in Chicago to set up the cyclorama, and William Castle stayed behind in Washington to oversee the final vote. When it became evident that the Senate intended to wait until the Cleveland administration took office, Castle attempted to influence the new president and the new secretary of state, Walter Q. Gresham. He used connections through Cleveland's former secretary, Thomas F. Bayard, but when the president decided instead to withdraw the treaty on March 9 to allow him time to investigate the legitimacy of the overthrow in Hawaii, he could not gain an audience to discuss the matter. Gresham told him that, after the cabinet meeting, it was determined that the government needed to collect more

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<sup>18</sup> Liliuokalani to Harrison, Jan. 18, 1893, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 219-220; Neumann, Blount Report, 24-25; Stevens to Gresham, Mar. 7, 1893, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 398-399, 414-415; Foster Interview, Feb. 21, 1893, vol. 4, Hawaiian Legation, USDS, NA; Macfarlane to Cleghorn, Mar. 7, 8, 1893, folder 4, box M 164, Cleghorn papers, AH.

<sup>19</sup> Macfarlane to Cleghorn, Mar. 7, 8, 1893, folder 4, box M 164, Cleghorn papers, AH.

information on the coup and the U.S. minister's participation before making a decision on annexation. The commissioner began to realize that Neumann's mission was having success, and that the treaty could possibly fail.<sup>20</sup>

Two days later, on March 11, 1893, Gresham gave ex-congressman James H. Blount of Georgia written instructions to investigate the coup and determine the legitimacy of the interim government and its request for annexation. His instructions granted him paramount authority, which was vague enough to allow him to gather whenever information he needed, but which also made people worry about what he would do on arrival. He was to report on the causes of the revolution, including the role played by Stevens, and to uncover the true wishes of the people of Hawaii regarding the provisional government. Gresham explained that the United States government had no right to interfere in purely local affairs and that it would also not allow interference by other powers.<sup>21</sup>

Blount received an overwhelmingly favorable reception by all factions upon his arrival in Hawaii, but within a few days, that began to change. News of the treaty's withdrawal from consideration by the Senate had inspired the Royalist and anti-Reform factions to challenge the provisional government, hoping to influence Blount's investigation in favor of the queen. The provisional government needed to show the congressman that it had the support of the majority of the people to validate Hawaii's application for admittance into the American union. Each

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<sup>20</sup> W. R. Castle to Dole, Feb. 25, 1893; Thurston to Dole, Mar. 10, 1893 (two letters), Annexation, series 404, FO & EX, AH; Memoranda of conversations with the secretary of state, 1893-1898; Thurston to Dole, Mar. 16, 1893; Carter to Dole, Mar. 22, 29, 1893, J. Mott Smith to Dole, Apr. 6, 1893, Annexation, series 404, FO & EX, AH.; J. W. Foster, *Diplomatic Memoirs*, I, 167-568.

<sup>21</sup> Gresham to Blount (instructions) Mar. 11, 1893, Blount Report, 1-3. Blount testimony, Morgan Report, 385.

faction used all available resources to sway Blount, but the provisional government found it much harder to keep his favor.<sup>22</sup>

Once in Honolulu, Blount immediately went to work. First, he took down the American flag from the Hawaiian government buildings and ordered American troops to return to the *Boston*, thus ending Stevens' unofficial protectorate. This caused great problems for the provisional government, which considered raising the flag back up on its own. On April 1, 1893, Blount lowered the American flag and replaced it with the Hawaiian standard. Few people in Hawaii noticed.<sup>23</sup>

By the middle of July, Blount's investigation led him to believe that the U.S. minister had illegally assisted in the coup and that he favored a restoration of the queen. Many members of the provisional government began to suspect that Blount was sent to the islands to make a case against Stevens and Harrison. British minister Wodehouse understood that Blount leaned toward restoring of the queen. He advised Blount that the best solution to the political problem was to put her back on the throne and invest in the American minister the same powers given to Lord Cramer in Egypt— a monarchy with an implied protectorate, enacted without changing the flag.<sup>24</sup>

In February 1893, Stevens wrote, "The Hawaiian pear is now fully ripe and this is the golden hour for the Unites States to pluck it."<sup>25</sup> The minister had long been a strong advocate of annexation and often wrote about it in his dispatches. These documents were used against him to convince Blount and others that Stevens had purposely assisted, or even helped plan, the revolution against the Hawaiian monarchy. The Blount Report claimed that Stevens had

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<sup>22</sup> William A. Russ, *The Hawaiian Revolution: 1893-1894* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1959), 164-181.

<sup>23</sup> Blount testimony, Morgan Report, 397; W.R. Castle to Dole, Thurston to Dole, Mar. 16, 1893, file: Annexation, series 404, FO & EX, AH; Blount to Gresham, Apr. 6, 1893, Blount Report, 6; Lt. Lucien Young testimony, Morgan Report, 338-339.

<sup>24</sup> Blount to Gresham, May 24, 29, 1893, No. 2 and No. 3, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 422-429; Liliuokalani Diary, June 19, 20, 1893, AH; Blount's formal statement to Gresham, July 17, 1893, Blount Report, 101-137.

<sup>25</sup> Stevens to Secretary of State, Feb. 1, 1893, No. 80, vol. 25, Dispatches NA.

“zealously promoted” the overthrow of the queen out of his “ardent desire that it should become a fact accomplished by his agency and during his ministry.”<sup>26</sup>

The press reacted strongly to Blount’s report. The *New York Times* believed it proved that the revolution “was accomplished only by the most shameful intervention on the part of Minister Stevens,” and that the conspiracy was an “abuse of his power.” Furthermore, the *Times* argued, “a more disgraceful conspiracy against a friendly and independent power was never carried on in the name of the United States.” It was a conspiracy by a “minister trained in the Jingo school of the late James G. Blaine.”<sup>27</sup>

With the questions regarding the minister’s actions boiling over in the press and the debate of annexation continuing in Congress, Stevens publicly responded to the Blount Report. He argued that he had a “sense of obligation to my country and an American duty to defend an insulted, threatened, and struggling American colony, planted as righteously and firmly on the north Pacific isles as our pilgrim fathers established themselves on Plymouth rock.”<sup>28</sup> He maintained that he was following the previous sixty years of established American policy dating back to Thomas Jefferson, William L. Marcy, William H. Seward, and James G. Blaine. Corruption by the queen had threatened to prompt a native insurrection, which justified using American troops under the July 1887 Departments of State and Navy instructions charging the U.S. minister and naval commanders with the protection of American life and property on the islands and “for the preservation of public order.”<sup>29</sup> Stevens closed his statement by attacking President Cleveland’s decision to remove the American flag from Honolulu as a “strange and unpatriotic proceeding in the presence of our national rivals.” He added that the president’s

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<sup>26</sup>Blount Report, 6.

<sup>27</sup>“A Shameful Conspiracy,” *New York Times*, Nov. 20, 1893.

<sup>28</sup>“Ex-Minister Stevens’ Reply”, J. L. Stevens, *New York Times*, Nov. 30, 1893, 2.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

decision to explore the option of restoring the queen to the throne was a “strange turning back of American policy of more than half a century.”<sup>30</sup>

Blount’s verdict convinced Gresham that Stevens had engaged in partisan activities on the islands, resulting in his covert complicity in the planning and execution of the revolution against Queen Liliuokalani. The destruction of the monarchy was against the wishes of the majority of the people. He therefore recommended her restoration to the throne. The investigation had several key omissions. He failed to interview anyone from the Committee of Safety or any officer from the *Boston* and excluded some testimony unfavorable to the queen.<sup>31</sup>

By September 1893, Gresham agreed with Blount and decided that the queen should be restored, which would require delicate handling. He was warned by many of his contemporaries, including *Harper’s Weekly* editor Carl Schurz and Attorney General Richard Olney, of the political and practical difficulties of attempting to restore the queen. First, the United States and other foreign powers had already extended official recognition to the provisional government. Restoring Liliuokalani could be perceived as an act of war by international law. He also argued that the restoration might require American troops to use force, which was unconstitutional without a declaration of war. There also was concern that once back on the throne, the queen would execute members of the provisional government on charges of treason. The only way to accomplish a restoration, then, would be if she agreed to grant amnesty to everyone involved and if the provisional government decided to step down and avert a confrontation.<sup>32</sup>

Republican Senator George Frisbie Hoar, agreed with these sentiments, while arguing for a resolution requesting all records regarding instructions to U.S. representatives and naval

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Gresham to the President, Oct. 18, 1893, Blount Report, xvii-xxi; *Pacific Commercial Advertiser*, Nov. 27, 1893; Stevens’ replied to Blount, *Washington Evening Star*, Nov. 30, 1893.

<sup>32</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 638-639; Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 240-241.

officers in Hawaii since 1881. He insisted that the interim government was legitimate because it had established itself peacefully and viewed Liliuokalani's actions as a usurpation of power by taking the right of suffrage away from the "important portion of its citizens, important in regard to numbers, in regard to character, in regard to intelligence, and in regard to property." This new government was legitimate because it had been "recognized by all the civilized powers of the world," and any attempt to reinstate Liliuokalani by the United States would be an act of war against this new "legitimate" government. He regarded the overthrow of Liliuokalani as similar to what had happened in the American Revolution, thus making it legitimate because of its purposes.<sup>33</sup>

These arguments did not dissuade Gresham, who decided to send former congressman Albert Willis of Kentucky to replace Stevens after Harrison recalled him. Willis was given very specific instructions because of the Blount Report. He was to express to the queen the president's sincere regret that Stevens had used armed forces against her sovereignty and to assure her the United States would assist in her restoration. In exchange, the queen had to agree to grant amnesty to those who had participated in the revolution. Willis was then to inform the interim government that the president expected it to restore the queen's constitutional authority. If either side refused, Willis was to inform Washington and wait for further instructions.<sup>34</sup>

Gresham's orders to Willis garnered much negative reaction from the public. Many people believed that the president and Gresham intended to use force to restore the queen. Thurston, however, was assured that Willis would not take any action that would imperil the

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<sup>33</sup> Senator George Frisbie Hoar of Massachusetts speaking for the Resolution requesting copies of instructions to U.S. representatives since the 4<sup>th</sup> day of Mar., 1881, Wed., Dec. 6, 1893*Cong., Rec.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 61.

<sup>34</sup> Gresham to Willis, Oct. 18, 1893, No. 4, Instructions, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 463-464.

lives and property of anyone in the provisional government. Thurston seemed to have at least tentatively believed the promise, because he wrote no letters warning Dole.<sup>35</sup>

Willis arrived in Hawaii and arranged a meeting with the queen on November 13. He expressed the sentiments of the president and secretary of state and offered assistance for her situation in exchange for amnesty for the conspirators. Liliuokalani responded that she was bound by the constitution to follow the laws governing acts of treason, which carried the penalty of death. Willis claimed that Liliuokalani told him that she wanted to behead all the men who had dethroned her, but she denied ever using the term beheading because that method had never been used in Hawaii. In her diary, she maintained that she had agreed to banishment of the conspirators that she and could not allow them to stay and repeat their offenses, which they had already done once before in 1887. When Willis pushed the issue, she agreed to leave the decision up to her cabinet and privy council.<sup>36</sup>

After receiving instructions from Gresham on how to proceed following his first interview, Willis met again with the queen on December 16. He informed Liliuokalani that the president would cease any efforts on her behalf unless she agreed to the amnesty provision. She again responded that she would agree only to banishment, because she was bound by her constitution to punish the conspirators. Willis left the interview frustrated, but later that evening he received a letter from the queen agreeing to Cleveland's terms. If restored to the throne she would uphold the 1887 constitution, grant amnesty to the collaborators, and uphold any

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<sup>35</sup> Gresham to Willis, Oct. 18, 1893, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 463-464; Gresham to Bayard, Oct. 29, 1893, Gresham papers, letter book (1893 – 1895), 150; W. D. Alexander to Dole, Nov. 10, 1893, AH, FO & EX, AH.

<sup>36</sup> Willis To Gresham, Nov. 16, 1893, No. 3, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

obligations entered into by the provisional government. She had consulted with Charles Wilson and Paul Neumann who advised her to agree to the terms in exchange for the president's help.<sup>37</sup>

Upon receiving this letter, Willis met with President Dole and the cabinet. He informed them of Cleveland's intention to restore the queen to her throne and Liliuokalani's letter granting them all amnesty, and then requested that they voluntarily step down in favor of the queen. He informed them it was their patriotic "duty to abide by the decision of the President." The men did not respond to Willis in the meeting but on December 23, he received an eighteen-page legal brief from Dole. The provisional government refused to surrender authority because the president of the United States had no legal authority over Hawaiian domestic affairs, meaning that any wrongdoings on the part of the American minister would need to be handled as a private disciplinary matter between the president and his staff.<sup>38</sup>

Before receiving this information from Willis, President Cleveland and his cabinet met on December 7 and decided to turn the whole matter over to Congress. The president's message expressed his belief that Stevens' actions had played a direct part in the success of the coup against Liliuokalani, which was a clear violation of his instructions. Cleveland explained that the queen had abdicated to the authority of the United States and not to the provisional government, which led him to consider restoring her to the throne. He now placed the matter before Congress, advising it that under the circumstances, annexation would be imprudent.<sup>39</sup>

Cleveland's act of turning foreign policy decisions over to Congress reflected the complexity of the situation. Stevens' actions created a question of legality under international

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<sup>37</sup> Interview between Willis and Liliuokalani, Dec. 16, 1893, *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 1263-1268 ; Liliuokalani to Willis, Dec. 16, 1893, *ibid.*, 1269.

<sup>38</sup> Willis to Gresham, confidential, Dec. 20, 1893, No. 17; Dole to Willis, Dec. 23, 1893, enclosed in Willis to Gresham, Dec. 23, 1893, No. 18, vol. 26, *Dispatches, NA*, and *FRUS 1894 Appendix II*, 1276-1282.

<sup>39</sup> James D. Richardson, *A compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, 10 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1905), 9:460-472; Blount Report, iii-xvi.

law that Cleveland had hoped to remedy with the voluntary acquiescence of the provisional government. With its denial of his request, the annexation treaty fell into question. Beyond the legal issues, the idea of annexation in general remained a controversial topic in the United States. With the exception of Alaska, the United States had not acquired territory since the Civil War and had never taken land beyond the ocean borders. Cleveland was an anti-imperialist and opposed the idea on principle; he was not alone. The annexation question had already fallen under heated debate, and Cleveland's message to Congress only added fuel to the flames.

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Regardless of Cleveland's reaction to the Blount Report or his deferral to the legislature, Congress was already heavy into the debate over Hawaii and the United States' future standing on the international stage. When the representatives of the provisional government of Hawaii arrived in Washington and requested annexation, they forced the United States to face the final obstacle in its evolution to first-tier status. Americans had always been expansionists, but had never considered themselves imperialists. In accepting the offer to annex the Islands, Washington would be taking on a property that did not fit into America's notion of itself. The subsequent "great debate" between the imperialists and the anti-imperialists reflected the final transition in its world system evolution, pitting those willing to embrace this new first-tier existence against those unsure what effect that would have on the foundation of the nation. It also centered on the question that if the United State decided to embrace an imperial path, would it do so in an aggressive manner, disregarding the wishes of the people in the territories, or would they choose a more benevolent path of acquiring territory, which came to them.

While Blount was in Hawaii investigating, news of his activities sparked lively debates in Washington. Blount's removal of the U.S. flag in Hawaii triggered a contentious discussion in Congress. Several senators were displeased that the president had appointed a congressman from Georgia, who had been "formerly in rebellion against the union" to investigate the overthrow.<sup>40</sup> Others were offended that Blount used his authority to take down the American flag, something they saw as an insult to national honor.

Senator Shelby M. Cullom of Illinois offered the most embittered attack on Blount, identifying him as a secret spy and haranguing him for ordering the flag lowered. He compared the congressman's actions to an incident at the beginning of the Civil War, when in 1861 Union General John Adams Dix sent orders to New Orleans to shoot anyone attempting to remove the Union flag from the city. His scathing speech heavily implied that he believed Blount's actions bordered on treason and warranted hanging, just as the removal of the American flag from southern cities earned an execution for Confederates during the Civil War.<sup>41</sup> Cullom further contended that Cleveland and Blount had disgraced America. He claimed "But where is the man whose cheek has not blushed with bitter shame, as day by day he has been forced to read the humiliating story of our blundering in Hawaiian policy?"<sup>42</sup> Cullom's speech reflected his cohort's belief that the flag represented American honor and that by hauling down that symbol without consulting Congress, Blount had not only embarrassed the United States but had disregarded the authority of its leadership. Honor was an important facet of the United States' position in the international community. A nation's flag was the symbolic expression of power

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<sup>40</sup> Senator Cullom of Illinois on the Resolution calling for an Investigation by the Foreign Relations Committee, Tuesday, Jan. 23, 1894, *Cong. Record*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., 1233.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> Senator Cullom of Illinois on the Resolution calling for an Investigation by the Foreign Relations Committee, Tues., Jan. 23, 1894, *Cong. Record*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., 1233.

and authority. For Blount, to remove the flag from Hawaii signaled to Cullom that the nation's promise of protection would lose all meaning among other nations.

Removing the flag, however, was not as offensive to other senators. Many recognized the international implications of the Stars and Stripes flying above an independent nation and agreed it was imperative to take down the flag. Senator John W. Daniel of Virginia made an eloquent yet angry speech criticizing his fellow senators by reminding them that the United States did not have the legal right to impose its flag or authority over another independent nation. In his speech, Daniel asserted that allowing the flag to fly over Honolulu resembled the Union's attempts to impose its authority over the South during and following the Civil War. Daniel also resented Collom's insinuation that Blount deserved hanging for violating what he defined as a Union General's Civil War orders.<sup>43</sup>

What is interesting about these remarks is that both men chose to use the North's exercise of authority over the South as their examples of imperialism, rather than the hundreds of examples set by European powers. These men were still reconciling a bitter past which tore the nation apart, so that they could help to construct a unified nation, ready to embrace a first-tier position. During the 1890s, a new national identity began to emerge as part of this process, in which the whole nation attempted to construct a patriotic consensus and cultural understanding of itself. Increased membership in organizations such as the Grand Army of the Republic and the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution, combined with the pledge of loyalty to the American flag, helped to ease increasing anxieties created by a rapidly changing nation. By connecting national honor to an "impassioned object" such as the flag, Americans could bridge

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<sup>43</sup> Senator Daniel of Virginia on the resolution reported by Turpie of the Committee on Foreign Relations Jan. 23, 1894; Tues., Feb. 20, 1894, *Cong. Record*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., 2312.

the sectional divide by displaying their patriotism to the nation-state rather than a region.<sup>44</sup> The ritual surrounding these impassioned objects provided a common cultural connection for Americans, who, through participating in their commemoration, consented to patriotic consensus.<sup>45</sup> Cullom and Daniel's argument over the use of the flag in Hawaii reflected this struggle to find an identity.

The discussion about Hawaii, however, went far beyond Blount's removal of the flag from Hawaii. Another important issue to address was the United States' role in the ending of the Hawaiian monarchy and its obligation to correct any wrong-doings. Most important, Congress was still greatly concerned with the proposed annexation of the islands.

Before Cleveland turned over the Blount Report to Congress, its members had already made arrangements to take the issue. On December 20, the Senate adopted a resolution empowering the Committee on Foreign Relations to subpoena individuals involved in the coup, request official papers, and investigate the revolution in Hawaii. After two months of hearings, between December 27, 1893, and February 26, 1894, the committee found in favor of the provisional government and against the queen. The Morgan Report exonerated Stevens and Wiltse for following instructions and placed more blame on the queen's cabinet members than on the Committee of Safety. Most important, the report held Liliuokalani responsible for the chain of events by claiming that when she announced her intention to promulgate a new constitution, thus violating the 1887 document, she abdicated her throne. The actions of the Committee of Safety were reasonable considering there was no formal government at that point.<sup>46</sup>

Many senators thought the findings were biased toward the pro-annexationists in Hawaii and purposefully harmful to the president. Morgan's committee had been partial to the testimony

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<sup>44</sup> Walter Hixson, *The Myth of American Foreign Diplomacy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 88.

<sup>45</sup> Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory* (New York: Alfred a Knopf, 1991), 3.

<sup>46</sup> Blount Report, *passim*.

of Stevens, the U.S. naval officers, and the Committee of Thirteen. He took the testimony of several people that Blount had not interviewed. It was argued that Morgan's whole purpose was to counter the Blount Report and manufacture legitimacy for the provisional government's action following the coup.<sup>47</sup> Morgan was a known imperialist and wanted to obtain the Hawaiian Islands. By justifying the rebellion, he helped to establish the legitimacy of the provisional government's request for annexation.

While the Foreign Relations Committee conducted its investigation, the Senate engaged in its own debate over the validity of the coup and the provisional government. Hoar believed that the Committee of Safety was justified in its actions because it had "the consciousness of a rightful cause, [and] the knowledge that the true interest of the people and all its civilization are at stake."<sup>48</sup>

Other senators found the provisional government's existence questionable. Senator Roger Q. Mills of Texas questioned the claim that U.S. troops were not involved in the coup, and pointed out the irony of the argument that the Americans were only defending the consulate and the legation when neither was under attack. "What a magnificent picture is presented by the representatives of 67,000,000 of the most powerful people on the globe with the muzzles of their guns upon a poor defenseless woman whose property is about to be stolen from her? And they tell us she is not a Christian and that the Christian people are not on her side!"<sup>49</sup>

Senator Wilkinson Call of Louisiana questioned Cleveland's action in sending a representative to restore the monarchy. Call was "not opposed to extending protection in proper circumstances over governments distant from our own country whenever our commercial and

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<sup>47</sup> Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 252-254.

<sup>48</sup> Senator George Frisbie Hoar of Massachusetts speaking for the Resolution requesting copies of instructions to U.S. representatives since the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1881, *Cong. Rec.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., 62.

<sup>49</sup> Senator Mills of Texas speaking for the Resolution requesting copies of instructions to U.S. representatives since the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1881, *ibid.*, 64.

financial interests shall require it.” He was more concerned with the idea of an American president interfering in the internal dispute of another country. It was not clear to him if the treaty agreements with the United States required Cleveland to protect the queen’s sovereignty against his own citizens. “The Question is, what was the obligation upon the President of the United States?”<sup>50</sup>

Some senators expressed concern with the actual annexation of Hawaii. Many men worried that Hawaiians were racially inferior and that extending territorial or statehood status would incorporate these people into the body politic. This was a question about how the incorporation of distant lands with non-white people of different cultural and political backgrounds would affect American democratic institutions. Would the United States have to extend the offer of statehood to the territory, as was always understood to be the constitutional requirement? If so, would the nation’s newly created identity survive the incorporation of exotic people with different identities?

Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado addressed this argument by claiming that when the United States was founded, many nations around the world doubted that it would endure. But after surviving “the greatest internal war that was ever conducted on the face of the earth,” the United States “proved that republics were as strong in that direction as a monarchy.” For this reason, the United States would also survive incorporating outlying states with foreign peoples.<sup>51</sup>

There were also greater concerns with the legal and moral blemish on American policy if the United States were to annex the islands. Senator Mills expressed the issue on the chamber’s floor in a speech requesting information from the president. He understood that the “people of

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<sup>50</sup> Senator Call of Texas speaking for the Resolution requesting copies of instructions to U.S. representatives since the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1881, *Cong. Rec.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., 73-73.

<sup>51</sup> Senator Henry M. Teller of Colorado speaking on Committee of Foreign Relations Resolution Regarding Hawaii, *Cong. Rec.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., 1578.

the Saxon race tend to control every country they have come in contact with” and that it was only a matter of time before they took Hawaii and everything else. Recognizing America’s rise to world power, he acknowledged that, “If our Government lives and keeps together and continues to grow and expand and multiply its power and its civilization, it will take everything with which it comes in contact.” He opposed the annexation treaty if it was determined that Stevens had assisted in the coup and made the United States an aggressor nation. “In God’s name,” he begged, “let us do it decently and in order.” He urged patience in the acquisition until the nation was ready for the responsibility.<sup>52</sup>

Schurz also engaged in the discussion with an article in *Harper’s* magazine. He acknowledged the United States’ changing position in the world, but cautioned about the means of achieving that status. “The patriotic ardor of those who would urge this republic into the course of indiscriminate territorial aggrandizement to make it the greatest of the great powers of the world deserves more serious consideration. To see his country powerful and respected among the nations of the earth, and to secure to it all those advantages to which its character and position entitle it, is the natural desire of every American.” Schurz thought that, most Americans agreed with him. His concern was with the “grave differences of opinion as to how this end can be most surely, most completely, and most worthily attained.” The question over Hawaii “is not a mere matter of patriotic sentiment, but a problem of statesmanship. No conscientious citizen will think a moment of incorporating a single square mile of foreign soil in this Union without most earnestly considering how it will be likely to affect our social and political condition at home as well as our relations with the world abroad.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Senator Mills of Texas speaking for the Resolution requesting copies of instructions to U.S. representatives since the 4<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1881, *Cong. Rec.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., 66-67.

<sup>53</sup> Carl, Schurz, “Manifest Destiny,” *Harpers New Monthly Magazine*, Oct., 1893, vol. 87, Issue 521, 738.

These arguments were the basis of the “great debate” between imperialists and anti-imperialists throughout the Gilded Age. Cleveland was representative of the anti-imperialist perspective. He was an admirer of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison and believed in maintaining the traditional foreign policy of non-entangling alliances with an adherence to the Monroe Doctrine. Presidents governing over the United States when it was a second-tier nation initiated both of those policies. Their strategies enabled the United States to engage in international trade and politics while developing into a first-tier power.<sup>54</sup> The Monroe Doctrine especially enabled the United States to lay claim to territory and markets that it needed for economic and security reasons, without requiring large expenditures of revenue or human resources to occupy them. This allowed the United States to channel those resources into its own development instead. By the 1890s, with progress well under way, the nation was in a position to afford the growth of a military force to protect itself beyond the continent.

Anti-imperialists disliked expansion beyond the continental borders for a variety of reasons. Many agreed with the racial questions discussed above. Others held significant concerns with the constitutionality of acquiring territories without offering statehood, an issue greatly debated during the 1850s annexation discussions. Most of them worried that gaining territories far from the continent and engaging in the international struggle for territorial dominance was inconsistent with American traditions. Such acquisitions also created difficulties in security, requiring the United States to build a large navy to defend its distant properties. This would cause strain on the struggling economy and threaten the moral stance of the nation.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Richard E. Welch, Jr., *The Presidencies of Grover Cleveland* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1988), 157-158.

<sup>55</sup> Robert L. Beisner, *Twelve Against Empire: the Anti-Imperialist, 1898-1900* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 216-221. Beisner’s discussion focuses on the larger imperial debate in regards to the Spanish-American War. For a thorough discussion of the imperial debate over Hawaii see Thomas Osborne, *Empire Can Wait: American Opposition to Hawaiian Annexation* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1981).

On the other side of the argument, the imperialists recognized the United States' evolving role in the international power structure and wanted to embrace the new status. A more active role in foreign relations would promote the growth of the nation. Imperialists wanted to compete with the first-tier nations like Britain and France no longer assuming the subordinate role in international decisions. To accomplish this, they realized that strategic areas, such as Hawaii, would improve the United States' success in competing with European powers, thus securing American gains.

Imperialists such as naval historian Alfred Thayer Mahan viewed American security in terms of a larger navy, an isthmian canal, and a base in Hawaii. With these assets, the United States would no longer be at the mercy of international threats. He believed that if the United States was to remain secure and prosperous, it must compete with the European powers for the few remaining strategic positions in the world. Pearl Harbor was one of these locations and would be a safeguard for the American west coast and a proposed Central American canal.<sup>56</sup>

Anti-imperialists viewed the acquisition of Hawaii as a security risk. The United States would no longer be able to use its oceans as a security blanket but instead would have to build a large navy to protect its distant possessions.<sup>57</sup>

Regardless of the stance each senator took in the debate, what is important is that they were engaging in this discussion because events in Hawaii had brought the issue to the table. Historians have argued that this debate about the United States entering into an imperial policy was the result of impending difficulties over Cuba, which led to the annexation of Hawaii. Evidence suggests that the Hawaiian annexation proposal actually ignited the conversation, forcing the United States to confront its evolving needs. Expansion was not a new topic in

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<sup>56</sup> Alfred Thayer Mahan, "Hawaii and Our Future Sea power," *The Forum*, 15 (Mar. 1893), 7-9.

<sup>57</sup> George W. Merrill, "The annexation of Hawaii," *The California Illustrated Magazine*, 3 (Mar., 1893), 507-509.

America, but Washington had not held a major argument about the acquisition of new territory since the purchase of Alaska in 1867. U.S. intervention in foreign nations was not uncommon—most recently in Samoa and Venezuela— but none of those incidents had led to an actual request for annexation. Thus, the government had recently debated the concepts of intervention and entangling alliances, but imperialism was a new strategy to confront.

On May 31, 1894, the Senate passed a resolution saying that the people of Hawaii had a right to establish their own form of government without U.S. interference. Furthermore, the United States would view any aggression by other nations as unfriendly. At this point, the reassessment of American's view of their foreign policy heritage put a halt to the discussions on the annexation treaty.

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When it became apparent that the debate in Washington would continue indefinitely, Thurston and Frank Hastings, then the newest representative sent to Washington, encouraged the provisional government to relieve itself of its provisional status and establish a new republic. The government's very existence was temporary, which had inherent problems. First, the leadership was a self-appointed body of revolutionaries with no accountability to the larger population; a criticism used against the Committee of Safety in Washington. Second, Royalist factions were gaining political support by focusing on the oligarchic character of the provisional government. By allowing for election and a legislative process, the *haole* could diminish the Royalist argument. Finally, the local newspapers were increasingly critical of the government, claiming that the sugar trusts controlled the nominations for cabinet positions and that anyone associated with a political organization outside of the Reform party was completely excluded from

participation. By creating a new constitutional government, Dole and Thurston believed this would help convince the American people of their legitimacy and secure their international status. The ultimate goal was still annexation, but political stability would secure the *haole* leadership in the interim.<sup>58</sup>

On March 15, 1894, the provisional government called for a constitutional convention to construct the Republic of Hawaii. Appearing to have popular support was the most important issue, but balancing that with a multiethnic population, in which the *haole* was the clear minority race, posed a serious problem in allowing for elections. The leadership determined that a limited franchise, especially for the election of nobles, was most important. Setting up the apportionment for the convention was equally problematic. They agreed to a thirty-seven member convention, with the president and members of the executive and advisory councils of the provisional government comprising nineteen members and a popular election for the other eighteen members. This would automatically give the revolutionaries the majority at the convention, while providing the illusion of a popularly formed government.

The leaders still feared allowing all persons eligible under the constitution of 1887 to vote for the remaining members of the constitutional convention. To curtail this, they required eligible voters to sign an oath of allegiance to the provisional government and to take an oath opposing the reestablishment of the monarchy before voting. This approach would ensure that those closest to the queen, mostly native Hawaiian, would not be eligible to vote.<sup>59</sup> As a form of protest, the majority of the *Kānaka* population refused to sign the oath and boycotted the

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<sup>58</sup> William Russ, *The Hawaiian Republic: 1894-1898* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, 1961), 6-14.

<sup>59</sup> Kuykendall, *Hawaiian Kingdom*, 649.

constitutional convention. Out of a population of about 150,000 people, only 4,477 men took the oath and voted.<sup>60</sup>

As a result, the new constitution created a republican form of government very similar to that in United States with the addition of an advisory cabinet for the king appointed by members of the two legislative branches. The new document also had strict voting restrictions. All people born or naturalized in Hawaii were considered citizens. The Minister of the Interior could grant citizenship to anyone who had a permanent residence in Hawaii; could read, write, and explain the constitution in English; and had at least \$200 dollars in property. The presidency was a single, six-year term chosen by a majority of both houses and there were high property qualifications for service in the legislature. With these provisions, the *haole* believed they could retain control of the government but still appear to be a popularly controlled republic. Then just to ensure that the United States did not misunderstand the intent of this new government, an article was included that allowed the executive the right to negotiate a treaty of alliance with the United States without authorization from the legislature.<sup>61</sup>

The ultimate goal of the Republic of Hawaii was to gain annexation, so after finalizing the constitution, the next step was to produce a cultural connection to the United States to encourage the union. In that regard, the Constitution of the Republic of Hawaii was adopted on July 4, 1894. The most overt form of symbolic nationalism was the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. It was custom for American residents in Honolulu to throw elaborate celebrations, with fireworks, athletic games, and patriotic readings and speeches. The 1894 celebration, however, was a unique day. At 8:00 am, Sanford B. Dole took the oath of office as president of the newly proclaimed Republic of Hawaii. The ceremony was short, with no pomp or circumstance and one short speech and few

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<sup>60</sup> Russ *The Hawaiian Republic*, 26. These figures are based on the 1890 election in which most native Hawaiian and all Asian residents were ineligible.

<sup>61</sup> Constitutional Convention Records, FO & EX, AH.

people attended the event.<sup>62</sup> This brief, modest, and purposely underplayed ceremony in itself revealed the intentions of the founding fathers of the Hawaiian Republic. They made little attempt to use the day as a means of garnering public support for their new government. Instead, they quickly took an oath of loyalty to it and left the ceremony to join other festivities scheduled for the day.

The real celebration started two hours later when the annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration for the United States began. The commemoration had grown over the years to include citizens of all nationalities who decorated the foreign consular buildings, war vessels, and public buildings as well as their private homes.<sup>63</sup> According to the *Hawaiian Gazette*, “The patriotic feeling made itself felt in all quarters and the result proved to many strangers that Honolulu has as much love for the great American holiday as any other of its size in the United States.” Awards went to those responsible for the best decorated building in Honolulu. Sporting events and a large yachting race topped off day’s festivities honoring the American holiday.<sup>64</sup> It seemed that on the day of the proclamation of the new Hawaiian republic, very little was mentioned about the new government because the focus remained on the United States.

The highlight of the day’s festivities was the keynote speech by United States Captain Cochrane. Every member of the new Hawaiian government attended. The official president of the day was Minister Albert Willis, who led the crowd in singing the American song, “The Battle Cry of Freedom,” before introducing speakers who gave a brief history of the United States’ quest for independence, and read the Declaration of Independence to great applause.

Captain Cochrane then took the stage, opening with the usual, “Ladies and Gentlemen,” then added the line, “I would that I could also say “fellow-citizens,” but I see so many here who

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<sup>62</sup> Russ, *The Hawaiian Republic*, 36-37.

<sup>63</sup> Albert Willis to Gresham, July 8, 1894, No. 64, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>64</sup> Enclosure 3 in Willis to Gresham, No. 64, July 8, 1894, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA.

are not yet Americans that perhaps it were better to employ a new expression: follow denizens.” He told the crowd, “It seems strange that one, 2,000 miles and more from home, can be in an atmosphere so overwhelmingly American as this. Where in all Yankeedom, or in all Christendom, is there a community of this size, or any size for the matter of that, which is honoring the Declaration of Independence, that colossal indictment and grand compendium of human rights, with greater zeal and enthusiasm than is the community of Honolulu?” He noted that, “the tie which binds multitudes of this people, rich and poor, brown as well as white, to the land of liberty is stronger perhaps than any of them fully realize.”<sup>65</sup> Cochrane’s comments were not lost on the crowd who recognized his purposeful connection of Hawaii to the United States, implying that they should all be American citizens observing their loyalty to the patriotic display and ritualistic feting of the holiday. He later remarked on the new provisional government and its leadership by saying, “Probably never in the course of the ages have the affairs of any infant nation been managed more ably, wisely, or honestly. These men of American Blood and American sympathies are of the same sort as those who founded our own Republic.”<sup>66</sup> He was touched by the enthusiasm of the citizens to share in the veneration for the United States.

He went on observe that some people might suspect that this particular celebration was something new to Honolulu, as they were applying for annexation to the United States, but assured the crowd that the 4<sup>th</sup> of July had always been a traditional holiday in Hawaii and that American patriotism had always been present on islands. He recalled the story of his first visit to in 1870 and how he and his crew were entertained at the home of Captain Tom Spenser by a group of native boys who played “John Brown’s Body,” “Sherman’s March to the Sea,” and

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<sup>65</sup> Captain Cochrane, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Commencement Address, *House Exec. Doc.*, 53 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 256, 3.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 4.

“Columbia the Gem of the Ocean.”<sup>67</sup> His story was meant to show that Hawaii had a strong cultural connection with the United States dating back well beyond the coup and annexation proposal, helping to create a usable past for the Hawaiian audience.

Finally, at the end of Cochrane’s speech, he acknowledged the new republic by standing and saying, “My fellow denizens {laughter}: If it is not altogether improper, let us give three cheers for the latest addition to the family the infant Republic.” As he finished these remarks, the band began to play American patriotic songs. The *Hawaiian Gazette* observed that, “the grandest song possible to sing—the song that will move anyone with a drop of American blood in his veins—was next sung by the audience. The strains of “America” rolled out upon the air and sent a thrill through all those who heard it.”<sup>68</sup>

This particular event speaks greatly to the Americanization process in Hawaii. On a day that the citizens should have been commemorating their founding of a new government, most were enthralled in a celebration of the United States. Instead of engaging in grand display for the Hawaiian government and fostering their own sense of nationalism and loyalty to their new republic, the leaders of the government chose to promote the veneration of the United States government to prove their loyalty and patriotism to the nation they hoped to join.<sup>69</sup>

The Royalist and native Hawaiians were not as excited about the new republic as the *haole* Reform party was. With possible annexation looming, native Hawaiians began fighting a twofold battle: one to restore Hawaiian political power and the other to maintain Hawaiian independence. The queen’s supporters formed a new organizations called the *Hui Hawaii‘I Aloha ‘Āina*. Dedicated to fight against annexation, its supporters elected Joseph Nāwahī, a Hawaiian-language newspaper editor, as president. The name of this organization, in itself, was a

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Cochrane, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Commencement Address, pg. 5.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 6.

form of protest. Because the native Hawaiian language contains fewer words than English does, many Hawaiian terms have multiple meanings. When translated under a westernized political connotation, the organization's name means the Hawaiian Patriotic League. When using Hawaiian cultural coding, however, *Aloha Aina*, does not mean patriotic but rather love of the land. For the *Kanaka*, therefore, the party's name was The People Who Love the Land.<sup>70</sup> This name had significant cultural connections to traditional Hawaiian creation mythology. They believed that the islands were born like human beings of the same parents: the sky father who gave birth to the islands, and the mother who created the stars and heaven.<sup>71</sup> They took this belief and applied it to their political concepts of nationalism and identity, while still operating within the westernized political arena. Their inalienable rights came, not from being human, but from being born of the same parents as the land they govern.

The *Hui Aloha 'Āina* began their attack on annexation by testifying in U.S. commissioner James Blount's investigation of the overthrow. They asked the U.S. president to restore the queen to the throne. Attempting to play on the ego of the president, they claimed a refusal to resort to violence because they were, "waiting, in their simple faith in the generosity and honor of the most liberal and honorable government of the world." In another statement they claimed that, "the natives when left alone have had a most satisfactory, peaceful, and progressive government, while all of the dissension, riots, and troubles recorded in the annals of these islands have ever been by and through foreigners seeking to wrench the power and wealth from the poor natives." Their purpose was to establish the independence of the commonwealth with the restoration of the queen, "who was ruthlessly and wantonly deposed by a mob of foreign filibusters, abetted by the United States minister resident and shielded by the United States

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<sup>70</sup> Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 130-31.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

forces.”<sup>72</sup> These petitions held significant sway over Blount and kept Congress at bay, but did not result in the queen’s restoration.

The native Hawaiians were greatly disappointed but continued their efforts to regain the kingdom. They began to employ other means of protesting. Some withheld offerings at churches where their minister supported the provisional government and many men and women began sewing quilts incorporating the native Hawaiian flag into the design. Members of the Royal Hawaiian Band, formerly supported by the monarchy, refused to sign an oath of loyalty to the new provisional government. In protest, they resigned their jobs, prompting one member of the legislature to tell them they would be eating rocks. In response to this public criticism, a local newspaper publisher’s wife wrote the band a new song entitled “Mele Aloha ‘Aina,” which translated roughly in to “Song for the People Who Love the Land” and was more popularly referred to as the “Rock-eating Song.”<sup>73</sup> The second stanza of her song read:

No one will fix a signature  
To the paper of the enemy  
With its end of annexation  
And sale of native civil rights.  
We do not value  
The government sum of money.  
We are satisfied with the stones,  
Astonishing food of the land.<sup>74</sup>

Later the band organized under the name of the Hawaiian National Band and began touring the islands and the United States for income, performing nationalistic songs as a form of protest and propaganda.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Statement of the Hawaiian Patriotic League, Blount Report, 445.

<sup>73</sup> Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 134-5.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

When the provisional government announced that the new constitution would be promulgated on July 4, 1894, the the *Hui* called for a mass protest meeting for July 2. Between 5,000 to 7,000 people attended. Joseph Nawahi, president of the *Hui*, told the crowd, “the house of government belongs to us, as the Kamehameha’s built it. We have been ousted by trespassers who entered our house and who are telling us to go and live in a lei stand... I’m telling you, my fellow citizens, we should not agree at the least.”<sup>76</sup> The group approved a resolution stating, “the loyal subjects of the Hawaiian kingdom... Do hereby most solemnly protest against the promulgation of a new constitution formed without the consent and participation of the people.”<sup>77</sup>

Nawahi took his speech very seriously. As he and other natives realized that their peaceful and diplomatic means gained nothing for their position, they began to plan for an armed coup against the republic. In October 1894, they bought a shipment of arms from San Francisco. A government spy learned of the delivery and on December 8, 1894, John Bush and Nawahi were arrested. Both men were editors of Hawaiian language newspapers, so the Republic also shut down the entire opposition press.

While Bush and Nawahi languished in jail, their effort continued under Robert Wilcox. Again, the Republic learned of the plans. While attempting to arrest one of the leaders, other members of the plot opened fire, killing one of the civilian guards and wounding one of the Hawaiian officers. Wilcox and the remaining forces fled to various parts of the island. Within two weeks, all were arrested. On January 16, 1895, the republic’s leaders claimed they had found arms at Queen Liliuokalani’s home and placed her under house arrest in Iolani Palace.

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<sup>76</sup> Joseph Nawahi, *Ka Leo o ka Lahui*, July 3, 1894, translated in Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 135.

<sup>77</sup> *Ka Leo o ka Lahui*, July 3, 1894; *Hawaii Holomua*, July 3, 1894, *ibid*.

Most of the men received prison sentences from one to thirty-five years. Wilcox was tried, convicted of treason, and sentenced to hang. Under pressure from the American government, however, President Sanford Dole commuted the sentence to life imprisonment. The *Hui* started a campaign to the release the men, who they saw as political prisoners. Many of the women made dresses of striped fabric resembling the prison uniforms as a show of solidarity for the men. The organization also began a fundraising campaign to help the families of the men in jail.<sup>78</sup>

As a result of the mounting protests for the release of the imprisoned, Nawahi gained his freedom from jail and opened a new newspaper called *Ke Alaha Aina*. He believed that Hawaiians must control their own government in order to care for the people and the land properly. “Hawaiian people,” he told them, “let us increase the love of our birth sand, the islands of Hawaii; then, you and your descendants will live long upon the land of Hawaii which god has given to you.”<sup>79</sup>

Nawahi continued to publish his newspaper, protesting the government and criticizing the *Haole*, until his death in September 1896. A staunch native nationalist, Nawahi contributed greatly to Hawaiian cultural preservation. Even his death became a forum for criticizing the government. The pro-Hawaiian English language newspaper, the *Independent*, said of Nawahi, “the deceased had for some time past been a very sick man, suffering from consumption contracted during his prolonged imprisonment for alleged political offenses in the pest hole known as Oahu prison. His offense was that he loved his queen and his country, and through his untimely death another sufferer has been added to the cohort of victims of the men of 1893.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Nancy Jane Morris, “Rebels of 1895,” *Trial of a Queen: 1895 Military Tribunal* (Honolulu: Judiciary History Center, 1995); Albertine Loomis, *For Whom are the Stars?* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1976), 123-126.

<sup>79</sup> *Ke Alaha Aina*, June 8, 1895, translated in Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 140.

<sup>80</sup> *Independent*, September 24, 1896.

Following Nawahi's death, the provisional government hoped that without leadership, the resistance organizations would collapse. Instead, they flourished. As Queen Liliuokalani asserted, "the cause of Hawaiian independence is larger and dearer than the life of any men connected with it. Love of country is deep seated in the breast of every Hawaiian, whatever his station."<sup>81</sup> To replace their leaders, they held an election on November 28, 1896, Hawaii's former Independence Day, as a symbolic reminder of their past.

Shortly after Nawahi's death, William McKinley became president of the United States. Members of the *Hui* knew McKinley was an expansionist, so they mobilized again, focusing their protest not in Hawaii, but in Washington, D.C. They began a mass petition drive collecting 40,000 signatures in protest against annexation.<sup>82</sup> On September 6, 1897, thousands of people appeared to hear the Hawaiian Patriotic League president, James Kauli, give a rousing speech in which he told the crowd, "the nation will never consent to the annexation of our land to America, down to the very last life." He compared annexation to being buried alive and then to quell the fear of arrest, he told the people, "let us take up the honorable field of struggle, brain against brain... Do not be afraid, be steadfast in aloha for your land and be united in thought. Protest forever the annexation of Hawaii until the very last lives."<sup>83</sup>

Eight days later, Senator John Tyler Morgan, staunch proponent of annexation, arrived in Honolulu to help influence the *Kanaka*. He gave a public speech at the Kawaiaha'o Church at Iolani Palace where nearly one thousand people greeted him with opposition. Morgan claimed that under the United States, they would be allowed to vote just as African Americans could in the south. He told them, "they enjoy the same opportunity's as I, and are respected by the people

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<sup>81</sup> Liliuokalani, *Hawaii's Story*, 302.

<sup>82</sup> U.S. Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, file 55A-J11.2, Record Group 46, National Archives.

<sup>83</sup> Speech by James Kaulia, *Ke Aloha Aina*, September 11, 1897, translated in Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 148.

among whom they live according to their merits.”<sup>84</sup> Morgan, however, failed to understand that the native Hawaiians were not ignorant of the realities in the United States. For well over a decade, Hawaiian language newspapers had covered race issues in America and the men and women attending his speech were well informed. One editorial asked, “Are Hawaiians going to be like blacks?” It told the readership of Americans’ fear of the Indians, “to whom the land those *Haole* trespass upon belongs to” and then asked how the *kanaka* could “escape from the bottles of poison that they desire to feed us.” The editorial closed by warning Hawaiians that they would be treated like American blacks if the islands were annexed.<sup>85</sup>

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While the revolutionaries in Hawaii were busy creating a republic and facing partisan opposition, pro-annexationists in the United States awaited the end of the Cleveland administration to complete annexation. With a presidential election in 1896, the Hawaiian delegation in Washington regained hope that the new administration under McKinley would be more receptive to the annexation proposal. In November, shortly after the election, Hawaiian minister Henry Cooper traveled to Canton, Ohio, and met with President-elect McKinley to discuss the future of the islands. Cooper’s impression of the new president left him hopeful that annexation would be a priority on his agenda. Upon that information, the Republic of Hawaii sent two more representatives to Washington in early 1897. William O. Smith and Alfred S. Hartwell joined Thurston and Frank M. Hatch to negotiate a new annexation treaty.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Editorial, *Ke Aloha Aina*, October 23, 1897, *ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> Henry Cabot Lodge to F. M. Hatch, Nov. 23, 1896; Lodge to Hatch, Dec. 5, 1896; file: letters and other documents (1895-1899), M-448, Henry Ernest Cooper Papers, Manuscript Collection, Archives of Hawaii.

The four men divided assignments. Smith and Hartwell stayed in Washington to negotiate the treaty and promote it in the state department. They began work on the treaty by meeting with members of Congress and the state department. In late March, McKinley assured the men that he would give annexation his full attention after the work on a new tariff was completed. The problem was that the Hawaiian reciprocity treaty was up for renewal, complicating the tariff debate in the Senate. Several representatives, including Marcus A. Hanna of Ohio, encouraged Smith to propose a joint resolution of annexation, similar to the bills that brought Texas into the union, as a means of removing Hawaii from the tariff debate and bringing annexation to a conclusion.

In May, they met with John Foster, a professional diplomat and one of annexation's biggest supporters. Foster visited the islands in October 1896 on business for a Pacific cable company and reconfirmed his determination to see the islands' annexation before the Japanese immigrants overwhelmed the islands. In 1886, the Hawaiian Kingdom signed an immigration convention with the Japanese government, allowing for the importation of laborers for the sugar plantations. By 1896, over 24,000 Japanese lived on the islands, equaling one-quarter of the population. Foster worried that this level of immigration, left unchecked, could result in Japanese occupation in another decade.<sup>87</sup>

When he returned from Hawaii he delivered a speech on the "wisdom and desirability" of annexing Hawaii to the National Geographic Society in Washington on March 26, 1897. Several senators and representatives attended the event and the newspapers covered the story heavily. In his comments, he expressed the view that he opposed territorial acquisitions on principle, believing it important to develop the existing domain. In the case of Hawaii, however, for Foster,

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<sup>87</sup> Foster, *Diplomatic Memoirs*, 168-173.

“it is precisely because I want to see a great and powerful nation — much greater and more powerful than the one we now have — developed on this continent that I hail the opportunity now offered of securing this outpost of our Pacific frontier.”<sup>88</sup>

Following this performance, Associate Secretary of State William R. Day asked Foster to begin annexation negotiations with the Hawaiian representatives. Day was an inexperienced diplomat, appointed to the position to assist the older secretary of state John Sherman, and wanted the treaty handled by someone with a background in the Hawaiian issue. Foster had negotiated the original 1893 treaty with Hawaii and knew all the details intimately. The resultant treaty, signed June 15, 1897, was a virtual duplicate of the previous agreement, with the exception of the provisions for an annuity for Liliuokalani and Kaiulani.<sup>89</sup>

President McKinley forwarded the treaty to the Senate on July 16, 1897 with the assertion that “annexation is not a change. It is a consummation.” He explained that the treaty was not a “new scheme” but the result of the long relationship between the countries and that successive failures of previous treaties proved that “it was just a question of time.”<sup>90</sup> While the Hawaiian legislature graciously accepted the treaty and voted for its ratification on September 8, the U.S. Senate did not act as quickly. The Committee on Foreign Relations reported favorably on the treaty, offering a resolution for its ratification, but it met with resistance from the sugar beet industry and stalled out till the end of the session.<sup>91</sup>

With the break in session and the treaty still in limbo, Hatch and Thurston began a massive lobbying campaign in Congress and the press to spread pro-annexation propaganda

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid. For an explanation of the Japanese threat to Hawaiian annexation see William Michael Morgan, *Pacific Gibraltar: U.S.-Japanese Rivalry Over the Annexation of Hawaii, 1885-1898* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2011).

<sup>89</sup> Treaty of the Annexation of Hawaii 1897, *Sen. Reports*, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., No. 681, 96-97.

<sup>90</sup> Message of the President William McKinley, *ibid.*, 95.

<sup>91</sup> Stevens, *American Expansion*, 286.

nationally. They focused on the international threat posed by England and Japan. The English were the traditional nemesis in foreign policy, so painting the image of England swooping in and taking the islands from the United States was easy to complete.

The Japanese threat was a relatively new development. Japanese interests had grown in the islands over the course of the previous decade. There were two altercations between Japan and Hawaii in the summer of 1897. In March, Hawaiian officials denied a group of Japanese immigrants' admission into the islands and increased duties on Japanese *sake* entering Hawaii. In May, a Japanese naval vessel arrived in Honolulu Harbor carrying diplomats, the immigration company, and the press. Rumors spread quickly in Honolulu that the Japanese were threatening to attack, but they discussed their grievances with the administration and left without incident.<sup>92</sup> When news of the treaty negotiations reached the Japanese representative, the island nation filed formal concerns on three grounds: the treaty would change the status quo in the Pacific; it infringed on existing treaties between Japan and Hawaii; and it complicated the settlement of Japan's existing difficulties with the archipelago.<sup>93</sup>

These issues with Japan played into the hands of Thurston and Hatch. Hatch wrote Dole that Senator Chandler advised him to expose anything that made it look like there was a danger of foreign interference with Hawaii.<sup>94</sup> With their recent victory in the Sino-Japanese War and their growing naval power, the Japanese were not only a threat to Hawaii, but to the United States' ascension to world power status. The Japanese were equal to the United States in the world system, both climbing to the first-tier within the nineteenth century. The Japanese, however, seemed to be embracing that last step in the rise: control of military technology. The

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<sup>92</sup> Mills to Olney, Feb. 9, 1897; Sewall to Sherman, June 20, 1897, vol.26, Dispatches, NA.

<sup>93</sup> Morgan, *Pacific Gibraltar*, 188-198.

<sup>94</sup> Hatch to Dole, Dec. 16, 1896, Letter book, December 96-May 97, Box M-58, F.M. Hatch Papers, Manuscript collection, AH.

United States was falling behind. The Hawaiian delegation used this intelligence to their advantage.

Their efforts were assisted by America's greatest imperialists— Alfred Thayer Mahan, Whitelaw Reid, Theodore Roosevelt, and Henry Cabot Lodge. They all argued that the United States needed to build a large navy and acquire coaling stations and naval bases throughout the Pacific to compete with the other powers. Roosevelt and Mahan in particular wrote articles, made speeches, and put pressure on political colleagues to convince them that the annexation of Hawaii was not only good for Hawaii, but imperative to the United States' ability to compete internationally.<sup>95</sup>

As the end of 1897 neared, the annexationists started to worry that the anti-imperialist movement might defeat the treaty, so they put a larger effort into gaining public support. Thurston circulated to all senators his *Handbook on the Annexation of Hawaii*, which emphasized the major reasons for annexation, including the danger posed by Japan and China. He also discussed the strategic advantages of holding a naval base on the islands, and pointed to the economic connection between the islands and the United States.<sup>96</sup> Morgan joined in Thurston's crusade with his own discussion of the importance of annexation in the *Forum* in March. Several other senators and congressmen published articles attempting to sway the upcoming vote in Hawaii's favor.

Native Hawaiians were equally concerned with the outcome of this vote and on November 20, 1897, a group of representatives of the *Hui* boarded the *Claudine* for California, armed with their petition and signatures of protest against annexation. Their efforts succeeded temporarily. They wrote a memorial to the president and Congress detailing thirteen legal points

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<sup>95</sup> Tate, *The United States and the Hawaiian Kingdom*, 273-277.

<sup>96</sup> Thurston, *Handbook on the Annexation of Hawaii*.

against annexation. The council attacked the validity of the Hawaiian republic from a constitutional perspective, urging the U.S. Congress to uphold its own democratic principles and vote against annexation. They questioned the legitimacy of republicanism on the basis that the majority of Hawaiian citizens and residents were denied the franchise and the constitution was never submitted to a popular vote. Furthermore, they claimed that Hawaiian republic existed only by “force of arms” and that the government, “assumes and asserts the right to extinguish the Hawaiian nationality.” They, “humbly but fervently protest against the consummation of this invasion of their political rights... And they invoke in support of this memorial the spirit of that immortal instrument, the Declaration of American Independence... that the government’s derived its just powers from the consent of the governed.” Just as the *Haole* were elected to officially establish their new republic on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, the memorialists chose to appropriate the language of their perceived oppressors and invoke American symbolism as a means of challenging what they determined to be un-American.<sup>97</sup>

The annexation bill failed by three votes in December 1897, mostly because of the tariff bill and the sugar beet lobby, but the Hawaiian republic did not give up. After consulting with various supporters in Congress, it was decided that the best strategy to gaining annexation would be to drop the treaty and attempt a joint resolution. In March 1898, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations introduced the resolution and emphasized the Japanese danger and the strategic location of the islands. A similar bill was introduced in the House on May 4, but the two bills received little attention, languishing in committees while the two houses debated the

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<sup>97</sup> “Memorial to the President, the Congress and the People of the United States of America,” Liliuokalani Papers, Manuscript collection, MS KC 4.27, Bishop Museum Archives, Honolulu, HI.

possibility of requiring a referendum of the people. While this discussion continued, turmoil related to Cuba erupted into violence.<sup>98</sup>

Hatch wrote Dole that he was concerned that the problems with Spain had overshadowed the Hawaiian question, but saw an opportunity to use the Cuban question to Hawaii's advantage. He proposed that instead of declaring neutrality in the Spanish-American War, Hawaii should offer its harbors to the United States Navy to demonstrate the islands' utility. After considering the possibility that the Spanish could attack the islands if they did not declare neutrality, Dole agreed to allow the U.S. Navy to use Honolulu Harbor to outfit its ships. Spain, of course, protested and Henry Cooper, Minister of Foreign Affairs, replied to Spain that Hawaii had not declared neutrality, had, "tendered to the United States privileges and assistance." He informed the government in Madrid that its protest would receive "no further consideration."<sup>99</sup>

The strategy was a success. On June 15, the House resolution was brought out of committee and passed with a 209 to 91 vote. This House-approved bill was then sent to the Senate where it met with another debate from the last remaining anti-imperialists and sugar beet producers. There was a greater resistance in the Senate, but when the president exerted pressure, the bill went up for a vote and passed by a forty-two to twenty-one vote. On July 16, 1898, the Hawaiian annexation bill finally passed and the five-year struggle by the Committee of Safety was complete.<sup>100</sup>

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When news of the annexation reached Hawaii, Minister Harold Sewall reported "unbounded enthusiasm" in the streets for days and nights. Even the old Royalist factions

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<sup>98</sup> Hatch to Cooper, Jan. 21, 1898; Hatch to Dole, Mar. 6, 1898, file: Annexation, box 53, series, 404, FO&EX, AH.

<sup>99</sup> Henry Cooper to H. Renjes, Esp., June 6, 1898, folder 10, box 11, series 410, FO & EX, AH.

<sup>100</sup> *Cong. Record*, 55 Cong., 2 Sess., 6022.

seemed to appreciate the news.<sup>101</sup> Four weeks later, in an official ceremony presided over by President Dole and Minister Sewell, the Hawaiian Republic relinquished its sovereignty and became a territory of the United States, thereby signaling the final shift in the evolution of the two nations. In June, Liliuokalani received the news that Congress had voted to annex Hawaii. Her diary entry for that day read, “Auē! My love for my birthland and my beloved people. Bones of my bones, blood of my blood. Aloha! Aloha! Aloha!”<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Sewell to Day, July 13, vol. 26, Dispatches, NA

<sup>102</sup> Liliuokalani Diary, May 8, 1898, folder 127, box 12, Liliuokalani Papers, AH.

## Conclusion

Her ship sailed into Honolulu Harbor just past midnight on August 2, 1898. Greeted by a small crowd, including her niece Kaiulani, Liliuokalani stepped off the ship and spoke to her people. With a tearful voice, she told them that annexation of Hawaii was difficult for them all, but the small group of supporters encircling her in the dark now, comforted her. She felt they were saying “we are all still behind you.”<sup>1</sup> Liliuokalani had just returned from United States where she made one last personal appeal against annexation, and now returned to her home filled with members of the *Hui*, but empty of a crown.

The Hawaiian queen’s arrival at midnight could not have been more symbolic than if it had been choreographed. Just as midnight signifies the end of the day, Liliuokalani’s return symbolized the end of the fight to maintain Hawaiian independence, begun with the first monarchy, Kamehameha I, and continued throughout the nineteenth century. Midnight can also be viewed as the beginning of a new day, which was exactly what the Hawaiian nation now faced as a territory of the United States. The islands’ government would no longer be in peril from foreign aggression and it would now benefit financially from the connection with the United States economy.

The relationship began when the New England missionaries arrived in Honolulu in 1820 to Christianize the native Hawaiians. They became some of the most influential people in the archipelago, inspiring a shift in the political and religious culture of the islands, which brought

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<sup>1</sup> Silva, *Aloha Betrayed*, 200.

Hawaii into the family of nation-states. The New England Protestant missionaries, men like Gerritt P. Judd, Hiram Bingham, Lorrin Andrews, and William Richards, became close confidants of the royals through their work in the mission. Their advice guided the royals in establishing a constitutional form of government capable of appeasing the international hierarchy and was their most important contribution to the evolution of annexation. By influencing the end of absolute monarchy, and the beginning of participatory government, they helped to construct an environment in which the native citizens began to challenge the original collaborators' power. This approach resulted in a partisan struggle that ultimately destroyed the monarchy.

Other important American influences were speculators and businessmen looking for lucrative new investments. In the 1840s, they introduced the idea of sugar plantations, which led to a change in the land tenure system and sparked a greater need for foreign markets. Peter Allen Brinsmade and Henry A. Peirce helped build the foundation of Hawaii's international economy and bought large sources of revenue to the islands. When England and France threatened the islands' sovereignty, these Americans used contacts in Washington to help broker the beginning of an informal relationship with the United States.

By the 1870s, Americans on the islands began to vie for power against each other. Many American settlers worked closely with native collaborators in the informal imperial relationship and began to push the United States to take an interest in the future of the islands. Other Americans who came to Hawaii, however, threatened the hegemony of the collaborators' power by gaining favor with the monarchs and manipulating the political and economic systems to their advantage. Walter Murray Gibson, Celso Moreno, and Claus Spreckels threatened the established control of the original Americans and their collaborators, creating political turmoil that led the *haole* to question the practicality of continuing the informal relationship. When

native leadership began to challenge these men, they revolted against the system their parents created, and overthrew the monarchy.

As Americans ingrained themselves into the islands, the United States advanced through its own developmental stages, progressing from a second-tier nation into a world power while maintaining its connection with Hawaii. When first approached to formalize a relationship with the island nation, the United States was confined by its own secondary status in the international hierarchy. Unable to confront aggressively the European powers who threatened the islands, the United States had to invoke the Monroe Doctrine as a warning to the old world that it intended to safeguard its investment in Hawaii by ensuring its independence. Under pressure from Americans in the islands, Washington began its involvement to keep from being left out of the Pacific imperial impulse and to protect American interests on the islands against European aggression. American foreign policy toward Hawaii thereafter focused on sustaining an independent Hawaii largely under U.S. influence. This policy led some Americans to view Hawaii as a virtual colony of the United States and insist that the islands would inevitably become part of the nation.

Washington was buying time to finish its own internal development, which had to occur before the United States could rise to first-tier status. Differences between the North and South over economic policy and slavery had to be resolved for the nation to build a united identity and economy capable of competing on the first-tier level. It was not until after the Civil War, with the full industrialization of the north and an American mastery of the tools of empire, that the United States was able to enter into its first-tier status and assess its relationship with the island nation.

During these same decades, Hawaii also attempted to progress from its third-tier status, while maintaining its independence. Embracing the agricultural changes introduced by foreign residents, and working to gain a trade agreement with the islands' closest major economic neighbor, the Hawaiian monarchy hoped to appease the American collaborators and natives by encouraging the growth of a strong economy. Security agreements were also an important facet in the monarchy's plan. King Kamehameha III negotiated protection agreements with most of the European nations and the United States, using these agreements to counterbalance each other. This allowed him time to begin the economic and political changes deemed necessary to gain nation-state status. Relying on the protection of foreign vessels, however, left the archipelago vulnerable to aggression by those very nations sworn to protect them.

By the late 1880s, Hawaii had become a virtual dependency of the United States, through both the trade and security agreements. The United States was comfortable with the security side of this arrangement, but often questioned the economic relationship. The internal political changes introduced by King Kamehameha III had also led to partisanship on the islands that threatened the control of the white collaborators. Natives had gained a thorough understanding of the political system and strong political parties formed to challenge the control of the collaborationist *Haole*.

When Liliuokalani ascended to the throne, she took a strong stance against the loss of monarchical power, and considered restoring the 1887 constitution. This idea threatened the *haole* and they reacted. They weighed their options to determine the best course of action to sustain their control over the islands, and determined that the best course was to end the monarchy and set up a republican government. This would solidify their position against native and non-white

foreign challenges, while guaranteeing the economic stability of the islands, and thus their investments. It was this group's actions that forced the United States to face its imperialist past.

When placed in the international context described above, a different interpretation of the annexation of Hawaii emerges. First, the conspirators who overthrew Liliuokalani were not just a group of Americans acting on behalf of the United States. They were attempting to preserve their own power over the islands against an increasingly antagonistic native and foreign population during a highly partisan internal struggle for power. The queen's attempt to bring about a new constitution threatened their hegemony, which in their eyes warranted counteraction.

Finally, Washington's decision to annex Hawaii was a reaction to the events in Hawaii, not the cause of them. When the members of the Committee of Thirteen arrived in San Francisco with news of their coup and a proposal of annexation, they forced open a debate in the United States. These men engaged in a five-year propaganda campaign, meeting with any willing government official and plotting with pro-annexationist Americans, to gain the needed numbers in the Senate to formalize the treaty. They were protecting their own interests.

Consequently, the annexation of Hawaii was not the result of an aggressive move by the United States to gain coaling stations or foreign markets. Rather, the acquisition was the result of seventy years of American residents' political activities on the islands and foreign policy decisions by both nations attempting to find their place in the international system. Those decisions led to an increasingly dependent relationship linking Hawaii to the United States. Finally, the formal step of annexation was a reaction to events in the periphery brought on by a small group of collaborationists attempting to preserve their personal status. These men forced Washington to confront the final obstacle in the United States' rise to first-tier status—its own reluctance to take on the burdens and responsibilities of an imperial policy.

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