

RES 26-07 | CALL TO REVIEW THE LEGAL STATUS OF THE KINGDOM OF HAWAI'I

SUBJECT: Call for the United Nations to Review the Legal Status of the Kingdom of Hawai'i

SUBMITTED BY: Hawai'i District United Methodist Church Acts of Repentance Task Force

ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

SOURCE OF STAFF TIME: None

WHEREAS on January 17, 1893 American businessmen and leaders without provocation or warning orchestrated the illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai'i and Queen Lili'uokalani despite five treaties signed by the U.S. Government with the indigenous Hawaiian government, and global recognition of Hawai'i as an independent and prosperous nation. On that day, thirteen resident businessmen calling themselves "the Committee of Safety," and including the son of a Methodist missionary, seized power by illegally occupying the government building with the assistance of 162 U.S. Marines and Navy sailors.

WHEREAS in 1898, U.S. President William McKinley, also a Methodist, and the U.S. Congress illegally annexed Hawai'i as a territory by

- negotiating with the forcibly established, non-indigenous Republic of Hawai'i instead of the legal and internationally recognized Hawaiian Government,
- ignoring petitions from over 90% of Hawaiian Kingdom citizens against annexation, and
- failing to secure a Treaty of Annexation or Cession from the Kingdom of Hawai'i as required by international law.

WHEREAS Hawai'i was listed by the United Nations in 1946 as a non-self-governing territory and eligible for the UN-led de-colonization process, yet the 1959 U.S. plebiscite or "statehood vote" did not offer the independence option as was required, failing the standard of free, prior, and informed consent. UN Resolution 1469 accepting the US report of the statehood vote and subsequent admission of the Hawaiian Islands as a domestic state to the US was therefore adopted without due process and without the consent of Hawaiian national citizens.

WHEREAS in 1993, 100 years after the overthrow, President Bill Clinton and the U.S. Congress officially apologized for the United States' participation in the illegal takeover of the Hawaiian Nation. The Apology Resolution (U.S. Public Law 103-150, 1993) acknowledges that "the indigenous Hawaiian people never directly relinquished their claims to their inherent sovereignty as a people or over their national lands to the United States, either through their monarchy or through a plebiscite or referendum."

WHEREAS the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA's General Assembly in 1994 passed the resolution titled "Stolen Nation," which recognized the overthrow of Hawai'i was illegal and urged its 64 member denominations to work for justice and reconciliation,

WHEREAS the Rev. Harcourt W. Peck supported the illegal overthrow and served as sharpshooter and acting adjutant for Colonel J. H. Fisher, commander of the forces who dethroned Queen Lili'uokalani. When he returned to Hawai'i a year later to serve as pastor of First Methodist Episcopal Church in Honolulu, he rejoined the sharpshooter company and served as chaplain of the insurgent Republic of Hawai'i.

WHEREAS Henry Waterhouse, son of Methodist missionary John T. Waterhouse of England, was a member of the "Committee of Safety" that planned and implemented the overthrow of the Hawaiian nation. He served the Provisional Government, the Republic of Hawai'i, and continued to

1 work towards the 1898 illegal annexation of Hawai'i by the United States, all while serving as a
2 Trustee of First Methodist Episcopal Church of Honolulu.

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4 **WHEREAS** Rev. Peck's and Mr. Waterhouse's active suppression of the legal and internationally
5 recognized indigenous government of Hawai'i, as well as their continued solidarity with those who
6 took over the nation, solidified the Methodist Church's status in Hawai'i,

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8 **WHEREAS** the 2020 General Conference Resolution 9999 initiated a formal public apology to
9 Native Hawaiians for The United Methodist Church's complicity in the illegal overthrow of the
10 Kingdom of Hawai'i,

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12 **WHEREAS** the 1992 California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church
13 passed Resolution No. 16, which resolved that the Conference "recognize the inherent right of
14 native Hawaiian people to self-determined governance," and "pledge support, advocacy and
15 solidarity for Hawaiian self-governance,"

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17 **WHEREAS** the illegal overthrow and systematic oppression of Native Hawaiians since 1893
18 continues to have long-term repercussions today, due in large part to the taking of Hawaiian lands
19 and resources, the near extinction of the Hawaiian language, history and culture, and the domination
20 of non-Hawaiian worldviews that have led to the impoverishment of the Hawaiian people, as well as
21 the exploitation of the land and natural environment which are sacred to Hawaiian people.

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23 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the 2028 General Conference of the United Methodist
24 Church call on the United Nations to review UN Resolution 1469 that confirmed the U.S. statehood
25 of Hawai'i even though the official UN process was illegally manipulated against the Hawaiian
26 people by the U.S.

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28 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the California-Pacific Annual Conference adopt proactive
29 measures to address the wrongs expressed and provide assistance to the Hawaiian people in their
30 efforts to resolve the long-standing offense to bring about restoration and healing to the Hawaiian
31 nation.

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33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the California-Pacific Annual Conference send this
34 resolution to the General Board of Church and Society to present to the 2028 General Conference
35 of the United Methodist Church.