

Mākua for peace, not war



By Pōkā Laenui

Editor's note: Longtime Hawaiian sovereignty activist Pōkā Laenui is a Vietnam-era Air Force veteran and a former OHA trustee. The views expressed in this community discussion column are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

The U.S. military has no "right" to train for combat on any Hawaiian soil.

Following U.S. aggression against Hawai'i in 1893, any "right" the U.S. holds in Hawai'i is nothing more than rhetoric masking for reality. The definition of aggression included in U.N. General Assembly Resolution 3314 of 14 December 1974 states:

"Aggression is the use of armed force by a State against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another State [...]"

"1. No consideration of whatever nature, whether political, economic, military or otherwise, may serve as a justification for aggression.

"2. A war of aggression is a crime against international peace. Aggression gives rise to international responsibility.

"3. No territorial acquisition or special advantage resulting from aggression is or shall be recog-

nized as lawful."

It follows, therefore, that the U.S. government's "legal" lease to Mākua Valley is nothing more than manipulation between the feds and the state.

I'm against U.S. military training, not only because such activity despoils the cultural, religious and environmental nature of the land. I'm against it because of the grand lies now being perpetrated in Hawai'i about the U.S. commitment to peace and its war against terrorism, handled as flippantly as if it were a sporting event.

The U.S. is not committed to peace. It is instead committed to its own expansion in order to enjoy its "thriving global economy." And it hopes to accomplish this expansion through the suppression of all peoples who possess the goods or services for this economy but who oppose U.S. control.

Why should Hawai'i support a war in Iraq where it is clear the U.S. had no business attacking that nation in the first place?


War on terrorism? How was Iraq committing terrorism against the U.S.? If anything, it has been and continues to be the reverse. It is none other than the U.S. who is committing terrorism against the people of Iraq on a daily basis – bombing homes and villages, killing hundreds of innocents, then pasting on a label of "suspected insurgent strongholds." The U.S. had no business going into Iraq, and it has no business remaining there another day.

Live-fire training at Mākua for duty in Iraq? Give me a break. The Iraqis fighting back are using home-made explosives and small arms. U.S. armaments are a hundred times more powerful than theirs. What further "live-fire" training does the U.S. Army need?

Yes, the U.S. is indeed a nation at war! But it is not "global terrorism" that is the enemy. The ene-

mies are the ghosts of America's past and of America's present (yes, including its historical and current occupation of Hawai'i). The U.S. war is nothing more than young and poor fools made into soldiers to hold onto the ill-gotten gains of corporate America. The U.S. is finally being called upon to answer for its past and present deeds. It is being called upon to come face-to-face with its greed.

To win this war, the U.S. must resort to the ultimate weapon: truth. It must turn to the ultimate force: love. It must take the long path to peace: confession. And it must beg for forgiveness. The United States of America can no longer take the path of "exceptionalism" as if it is exempt from the laws of humanity. It must accept that it, too, is bound by the rules of fair play, justice and humanity.

When the U.S. succeeds in that kind of victory, the whole world will be the winners. In the meantime, leave Mākua and all Hawaiian lands alone. 

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