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# Speech/annual convention, Order of Kameham

Senator Daniel K. Akaka Papers

Public relations, Speeches, statements, and messages, Box PR2, Folder 143

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THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA  
SPEECH/ANNUAL CONVENTION  
ORDER OF KAMEHAMEHA  
AUGUST 28, 1987

ALOHA, AND THANK YOU VERY MUCH. IT IS INDEED A PLEASURE AND AN HONOR FOR ME TO BE HERE WITH YOU THIS EVENING, AS WE CELEBRATE ANOTHER YEAR IN THE HISTORY OF THIS GREAT INSTITUTION: THE ORDER OF KAMEHAMEHA.

THERE IS NO GROUP THAT BETTER REPRESENTS THE TRUE SPIRIT OF HAWAII AND THE DREAMS OF OUR PEOPLE THAN THE ORDER OF KAMEHAMEHA. THERE ARE NO MEN WHO HAVE FOUGHT HARDER AND LONGER FOR THE RIGHTS OF OUR PEOPLE THAN THE MEN OF THIS ORDER. AND, THERE ARE NO MEN WHO HAVE MORE SUCCEEDED IN CARRYING OUT THE WILL OF THE FOUNDER OF THIS ORDER THAN THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE PRESENT HERE TONIGHT.

I AM NOT SURE IF YOU KNOW THIS, BUT I FEEL A SPECIAL SENSE OF PRIDE IN THIS ORGANIZATION BECAUSE IT WAS ONE OF MY CLOSE RELATIVES, SIMEON AKAKA, WHO

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 23, 1987

WAS A MEMBER OF THE ORDER AT THE TIME OF ITS 1903 ORGANIZATION. INDEED, WHAT UNCLE SIMEON AND THE MANY OTHER MEN OF THAT DAY RECOGNIZED ABOUT THE GROUP WAS ITS VALUE IN PERPETUATING THE SPECIALNESS OF THE HAWAIIAN PEOPLE. UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GREAT ALI'I AI MOKU, JONAH KUHIO KALANIANA'OLE PI'IKOI, THE ORDER WAS GIVEN DIRECTION, A VISION INTO THE FUTURE WORLD, AND THE MOTIVATION TO TAKE ITS PLACE IN SOCIETY WITHOUT HESITATION.

WELL, I KNOW THAT UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF ALI'I AI MOKU ANDERSON, THE SAME IS TRUE TODAY.

THIS YEAR, AS WE CELEBRATE THE EIGHTY-FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORDER CREATED BY THE PRINCE, THE STATE OF HAWAII CELEBRATES HO'OLAKO, THE YEAR OF THE HAWAIIAN. IT IS A YEAR TO COMMEMORATE THE HAWAIIANS, AND TO CELEBRATE THE ENRICHMENT THAT THE PEOPLE OF THIS GREAT STATE SHARE AS A RESULT OF EXPOSURE

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAWA

AUGUST 28, 1987

TO HAWAIIAN VALUES AND HAWAIIAN SENSITIVITIES.

CERTAINLY, IT IS INCUMBENT UPON THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII TO RECOGNIZE ITS DEBT TO THE SO-CALLED "HOST CULTURE." FOR, TRULY, WITHOUT HAWAIIANS, THERE IS NO HAWAII. AND, I THINK THE PEOPLE OF HAWAII, AND THE PEOPLE OF HAWAIIAN ANCESTRY, HAVE ELOQUENTLY REPRESENTED THIS TRUTH.

THROUGHOUT THE ISLANDS, A VARIETY OF EVENTS CELEBRATING THE HAWAIIANS HAVE ALREADY TAKEN PLACE. FOR THE FIRST TIME, A GOVERNOR OF HAWAIIAN ANCESTRY HAS BEEN INSTALLED AS LEADER OF OUR FIFTIETH STATE. LIKewise, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE PATHS OF OUR ANCESTORS HAVE BEEN REAFFIRMED WITH THE "COMING HOME" OF THE HOKULEA. OF COURSE, THE KAMEHAMEHA SCHOOLS CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL, AND OTHER GROUPS HAVE JOINED IN THIS YEAR-LONG OBSERVANCE.

AND, LET US NOT FORGET KAUAI'S FIRST: THE SPONSORSHIP OF THE FIRST

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 28, 1987

INTERISLAND SAILING CANOE REGATTA. SURELY, THIS WAS A SUCCESSFUL EVENT.

NOW, AS WE ENTER INTO THE LAST TRI-MESTER OF THIS EMINENT YEAR, IT IS IMPORTANT FOR US TO FULFILL YET ANOTHER TASK. WE HAVE ALREADY SHOWN OUR REVERENCE FOR THE LAND AND THE ELEMENTS OF NATURE, FOR OUR FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS, AND FOR OUR OWN CULTURAL TRADITIONS. THESE QUALITIES SHALL UNDOUBTEDLY PENETRATE THE WAY OF LIFE IN HAWAII FOR A LONG TIME TO COME.

WHAT REQUIRES OUR WHOLEHEARTED ENDORSEMENT AND ATTENTION FOR THE DURATION OF THIS YEAR, HOWEVER, IS THIS: WE MUST TAKE IT UPON OURSELVES TO MOLD THE INSPIRATION GENERATED BY THIS OBSERVANCE INTO A PURPOSEFUL, TANGIBLE, LASTING COMMITMENT TO THE PERPETUATION OF OUR HAWAIIAN PEOPLE. SURVIVAL OF OUR RACE, AFTER ALL, IS THE BOTTOM LINE.

I KNOW THAT I NEED NOT RECOUNT THE DIRE STATISTICS OF OUR PEOPLE, FOR THE

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 28, 1937

PROBLEMS HAVE ALREADY BEEN WELL-DOCUMENTED. INSTEAD, I KNOW THAT I CAN SAY THAT THE ORDER OF KAMEHAMEHA, AS A ROLE MODEL FOR THE PAST EIGHT AND ONE-HALF CENTURIES, PLAYS A PIVOTAL ROLE IN ANY ENDEAVOR THAT SEEKS TO BETTER THE SITUATION OF THE HAWAIIAN PEOPLE.

BY VIRTUE OF YOUR HISTORY AND THE RESPECT THAT YOU COMMAND IN OUR COMMUNITIES, YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO LEAD. INDEED, WHAT OTHER GROUP BOASTS A CONCEPTUAL HISTORY THAT DATES BACK AS FAR AS THE 1800'S? AND, INDEED, WHAT OTHER GROUP HAS RESPONDED TO ITS CALLING WITH SUCH FERVOR AND PROFESSIONALISM AS THIS? I DARE SAY, NONE OTHER THAN THIS ORDER.

HAWAIIANS AND NON-HAWAIIANS, YOUNG, OLD, RICH AND POOR, THEY ALL LOOK TO YOU FOR GUIDANCE. AND, CERTAINLY, THIS IS NO EASY BURDEN TO BEAR. YET, YOU POSSESS THE VIRTUES NEEDED TO LEAD THEM; THE COMMITMENT REQUIRED TO BRING THEM

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 28, 1987

INTO THE 21ST CENTURY AS THE LEADERS THEY SO RIGHTLY DESEERVE TO BE.

TO DO THIS, WE MUST FIRST UNDERSTAND WHAT BEING HAWAIIAN REALLY MEANS. SURE, BEING HAWAIIAN MEANS THAT OUR HAIR MAY BE A DIFFERENT COLOR; OUR SKIN A LITTLE DARKER. BUT, THOSE OUR SIMPLY SUPERFICIAL CHARACTERISTICS. BEING HAWAIIAN MEANS BEING UNIQUE. IT MEANS HAVING STRONG TIES TO THE AINA. IT MEANS HAVING SINCERE RESPECT FOR OUR LANGUAGE. IT MEANS UNDERSTANDING OUR ARTS, CULTURE AND MUSIC. AND, IT MEANS KNOWING AND APPRECIATING OUR HISTORY. FOR, IF WE DO NOT APPRECIATE WHERE WE CAME FROM, HOW CAN WE POSSIBLE KNOW WHERE WE ARE HEADED?

IN WASHINGTON, I TRY TO EDUCATE MY COLLEAGUES ABOUT HAWAII AND OUR PEOPLE. I WORK HARD TO MAKE THEM REALIZE THAT THE HAWAIIAN PEOPLE NEED ATTENTION, AND THAT THE HAWAIIAN PEOPLE WANT TO EARN THEIR PLACE IN SOCIETY. SLOWLY, MY EFFORTS ARE

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 28, 1987

COMING TO FRUITION. ALREADY, WE HAVE RECEIVED FUNDING--\$1,000,000--TO INSTITUTE SOME FAMILY-BASED HEALTH CENTERS FOR OUR CHILDREN. SOON, WE EXPECT TO SEE NO LESS THAN ELEVEN OF THEM THROUGHOUT OUR ISLANDS. AND, I AM WORKING TO GET US MORE MONEY FOR THIS PURPOSE.

LIKEWISE, WE HAVE RECEIVED FUNDING FOR EDUCATING OUR KAMALII ABOUT THE DANGERS OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE. AND, I AM PLEASED TO TELL YOU THAT THE HOUSE HAS PASSED MY BILL TO CREATE A \$10,000,000 PER YEAR EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR NATIVE HAWAIIANS. THIS, I EXPECT TO BECOME LAW BEFORE THE END OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THIS 100TH CONGRESS. SO, YOU SEE, MY COLLEAGUES ARE SLOWLY BECOMING AWARE, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, BECOMING RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE.

THE CHALLENGE AWAITS YOU, HOWEVER, TO READY OUR PEOPLE FOR THE FUTURE. WE MUST PREPARE THEM FOR THE DEMANDS TO COME. WE MUST TRAIN THEM FOR THE JOBS OF

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 28, 1937

OUR INDUSTRIES DOWNSTREAM. YET, IN DOING SO, WE MUST REMAIN COMMITTED TO THE NOTION OF CULTURAL PRESERVATION. WE MUST NEVER LOOSE OUR UNIQUE QUALITIES, ATTITUDES AND TRADITIONS; WE MUST ENSURE A POPULATION EAGER TO SEEK INFORMATION ABOUT, AND PARTICIPATION IN, HAWAIIAN CULTURAL FORMS.

AND, YOU, AS MODERN DAY KAMEHAMEHAS, HAVE THE POSITION, POWER, AND INFLUENCE NEEDED TO GUARANTEE A POSITIVE OUTCOME. WE MUST TEACH OUR CHILDREN TO UNDERSTAND OUR HISTORY. AND, THIS IS NO EASY TASK. JUST THIS AFTERNOON, FOR EXAMPLE, I MET WITH A GROUP OF HAWAIIAN HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WHO WORK WITH HAWAIIAN STUDENTS IN WAIANAE. ONE OF THE PROFESSIONALS TOLD ME ABOUT THE LACK OF HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE OUR CHILDREN POSSESS. HE ONCE ASKED, HE SAID, A GROUP OF STUDENTS TO TELL HIM EVERYTHING THEY KNEW ABOUT KAPIOLANI. ONE STUDENT, THE ONLY STUDENT TO RESPOND, RAISED HER HAND AND ANSWERED: "KAPIOLANI. ISN'T THAT THE NAME OF A STREET IN HONOLULU?" NOW, IF THIS IS NOT ASTOUNDING, THEN I

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 28, 1987

DO NOT KNOW WHAT IS! OUR CHILDREN SHOULD KNOW OUR HISTORY. THERE IS SIMPLY  
NO EXCUSE FOR ANY LESS.

FOR THIS REASON, I BELIEVE THAT THE YEAR OF THE HAWAIIAN IS VALUABLE. IT  
AFFORDS US A CHANCE TO STIMULATE, INVIGORATE AND INSPIRE OUR PEOPLE TO BE  
HAWAIIAN; TO TEACH THEM THAT IT IS NOT ONLY OKAY TO BE HAWAIIAN, BUT THAT IT  
IS AN OUTRIGHT HONOR TO BE HAWAIIAN.

THE CHALLENGE, THEREFORE, IS FOR US TO REAP THE BENEFITS OF THIS YEAR  
TO THE GREATEST DEGREE POSSIBLE. WE MUST PREVENT THE ENERGY, INDEED SYNERGY,  
BEING CREATED FROM DISSOLVING INTO OBSCURITY.

EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU, AS MEMBERS OF THIS ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER, ARE  
DESCENDANTS OF ONE OF HAWAII'S GREATEST VISIONARIES; A MAN, WHO, IF HE WERE ALIVE  
TODAY WOULD CERTAINLY BE AT THE HELM. PRINCE KUHIO, YOUR FOUNDER, SET OUT TO

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 23, 1987

ACCOMPLISH THE NECESSARY INSTITUTIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR HAWAIIANS. YOU ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS. YOU ARE THE EXTENSION OF THE DIRECTIONS HE COMPASSIONATELY SET.

WE ARE THE HAWAIIANS WHO ARE CHARGED WITH THE DIRECTION HE SET FOR THIS DAY. WE ARE THE HAWAIIANS WHO MUST EMULATE THE GOODNESS OF HIS LIFE'S WORK AND CONTINUE BUILDING UPON IT FOR OUR SUCCEEDING GENERATIONS.

SO, IN CLOSING, LET ME SIMPLY ASK EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU TO TAKE SOME TIME, IF HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, TO TRULY REFLECT ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HAWAIIAN. FOR, IN FINDING AND UNDERSTANDING THOSE VALUES, THE TASK OF ENSURING THEIR PRESERVATION IS FIFTY PERCENT COMPLETED.

MAHALO NUI LOA FOR YOUR GRACIOUS INVITATION TO JOIN WITH YOU TONIGHT. AND, AS I LEAVE, LET US REMEMBER THE WORDS OF A PROFOUND HAWAIIAN PROVERB. IT GOES

HONORABLE DANIEL K. AKAKA

AUGUST 23, 1987

LIKE THIS:

"E KAUIPE AKU NO KA HOE,

E KO MAI KA HOE,

E HOE."

IT MEANS:

"PUT FORWARD THE PADDLE,

DRAW IT TOWARD YOU,

PADDLE ON."

IN THE NAME OF SURVIVAL, IN THE NAME OF EXCELLENCE, AND IN THE NAME OF  
KAMEHAMEHA, LET US PUT FORTH OUR COLLECTIVE PADDLES, AND MOVE FOREVER FORWARD.