

# LĀ KU'OKO'A INDEPENDENCE DAY

'IOLANI PALACE

28 NOVEMBER 2013

## WHAT IS LĀ KU'OKO'A?

In the Kingdom of Hawaii, November 28 was an official holiday called La Ku'oko'a, or Independence Day. This was the day in 1843 when England and France formally recognized Hawaii's independence.

Faced with the problem of foreign encroachment of Hawaiian territory, His Majesty King Kamehameha III deemed it prudent and necessary to dispatch a Hawaiian delegation to the United States and then to Europe with the power to negotiate treaties and to ultimately secure the recognition of Hawaiian Independence by the major powers of the world.

In accordance with this view, Timoteo Ha'alilio, William Richards and Sir George Simpson were commissioned as joint Ministers Plenipotentiary on April 8, 1842. Sir George Simpson, shortly thereafter, left for England, via Alaska and Siberia, while Mr. Ha'alilio, a devout native Christian, and Mr. Richards departed for the United States, via Mexico, on July 8, 1842.

The Hawaiian delegation, while in the United States of America, secured the assurance of U.S. President Tyler on December 19, 1842 of its recognition of Hawaiian independence, and then proceeded to meet Sir George Simpson in Europe and secure formal recognition by Great Britain and France. On March 17, 1843, King Louis-Phillipe of France recognizes Hawaiian independence at the urging of King Leopold of Belgium, and on April 1, 1843, Lord Aberdeen on behalf of Her Britannic Majesty Queen Victoria, assured the Hawaiian delegation that:

*"Her Majesty's Government was willing and had determined to recognize the independence of the Sandwich Islands under their present sovereign."*

## FORMAL AGREEMENT OF RECOGNITION

On November 28, 1843, at the Court of London, the British and French Governments entered into a formal agreement of the recognition of Hawaiian independence, with what is called the Anglo-Franco proclamation. To wit:

*"Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the King of the French, taking into consideration the*

*existence in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaiian Islands) of a government capable of providing for the regularity of its relations with foreign nations, have thought it right to engage, reciprocally, to consider the Sandwich Islands as an Independent State, and never to take possession, neither directly or under the title of Protectorate, or under any other form, of any part of the territory of which they are composed.*

*The undersigned, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs, and the Ambassador Extraordinary of His Majesty the King of the French, at the Court of London, being furnished with the necessary powers, hereby declare, in consequence, that their said Majesties take reciprocally that engagement.*

*In witness whereof the undersigned have signed the present declaration, and have affixed thereto the seal of their arms.*

*Done in duplicate at London, the 28th day of November, in the year of our Lord, 1843.*

*[L.S.] Aberdeen*



*Declaration*  
*Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the King of the French, taking into consideration the existence in the Sandwich Islands of a government capable of providing for the regularity of its relations with foreign nations, have thought it right to engage, reciprocally, to consider the Sandwich Islands as an Independent State, and never to take possession, neither directly or under the title of Protectorate, or under any other form, of any part of the territory of which they are composed.*  
*The undersigned, the Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the Ambassador Extraordinary of His Majesty the King of the French, at the Court of London, being furnished with the necessary powers, hereby declare, in consequence, that their said Majesties take reciprocally that engagement.*  
*In witness whereof the undersigned have signed the present declaration.*

*[L.S.] St. Aulaire"*

## NATIONAL HOLIDAY

November 28 was thereafter established as an official national holiday of the Hawaiian Kingdom to celebrate Hawaii's independence.

## INTERNATIONAL STATURE

As a result of this recognition, the Hawaiian Kingdom entered into treaties with the major nations of the world and established over ninety diplomatic legations and consulates in seaports and cities around the world.

## THE FAKE REVOLUTION

Fifty years later, in 1893, an illegal intervention by the U.S. into Hawaii's affairs resulted in a "fake revolution" against the legitimate Hawaiian government, and a puppet oligarchy set itself up with its main purpose of annexing Hawaii to the United States. After an attempted counterrevolution in 1895, the oligarchy announced that November 28, 1895 would not be celebrated as La Ku'oko'a, and the American holiday Thanksgiving would become the official national holiday instead. Removing a holiday like Independence Day was a way to cover up and try to destroy the history and identity of the Hawaiian national population.

At first Hawaiians protested and celebrated Ka La Ku'oko'a anyway, telling the story of the national heroes who had travelled to Europe to secure Hawaii's recognition. But over time, this history - knowledge of the holiday and how it was replaced - was almost lost, until Hawaiian language scholars in the last few years started translating Hawaiian language newspapers and uncovered the history.

Today's celebration of Ka La Ku'oko'a asserts that Hawaii is still an independent nation, even under the prolonged illegal occupation by the United States.

[Text from Kalāhui Hawaii in UNPO publication and [www.HawaiianKingdom.org](http://www.HawaiianKingdom.org)

## TIMOTEO HA'ALILIO (1808–1844)



Ha'alilio converted to Christianity as a young man, and remained a devout follower of Iesu Kristo all his life. Proficient in Hawaiian and English, he served as private secretary of King Kamehameha III and as a member of the treasury board. As the minister plenipotentiary of the Hawaiian Kingdom, he led the diplomatic team to Europe that successfully secured formal recognition of the independence of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Timoteo Ha'alilio passed away of tuberculosis on December 3, 1844 on his way home to the Hawaiian Islands.



Ua Mau Ke Ea O Ka Aina I Ka Pono

Official Publication of the Hawaiian Kingdom Government Press

The Hawaiian Kingdom

Box 23055 Makiki Station • Makiki, Oahu, Hawaii



*Celebrating*

**HAWAII  
INDEPENDENCE  
DAY**

**NOVEMBER 28**