

**RELATIONS WITH HAWAII: SPEECH OF
HON. CUSHMAN K. DAVIS, OF
MINNESOTA, IN THE SENATE OF THE
UNITED STATES, WEDNESDAY AND
THURSDAY, JANUARY 10 AND 11, 1894**

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Relations with Hawaii: Speech of Hon. Cushman K. Davis, of Minnesota, in the Senate of the United States, Wednesday and Thursday, January 10 and 11, 1894 by Cushman K. Davis

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CUSHMAN K. DAVIS

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HON. CUSHMAN K. DAVIS, OF
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From Senator McMillan

Feb. 20, 18

RELATIONS WITH HAWAII.

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S P E E C H

OF

HON. CUSHMAN K. DAVIS,^{Secretary}
OF MINNESOTA,

IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

Wednesday and Thursday, January 10 and 11, 1894.

—♦—
WASHINGTON.

1894.

SPEECH
OF
HON. CUSHMAN K. DAVIS.

The Senate having under consideration the resolution submitted by Mr. FAYE January 3, 1894, proposing to declare as the opinion of the Senate that, pending the investigation by the Committee on Foreign Relations, there should be no interference on the part of the Government of the United States with affairs in Hawaii—

Mr. DAVIS said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: On the 4th day of March, 1893, there was no question pending between this Government and the Government of Hawaii except the consideration of the treaty of annexation. All preceding questions, whatever they were, had been gathered up into the recognition of that Government, and had been settled in the most solemn form by the conclusion of a convention which had been submitted to the Senate. The Provisional Government of Hawaii had also been recognized by the nations of the civilized world, and from no quarter of the horizon was there any portent whatever of trouble to come.

Immediately upon the accession of the present Administration recommendations were made and action was taken which, in the course of their performance and in their consequences, have largely undone, and threaten entirely to undo, the composed condition of affairs which up to that time had existed. Our relations to those islands are now such as to excite the gravest apprehension, and seem to be fraught with consequences which, as they evolve from day to day, no foresight can adequately predict. The widest divergence of opinion exists, the matter is thrown into the sea of debate and public discussion, and it is my purpose, with powers which I regret are not adequate to so great an occasion, to discuss somewhat extensively the past and the present of those transactions.

Mr. President, the relations of Hawaii to the United States are and have been peculiar and exceptional. For more than fifty years, as a matter of announced national policy on the part of this Government, acquiesced in by Hawaii and by the nations of the civilized world, those islands have been entailed to the United States, and as to the United States have been in reversion when the time should come when the fleeting monarchy which has existed there should expire. There has not been a Secretary of State since 1840 who has not announced this determination and this policy. Mr. Webster, Mr. Legaré, Mr. Marcy, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Seward, Mr. Blaine, and all who have held that office have spoken in the voice of their Government in this respect with no uncertain tone, and it has been acquiesced in by foreign nations.

So that it is neither extraordinary nor remarkable that at some time under favorable circumstances and conditions that to which manifest destiny had dedicated those islands should be brought to pass. Indeed in 1854, Mr. Marcy, then being Secretary of State, a treaty of annexation was negotiated and only failed of confirmation because of its condition respecting pecuniary compensation to be made, and because of the fact that the treaty provided that the Islands of Hawaii should become a State in the Union.

Mr. President, the condition of that country, like all communities which have emerged or are emerging from barbarism into civilization, has always been peculiar and precarious. It has been subjected to foreign intervention over and over again, and those interventions were the occasions of many expressions of policy by the various Secretaries of State whom I have mentioned.

In 1836 the English negotiated relations with that island under the guns of a frigate. In 1839 the French did the same. In 1843 the English Government by force took possession of those islands and held them for months. The French did so substantially on another occasion, and when in 1851, under the guns of a French man-of-war, treaty obligations were demanded of the Kingdom of Hawaii, the then king executed a deed of cession and delivered it in escrow to the United States representative to be opened and considered as received upon the happening of certain events.

As I shall, in the course of the remarks which I propose to make, discuss at considerable length the events of January, 1893, in that island and the events subsequent to that time, it is, in my conception of the subject, necessary and proper, not for the purpose of vindicating particularly what has been done, but for showing the reasons and occasions of the action of the civilized people of those islands, to go somewhat into the history of the repeated occasions of oppression and abuse of power which finally brought those people to a conviction that they were under a condition of government which they could no longer endure and which authorized them to resort to the sacred right of revolution.

The reciprocity treaty with the Hawaiian Islands was concluded in 1876. Before that time and from the beginning of its history, or from the beginning of the time when civilization had come in contact with its history, those islands had been, so far as their civilized condition was concerned, the outgrowth of American influence, American settlement, and American civilization. It was a proud memorial of these. No other government exercising a protectorate or a sovereignty over the people of any other islands in the Pacific Ocean had brought about such results. The English found a republican form of government recently organized by the Maoris in New Zealand when they took possession in 1840, and where are the Maoris now? Swept away by the inexorable destructiveness of British administration.

But here in these islands, through American settlement, American influence, American wealth, and American Christianity, is presented the only instance in all that vast sea of a people forming themselves into a government under the guidance of civilization. So when the reciprocity treaty of 1876 became operative, there poured into those islands thus prepared an enor-

mous accession of American enterprise, wealth, and people, and its influence upon the destinies of that island of all kinds was of the most beneficent character.

But the new influences had to contend with a condition of things destined to soon pass away. The experiment of monarchical rule, then being conducted there, was ephemeral in its very nature.

Mr. President, relations such as those between this Government and that implied a certain right of intervention and control and interference. Such intervention and control have been exercised over and over again. That which would not be necessary in any situation which may now be conceived of as to relations which we have with any other nation of the world has been necessary there.

In 1874, by the death of the King without issue, he naming no successor, the office became elective by the Legislature. Strife arose between the partisans of Queen Emma, who represented the British interests, and those of the late King Kalakaua, whose disposition toward the United States was supposed to be favorable. The Legislature of Hawaii convened. There was an election. It resulted in the choice of the late King. Immediately a riot sprang up, intended by its contrivers to grow to the proportions of a revolution. The rioters were natives. They broke into the legislative chamber where the ceremony of election was taking place, and assaulted and beat the legislators then in the performance of their duty. Whereupon, without invitation, upon the mere motion of the United States minister, the American marines were landed from the ship of war then in the harbor of Honolulu, and that election was thereupon conducted and concluded, and King Kalakaua was inaugurated under the direct supervision and guard of American military power.

In 1880 there was trouble in Hawaii because a foreign adventurer by the name of Moreno, who had become minister of foreign affairs or of finance, was playing havoc with the interests of the islands. The situation became so intolerable that all the foreign ministers raised their flags over their legations, and declined to hold any further intercourse with that Government until Moreno was displaced.

In time the Government became corrupt—corrupt beyond example, inefficient beyond precedent; it became the prey of every flagitious scheme which was not able to obtain a foothold in any other land. The opium bill of 1886, designed by its promoters to have its inevitable effect of producing a moral lethargy upon the people, was introduced, and a most singular system of bribery did its work.

A Chinese named Aki gave to the then King \$71,000 as a consideration for a license to be thereafter issued to him. Another Chinese paid to the King \$20,000 for the same thing, but took the precaution to get the license before he paid his money. The consequence of which was that Aki committed suicide and his estate went into administration. Because of the excesses, the profligacy, the riotous expenditure of the late King, his private debts had become about \$250,000, and he was compelled to assign the crown lands to trustees as security for the payment. The administrator of Aki put in his claim. It was contended on the part of the Hawaiian Government, or by the trustees, that the contract was against good morals and public policy, and therefore was

void; but by a strange yet I think logical application of the ancient maxim that the king can do no wrong, the supreme court of Hawaii held the contract valid and held the estate for the repayment of the sum.

The year 1887 was marked with great disturbances. Many events, which the limitations of the present occasion do not permit me to recount in detail, had brought this about. Many people from civilized lands had come in; great operations were going on, agricultural and otherwise; the existing constitution of 1874 was distasteful to them—unjust, for it contained instrumentalities of oppression. Accordingly, in that year a revolution was organized—revolutions are frequent in that island—and volunteer companies were equipped. Foreign residents addressed their ministers and stated that the situation as it had been was intolerable. Mass meetings were held, guarded by armed volunteer troops; business was suspended, and resolutions were passed declaring that the monarchy had ceased to exist through its incompetency and corruption.

A committee was sent to the King with this resolution. He called upon certain foreign ministers, those of the United States and Great Britain and Portugal, and offered to put his Kingdom into their hands if he could be extricated from what he considered the personal peril of his position. They declined this, and advised him to promulgate a new constitution at once, acceding to the demands of the revolutionists. He followed the advice. This was the constitution of 1887, which the ex-queen, by a revolutionary act, and in violation of the terms of every constitution which ever has subsisted in that island, undertook to abrogate by her own personal decree, and to restore that of 1874, which contained the unjust and oppressive provisions to which I have alluded.

After the adoption of the constitution of 1887 the next three years and a half of the history of that island were marked with sedition, conspiracy, and tumult. There was a revolution in July, 1889, and it resulted in insurrection, fighting in the streets, and much bloodshed.

Mr. FRYE. Will the Senator allow me?

Mr. DAVIS. Certainly.

Mr. FRYE. My impression is that the Senator is not strictly accurate when he says that Queen Liliuokalani proposed to restore the constitution of 1874. I think the evidence shows that she proposed a constitution of her own, which was infinitely worse than that of 1874.

Mr. DAVIS. I have compared the constitutions of 1887 and 1874 with what purports to be a copy of the constitution which she proposed to promulgate in January, 1893, and which until a very recent date has been visible to no man, and I am inclined to think that my general statement in that respect is correct.

Mr. FRYE. I simply desire to say further in relation to that, that there may be similar features in the constitution of 1874 to the one proposed by the Queen, but as published in the Blount report there are some parts of it left out of the constitution which the Queen proposes, notably the article which provided for disfranchising all the white inhabitants.

Mr. DAVIS. I shall come to that in the due course of my remarks. I propose to analyze those constitutions before I get through.

There was another conspiracy in 1888, the direct object of which was to depose the then King, and the ultimate object of which was to procure an abrogation of the constitution of 1887 and a return to the former bad condition of affairs.

Mr. President, I wish to impure in the discussion I am about to make upon this question of fact improper motives to no man. I have, however, become impressed with the conviction that upon the testimony which Mr. Blount took in the Hawaiian Islands, and upon that alone, his report can not be sustained.

Mr. FRYE. If the Senator will pardon me one moment, I should like him to state right there if it is a fact that his argument is proceeding upon the evidence printed in the Blount report, and that he has not been present as a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations to hear the evidence which has been since taken?

Mr. DAVIS. That is true. In what I shall say, Mr. President, respecting the bearing of the testimony upon the Blount report, I shall confine myself exclusively to the testimony reported by that gentleman in connection with it. I will also state that, as a matter of fact, and designedly, I have not attended a meeting of the subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Relations now conducting its investigations. No syllable of the testimony taken there has been reported to me. I am unable to use it. I would not use it if I could, owing to the manifest impropriety of any such action. But I purpose to test the report so far as I can by the testimony which was taken by Mr. Blount and which it is asserted sustains it; and it does seem to me, weighing it with as much impartiality as one can who has convictions upon either side of the subject, that, instead of sustaining the conclusions to which the commissioner came, it sustains the action of Minister Stevens and sustains the action of the preceding Administration based thereon.

As I said, another conspiracy was inaugurated in 1888, all of these conspiracies having for their object the deprivation of the people there, who are of American and European birth, of the civil rights guaranteed to them by the constitution of 1887, having for their object a reversion to the old order of things whereby only native subjects were electors and eligible to office. The King having granted the constitution of 1887 under the conditions of force and duress which I have stated, many of his subjects were naturally dissatisfied, and accordingly the conspiracy of 1888 was entered into, in which the recent Queen, then Mrs. Dominis, was a prime mover, for the purpose of deposing her brother. Its object was to compel by force the King to abdicate.

The King got forty-eight hours to temporize, and the result was that some of the revolutionists were arrested, the conspiracy was frustrated, and the object of Mrs. Dominis, who afterwards became queen, was not attained. I cite this and other analogous facts to show the character and disposition of this woman, what she has done in the past, what her purposes have been, how she has violated pledges and oaths, and how much reliance can be placed upon any assurance of hers that her conduct in the future will ever be otherwise than it has been in the past.

Another revolution or conspiracy took shape and force on the 30th day of July, 1889, and Mrs. Dominis was back of that. It was known as the Wilcox insurrection. He arrayed a force of one hundred men, and he was a man perfectly competent to

carry out a design of that character. He is a somewhat remarkable personage, of Hawaiian birth, largely of Hawaiian blood. He was educated in his youth at the expense of the Government of the islands in the military schools of Italy, and served as a subaltern in the artillery service of that Kingdom until he was recalled by his own government. He entered into a conspiracy to dethrone the King, and Mrs. Dominis, the King's sister, was a confederate with him. With characteristic falsity she afterwards disavowed it, but no one can read the evidence in this report without being convinced that such was the fact, the scheme being throughout to procure a return to the old bad order of things.

Wilcox with his armed force moved out early in the morning and took possession of the government building. He received large accessions. The King fled from his palace and took refuge in a boathouse, under the guns of the United States man-of-war Adams. Some ten Hawaiians were killed in the fighting which ensued before the insurrection was put down.

On that occasion, in 1889, in the presence of a revolution organized and carried out to overthrow the King, the then minister of the United States did not hesitate. His conduct was never condemned. Mr. Merrill, who was then our minister, without any invitation from the Government, landed the American marines from the ship of war then in the harbor. He landed them because it was necessary to protect American life and property, no matter what the incidental results or the collateral consequences might be as to the stability of the Kingdom itself. His conduct was never blamed. Later in the afternoon, at the request of the Government, which he had not asked before, another detachment was landed and he reports:

The appearance of the marines on the streets and at the legation had a very favorable effect upon the populace.

Here was a conspiracy to overthrow the throne, necessarily implicating American interests in the result, whichever way the result might be, threatening violence; and yet before anything overt had happened, an article of property destroyed, or the life or safety of a single person actually threatened, the then minister landed the American troops, and no exception was ever taken to that act.

The time came for the King to die, and Mrs. Dominis was elected as his successor and took the title of Queen Liliuokalani.

Mr. MORGAN. Mrs. Dominis was not elected by the Legislature; she was appointed by Kalakaua.

Mr. DAVIS. I did not mean to say that. The constitution of that kingdom, issue failing, empowers the king the right to designate his successor, and that failing, the right of election vests in the Legislature. She was designated by her brother. When she was inducted into the sovereignty, under circumstances of great solemnity, she took an oath administered by the chief justice of the Kingdom to support the constitution of the year 1887; and yet her words had scarcely died away (certainly not from the recollection and hopes of those who heard them) before, in the early part of the year 1892, she began to conspire to do that which she afterwards attempted to do in January, 1893. She purposed and conspired to promulgate a constitution similar to that of January 14, 1893, and which when attempted resulted in her downfall. She requested Wilcox, the trained