

Interview

JOHN WAIHEE

Reel 1

(shot 1)

59:42 bars and tones

00:00 (MEDIUM CU) GENERAL CONVERSATION; make-up artist applies make-up

(shot 2)

00:24 QUESTION: (MEDIUM CU) John, please give us a little background about yourself; your parents, your birth, your education, your introduction to politics.

00:30 WAIHEE: Well, I was born on the Big Island, and my parents were um ... John Waihee—John, Junior, and Mary Purdy Waihee. He was uh, he was from Hilo and she was from Waimea, so they settled in Honokaa, which I grew up on. So yeah, so my—my background is rural. Living on the Big Island, um ... growing up in the middle of uh, the plantation town of Honokaa. And uh, somehow associating with cattle ranching, which my father was a rancher.

(shot 3)

01:04 QUESTION: How big a ranch did he have?

01:06 WAIHEE: Well, he actually used to work uh, had a uh, he uh, used to work with um, with a Chinese doctor who had a ranch. So he used to manage it. And he always wanted his own place. And so he heard of this thing called the Hawaiian Homes Commission, so he was one of the early applicants, the 1950 applicants that applied in 1950 for some ranchland, and then spent the rest of his life waiting for it. And so the rest—uh, he never actually owned his own ranch. He'd always lease somebody else's property and used to uh, made him a little bit of a Hawaiian Homes activist. So in order to support his family, he worked for the telephone company, but he considered himself a rancher.

(shot 4)

01:49 QUESTION: How many children were there?

01:52 WAIHEE: Uh, there was myself and uh, three sisters. I'm the uh, I was the only son and the oldest uh, child.

02:00 QUESTION: And you—

02:00 WAIHEE: Which was a great position to be in.

02:06 QUESTION: Hawaiian on both sides of your family?

02:07 WAIHEE: Yes. Both my parents were uh, three-quarter Hawaiian. So uh, that makes me about three-quarters Hawaiian, again.

02:14 QUESTION: That's [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. [LAUGHTER]

02:19 WAIHEE: They had everything else besides that, though. The—the—that last quarter was really messed up.

02:24 QUESTION: There were all sorts of—

02:25 WAIHEE: Yeah. Well, Irish ... uh, I think uh, that gave me my natural inclination for politics, you know, but—

02:33 QUESTION: Well, in Hawaii when you mix Hawaiian and Irish, you can't stay away from it.

02:36 WAIHEE: Yeah; you might end up with something weird.

02:39 QUESTION: Purdy is a famous name.

02:40 WAIHEE: Yeah; Purdy. Purdy is a hawa—it's uh, sort of a Hawaiian cowboy family. My great-grand uh, un—uncle was Ikua Purdy, the famous cowboy that uh, you know, went up to Cheyenne, won the world championship, and all of this stuff.

02:56 QUESTION: So that's paniolo country—

02:58 WAIHEE: Right.

02:58 QUESTION: --where you grew up.

02:59 WAIHEE: Right.

(shot 5)

03:00 QUESTION: So you have Hawaiian aunties and uncles and so forth. As a kid, you were born in 19 ...

03:06 WAIHEE: You really want that information?

03:08 QUESTION: Yes, I do. You were born in 19—

03:11 WAIHEE: 1946; May 19, 1946.

03:14 QUESTION: 1946. So you're growing up, small kid time is post-war Hawaii.

03:20 WAIHEE: Right.

03:21 QUESTION: On the Big Island, Hamakua Coast.

03:23 WAIHEE: Right.

03:24 QUESTION: Honokaa. What was that like? How would you describe your small kid life?

03:29 WAIHEE: Well, uh, first of all, **(03:30-03:44-SLOW ZOOM IN from MEDIUM CU to CU)** it was um ... very relaxed. I mean, we—we—we were um ... we were not wealthy, by an stretch of the imagination. On the other hand, I—I don't think we knew we were poor. You know, because uh, it was the—it was country living. I mean, there was always enough to eat, uh, my father fished all the time. Um, and when he wasn't fishing, he was raising cattle. And so we—we had all fresh food. I mean, the most exciting meal that we could have would be something you'd buy from the store, like Spam, you know. You get—you get—you get uh, canned foods, and you'd think, wow, this is time for a Christmas celebration. Because it was unusual. But fresh produce, fresh food was, you know, very—very comfortable, and there was a lot of family around all the time. I mean, we obviously associated with people who were my cousins, my friends. And the people you uh, associate—you—you grew up with ... you know, you grew up with from very young. I mean, the—the town—we used to always, h—you know, hope some new family would move in just so we could see if there was uh, you know, there'd be some new girls coming to town. Which everybody else was your sister. Uh, you know, it's—it's tough being a teenager in a railroad community. [CHUCKLES]

(shot 6)

04:49 QUESTION: Tell me about—I mean, your parents, you've got a lot of Hawaiian blood, but how Hawaiian were they? I mean—

04:54 WAIHEE: Oh, they were very—

04:57 QUESTION: Did you hear language at home, did you—traditions? I mean, did your sisters all grow up in the hula or ...

05:02 WAIHEE: Yeah, well, we—you know, we ... it—it's interesting because we were—we were a very Hawaiian family, but you didn't sit around talking about this as being Hawaiian. I mean, the—my mother just acted Hawaiian, my father acted Hawaiian. And everybody uh, in the neighborhood acted in their own cultural context, you know, whoever it was. We happened to be Hawaiian. And then you all believed you were all people from Honokaa or Ahualoa, which is where we lived. But in terms of years later, my looking back on it, I mean, it was a very Hawaiian family. My parents spoke Hawaiian. They spoke uh, they spoke Hawaiian uh, to each other. They did it mainly when they didn't want us to uh, know what they were talking about. Uh, a lot of times when they were being naughty or something; I—I don't know. But uh, they were saying things that they didn't want the kids to know about. And uh, uh, but obviously, we—we picked up some understanding of it. Um ... my grandmother used to s—come and stay with us all the time. She was my father's mother. And she uh, she was pure Hawaiian, and she—she would always you know, do things in the Hawaiian way. Um, so y—you—you were sort of in that mi—milieu.

(06:25) The only—the—the—the only time that Hawaiian-ness came up as a separate issue from normal life in other words, was uh, when ... in discussions about Hawaiian Homes, an—and Hawaiian—and my father's desire, uh, to become a Hawaiian homesteader. And what that meant. And so it was in that context, that kind of political context that—that I began to have some kinda sense of the uh ... uh, th—to the ... the—the uh, issue of what Hawaiian-ness might be, separately from everyday—everyday life. And my dad and I had an interesting relationship. Because he used to spend a lot of time talking to me. I mean, that's what we did, you know. He—he—he didn't think watching television was too cool, so he'd let us do it for a while, and then the rest of the time he'd just—he'd be talking to me, constantly, about things that were happening in the community. Um, he was the only Hawaiian Democrat in like about fifty miles of where I lived, and probably in his family. Um, and he uh, so he had that kind of social orientation type of thinking, or—or he was a little bit of a—of a different uh, type of thinker. And uh, so we'd talk about it. We'd talk about Hawaiian homes, we'd talk about what—what needed to be done, and uh, and his own activism.

(Shot 7)

08:02 QUESTION: I know, but I'd like you to explain why all those Hawaiians were Republicans. All of your—

08:09 WAIHEE: Well, I—I—think uh, I think a lot of them were Republicans because of Prince Kuhio. I mean, they just—it was just kind of a tradition. I mean, they—Prince Kuhio was a Republican, and people just sort of fell in—in tune with it. And a lot of the early um ... uh, they just saw r—the Republicans as being more ... uh, tied with uh, with uh,

Hawaiians than—than—than uh, maybe the Democrats, w—which were actually, you know, late beginners politically. Um ... although the founder of the Democratic Party was Prince Kuhio's cousin, David Kawananakoa. It was a family thing in those days; the royalty did everything. I mean, they—you know, they founded both parties. Uh, by the time we get to the 30s and the 40s uh, you know, y—you see Johnny Wilson coming onstage, you see a number of prominent Hawaiians—the Trasks and so forth, that—that start to stand up as Democrats, that have more social orientation. Uh, uh, my father's particular conversion was—was actually because of his relationship with a very famous legislator that lived right behind us in uh, Ahualoa, which is right above uh, Honokaa; uh, Yoshito Takamine. Takamine uh, was a um ... was a uh, uh, member of the (09:38-09:59-ZOOM OUT to less tight CU) ILWU. And he was very active uh, in uh, the union activities. And then he—he ran for uh, office. I think that would be around the—the early 1950s uh, m-m, possibly. And so I remember him coming over. I mean, that's the way you did politics in those days. Spending hours with my father, talking about the Democratic Party, what needed to be done, changes that needed to be had, et cetera, et cetera. And um ... my father became a lifelong Takamine supporter.

(shot 8)

10:14 QUESTION: Do you remember any discussion that they had or that your dad ever mentioned in all this talking about statehood?

10:22 WAIHEE: Well ... uh, you know, statehood was a very interesting ... concept. Because m—most people sort of knew that statehood was the right next step. I mean, it was the necessary and the correct next step politically for Hawaii. Because statehood meant equality, uh, putting us, the people of Hawaii on par with the—the rest of the country. And I—I remember many conversations with—with schoolteachers when I was ve—you know, very young, prior to uh, uh, uh, to—to statehood occurring, where the—statehood was the—the achievement of statehood was associated with the ability to be president. Every American should be able to be president, and if we became a state, anybody in this classroom could be president. And uh, and it was that kind of feeling. And—and I think on an intellectual level um ... for uh, Hawaiians, I think on an intellectual level, I think Hawaiians ac—most Hawaiians accepted ... that concept. (11:36) But on an emotional level ... I—I—I'm not sure that they bought into it a hundred percent. Because—an—and it wasn't something that was necessarily expressed in conversation uh, directly as much as it was expressed in terms of concerns that would be raised about what would happen if. What would happen to the Hawaiian Homes program. What would happen to um ... to—to—to Bishop Es—uh, Princess Pauahi Bishop's estate. You know, these kinds of things. I mean, there was a cons—so the—so uh, uh, uh, I think uh,

within the Hawaii population, there was a—kind of a unique sense of what statehood meant, that might have been peculiar to the native Hawaiian population. Whereas as a—as a—and again, as an intellectual exercise, it was something that everybody agreed ought to take place. And some people actually, maybe more actively than others, advocated it. But on an emotional level, there was this concern uh, or this ... I wouldn't say hesitation. May—maybe there was this kind of caution about what that would mean for programs and for the legacy uh, of native Hawaiians. Now, obviously, uh, the 1950s was not a time when there was as much political rhetoric about these issues as there are today. But there was still uh, a lot of intense feelings, particularly among the civic clubs and other Hawaiian organizations. (13:25) So I remember being in many discussions on both levels, hearing people talk about statehood ul—ultimately being described as a very good thing. But one where everybody was saying, you know, you gotta be—this has—this has gotta be protected. And so if you look at the Hawaiian—Hawaii—State of Hawaii uh, Constitution ... see, when I—when I had a chance to sort of later on in life to actually deal with that document much more so than when I was growing up, um, I—I began to understand more clearly or—or get a better sense of some of the things that were done to actually make statehood um ... palatable to a great cross section of the people. (14:12) I mean, the inclusion of the—the Hawaiian trust language in the State constitution, the idea that the Hawaiian Homes program wa—would be part of the State's responsibility. I mean, uh, I'm not so sure people back then trusted Washington. I mean, we have a slightly different history than maybe some of the tribes, n—native American indi—uh, native American tribes in America who saw Washington as the great White father. I mean, w—we wanted to keep everything here, keep it uh, keep it local, keep it special, keep it in Hawaii. And so you know, uh, I think some of that, at least in my experience, played a um ... a role in that.

(shot 9)

14:58 QUESTION: And that comes out of the inde—(15:00-tape stops-tape starts on MEDIUM CU) you were only thirteen years old in 1959.

15:03 WAIHEE: I think I was in the—yeah, seventh grade.

15:05 QUESTION: Okay.

15:07 WAIHEE: Or something. Sixth or seventh grade; I don't remember.

15:10 QUESTION: John, would you briefly explain what the Hawaiian Homelands legislation, how it worked and how Hawaiians got land under it?

15:19 WAIHEE: Well, uh, in—in a nutshell, what—what the—the legislation was, was that it was a federal legislation that had been sponsored by Prince uh, Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaʻole uh, in about the uh, 19—late nineteen ... twenties; right—right in that area, about 1920. That uh, set aside uh, about two hundred and fifty acres of uh, lands that were part of what we call the Ceded Land Trust, um, for—to be used, to be allocated to native Hawaiians for their use. Uh, and as he talked about it, it was for their r—rehabilitation and for the s—you know, the—the—the sustenance—uh, to sustain the native race. Um, what was happening was that a lot of people—native Hawaiians were dying out, and he wanted to—he was—he wanted to develop a program that was targeted to native Hawaiians to bring them back to the lands. And uh, that—and so he created the Hawaiian Homestead program. Bu—this was about the same time, by the way, that there is a federal homestead program going on, that in—where any citizen can go in and get uh, X-number of acres of land, buy it from the federal government or from the—the state government uh, and settle it. My grandfather actually had parcels of land that he had bought from uh, as—as—through the normal homestead program. So what Prince Kuhio wanted to do was to make one that was particular for Hawaiians. And it became part of his ... you know, in a way, his ... his bequest.

(shot 10)

17:01 QUESTION: So your dad, when he was applying for the Hawaiian Homestead land was applying for some of that two hundred and fifty thousand acres.

17:08 WAIHEE: Yeah. And what he wanted was—you know, in 1950, the ranchlands, the ranchlands in um, in the Waimea area of the Big Island, which was—which had been a long ... which were state lands, uh, Hawaiian homelands, had long been um, leased by the Parker Ranch. They became available for homestead. And a whole number of the—and a number of ranches were then uh, allotted out to various uh, native Hawaiians uh, to begin to use as ranches.

17:44 QUESTION: That was pretty good ranchland.

17:46 WAIHEE: Well, it was pretty good ranchland. But it was uh, not necessarily good land. Um, I don't know—and there were some farmlands that were—that were allotted too. But it was, you know, a good opportunity. I mean, it was something that he couldn't have done ... without uh ... getting uh, getting a lot.

(shot 11)

18:10 QUESTION: I have this peculiar theory about you. I mean,

you—

18:14 WAIHEE: Most people do.

18:15 GENERAL CONVERSATION

18:26 QUESTION: When did you develop your Hawaiian consciousness? I mean, it seems to me that when you became— (**18:31-18:37-ZOOM IN** from **MEDIUM CU** to **CU**) I have a theory that you developed your Hawaiian consciousness in Benton Harbor, Michigan as a community action worker who would forever be changed, and when he came back, I mean, he didn't—I don't mean the Hawaiian part of it, but the consciousness that something has to be done.

18:47 WAIHEE: Well, I—I think I developed my social consciousness, you know, uh [**18:50-CLEARs THROAT**], my social activism on uh, in Benton Harbor in—in uh, Michigan. But ... I mean, actually, the—y—there was a moment in my life, earlier to that, when I developed a kind of a Hawaiian consciousness [**19:05-CLEARs THROAT**] that uh, maybe um ... didn't—I wasn't really aware of before. And that is that r—you know, right about—I used to love to read. I mean, when I was growing up, I read everything. I—you know, uh, the little Encyclopedia Britannica that we had in our family home, I read it from cover to cover. I mean, I just—you know, anything I could get my hands on. And I uh, sometime at about the fifth or the sixth grade, and um ... I read for the first time in my life, a history of Hawaii. And I discovered that the Hawaiians had this—I mean, it's amazing. (**19:47**) You know, I'm growing up in a Hawaiian household, talking about Hawaiian issues sort of—or at least being involved, you know, in a casual kind of everyday way, but never identifying it with any kinda context. And then all of a sudden, about the summer between the—what I did I say; the fifth, sixth, seventh grade, sometime in that era—that—that period, I um—I don't know exactly when, but I—I read this book about, you know, on Hawaiian history. And it just floors me, that ... that thi—this—this rich, rich history. And then I—what I do is, I deliberately find anything on the subject that I can find, and read it. And then I become very conscious of this ... actually, very proud of uh, of uh, kind of um ... it's sort of interesting; it's very proud, very—and—and then I—I start feeling unique. And like uh, and I—and I—and I want, and I—and I start enjoying myself in a way that I didn't do it before. I mean, I never—I mean, the wonderful thing about growing up in rural Hawaii when I was, was everybody were who they were. And nobody particularly felt or cared what you thought about them. I mean, you know, we grew in that kinda context. I mean, we—we—there weren't separate people all over the place; there were either good people, bad people, people you liked, you didn't like, there were Filipinos, Hawaiians, Japanese. But that's who

they were. But all of a sudden, I developed a kind of a sense of liking who I was, as opposed to just accepting everybody and myself as who I was. And—and that's when my real consciousness uh, started. And I—and I got very interested in it.

21:38 QUESTION: And that was like intermediate school?

21:40 WAIHEE: Yeah; probably late—uh, end of elementary, beginning of intermediate school. Now, by the time I get to college, and I get to college in an era where, you know, it's the 60s, in the center of the 60s, and the civil rights movement are go—is going on, and all of this stuff is happening, and I happen to be going to school in an area that—that subsequently had the third worst riot in America. So I mean, this is like the segregated North. Uh, and you know, and this stuff is very interesting, very exciting, and obviously uh, very appealing on an intellectual level. But you know, and in the process of participating in that time, in that era, in that time zone, it suddenly occurred to me that uh, I should be doing this back home. I mean, you know, it's uh, I mean, as—as a human being, I obviously want to see everybody benefit fully from the American dream, the American life. But as a person ... I mean, why am I—I up here trying to fix somebody else's back yard. I need to go home. And that's all—becomes part of the—the decision of coming home, getting involved that ultimately you know, leads to ...

(shot 12)

23:01 QUESTION: Yeah; we never really did quite handle your education. Because that's what takes you to the mainland, to that place. Could just briefly tell us where you started school, where you made your—and then you come over here, right, to go to [UNINTELLIGIBLE].

23:17 WAIHEE: Yeah; yeah. Yes. Yes.

23:19 QUESTION: Start that out for me.

23:20 WAIHEE: Well, I wen—went to Honokaa School. And that—eve—even 'til today, you know, that's my—like uh, an alma mater of mine. I—I was fortunate to have many alma maters, actually, if—if you really want to get into all of this stuff. But uh, you know, I—I—I go to Honokaa School. My parents uh, you know, keep wanting me to go s—maybe to uh ... private school some place else, or do something better. Uh, but you know, I kinda like it there, and probably would have stayed there, except my mother decided to go to school and teach. And in those days, sh—you just needed some kinda certificate. And I realized that I was gonna get—close to high school—that I was gonna be in her class. And it just—you know, I—I was not—um, I guess I—I uh ... I was not

your normal good student. Uh, I uh, uh, I try—you know, so I—I would be the kind of person that most teachers w ... probably liked on a personal level, but then you know ... spent most of their time ir—irritated by because the rest of the class would be um, you know, probably wasted. But you know, so I had this ... uh, uh, you know, [UNINTELLIGIBLE] come back to the high school. So my mom decides me—to send me ... to uh, to school uh, in Honolulu. And that—which was kind of a financial struggle for them. Uh, so I come down to school here and go to Hawaii Mission Academy. I uh—

24:51 QUESTION: In what grade; do you remember?

24:52 WAIHEE: Ninth grade.

24:53 QUESTION: Ninth grade.

24:54 WAIHEE: And I actually um ... yeah, I worked a little bit to help—help them pay for my education. And the first thing was that coming down here, I mean, this was the big city. You know, until that time, uh, Hilo was my idea of the big city. And that's the city. You know, that's where some of my cousins came from, and they were citified, you know. And then I come to Honolulu, and I think, wow, this place is really something. And it's exciting. And this was, uh, you know, Honolulu back in 1960, uh, which was a much, much more relaxed time than it is now. And um ... you know, so I'm—I—I really enjoy it, and I—and I have fun, and I—and I—and I—and I—and I learn that—see, my father—my father ruined me in a sense. Because he—he—he kind of encouraged these conversations and these arguments. So one of the first thing I would—I would do, it was like almost uh, instantaneous, it was almost like I was programmed to do. If somebody said, you know, that direction was east, I would immediately want to know why. And why wasn't it west. And so uh, what's interesting about going to this particular school was that they didn't know me from kindergarten, so they didn't expect it, and therefore then they didn't just shut me up and say, uh, you know, look, you did that in the first, second, third, fourth, fifth grade, you know, just don't do it in the seventh anymore or the ninth. I mean, these people actually thought I wa—I was sincerely asking a question. And so uh, you know, thi—this idea of um ...

26:31 QUESTION: [CHUCKLES]

26:32 WAIHEE: --of exchanging and challenging and—and—they—they eventually got irritated by it, but you know, challenging authority especially was—

26:39 QUESTION: They didn't know you just being a prick.

[LAUGHTER]

26:42 WAIHEE: Well, I—I didn't know if I could say that. But you know—[LAUGHTER]. But the—the idea of just challenging authority was fun. I mean, I—you know, I—I—I never thought—I never was actually malicious about it, actually, or in any way um ... I mean, I just—it was fun. It was fun; it was fun to do, and I had a great time. Uh, but you know, that—uh, that carried over into all kinds of activities. And eventually, they just asked me to leave the school. Um, uh, in ha—in the case of Hawaii Mission Academy, on more than one occasion. So I'd filter back to Hawaii, you know, Big Island, and go to ko—uh, to go Hilo to school and do a number of other things. Then come back here. So there was this—like this really checkered career. And um, academically, well, my records were a mess. So not only was I kind of like uh ... this is—this is an era where um, people took it a lot more seriously, your behavior a lot more seriously than they do today. And so you know, the—uh, uh, not only did I have uh, all this behavioral um ... [CHUCKLES] malfunctions, but uh, you know, they—they also uh, spent academically—uh, uh, I think I graduated with something like a 1.6 GPA or something, you know, and it was—it was—but I—I was obviously intelligent. And—

28:08 QUESTION: Where did you graduate from?

28:10 WAIHEE: Hawaii Mission Academy.

28:10 QUESTION: Oh; it was Hawaii Mission.

28:12 WAIHEE: Eventually. Eventually, Hawaii Mission Academy was the only school that would give me a diploma. But they made it plain to the world that this was not something that they were necessarily proud of, at that moment.

28:23 QUESTION: M-hm.

28:24 WAIHEE: And uh, and so um ... m—being there was—that was the kinda thing. I mean, uh, all my—you know, like whenever they would talk to my parents or do anything about me—he has such tremendous potential, what a waste, the poor boy. You know, it was that kinda situation.

28:39 QUESTION: Then you go from there to another Seventh Day Adventist school.

28:43 WAIHEE: Right.

28:44 QUESTION: In Michigan.

28:46 WAIHEE: Right. What happens is that there aren't too many places in the nation that I can get accepted into college.

28:53 QUESTION: Yeah.

28:54 WAIHEE: Period. So the only two places that I get accepted to uh, to college at is either—is Andrews University, which I end up at, and the University of Hawaii. And the University of Hawaii was an interesting situation because back then uh, in—in order for any local student to get admitted to the University of Hawaii, he had to take an entrance exam. And it had to do with whether or not your English proficiency was uh, was sufficient, whether you had learned enough in the public school systems and all—in the school system and the rest. Now, that—that—the—that test um, was subsequently discontinued as being culturally biased. But in those days

[29:43-CLEARs THROAT] uh, it—it was required. So the only two places I took the test at was at the University of Hawaii and Andrews. Andrews, when I got there in uh, in—in—in uh, to decide whether I was gonna go in the remedial program or regular—and the University of Hawaii. And so in my case, this culturally biased test was actually very beneficial. Because it—uh, I could prove that despite what, you know, my report cards were, I actually did—my head did actually contain a brain. And I uh, you know, I scored like w—one of the top one percentile or whatever it was, in—in the whole state. And so they gave me—they gave me—admitted—both places admitted me.

End tape

30:24 QUESTION: So you were at Andrews—

30:28 END

Interview

JOHN WAIHEE

Reel 2

00:06 QUESTION: (CU)--you mentioned coming back to Hawaii.

00:09 WAIHEE: Yeah, I—
(shot 1)

00:10 QUESTION: Deciding that you were gonna come back. So I'm going to try to get you into law school, and I want to ask the question about discussions in that first law school class about the future—well.

00:26 WAIHEE: Well, what—what happens is—well, two things happen uh, that was uh, that um ... that makes it, you know, somewhat. When—when I—my high school career was so bad that I remember telling my dad, this is—you know, it was a big thing in—big moment in my life—that I was gonna make him proud of me. I was—I would be student body president of the univer—of this college that I was attending. And he was the only guy that—that ever believed me. And when I got to Andrews in my senior, I decided I better keep the promise. And so—and you know, that was my first excursion in—into retail politics. And um ... so I became student body president in the middle of the 60s. And then what happens is, in that process, I actually end up working in Benton Harbor, in com—in the community action programs and community education an—an—and the like. Um, during that time, I—I—I was—I actu—I applied for law school. (**01:27**) I always wanted to go to law school. I mean, in the context of my family you talked about, growing up, the one thing that we would talk about was the family never had a lawyer. You know, that if we—if we needed a lawyer so we can go and solve these land claims and particularly about Hawaiian land claims. And—and—and actually now that uh, now that I think about it, that is the usual context uh, dealing with land, that things Hawaiian would be expressed. You know, this was Hawaiian land or this was that, this was that. And uh, you know, a lawyer; get to be a lawyer. Um ... what—what basically happened was that I applied f—I was uh, working in Benton Harbor in the inner city, and uh, and I applied for law school, and the draft was going on. And they essentially told me, you can to go to law school, but you gotta go to Vietnam first. Or you can work in Benton Harbor, and get a—get—we have uh, because the place was so riot-ridden, we had an occupational deferment. And so you know, it didn't make—that wasn't that hard a choice. Uh, my name was not Kerry, after all.

02:40 QUESTION: [CHUCKLES]

02:41 WAIHEE: And so you know ... uh, I—I stayed in Benton Harbor [02:45-CLEARs THROAT]. But when I came back to Hawaii—uh, uh, I mean, I just—I just wanted to come back. I mean, I wanted to come back, and I heard that there was this model cities program going on. And that was right up my alley. So I came back to Hawaii, and I found out—I found out my wife lived in the model cities area. Which mean that we had preference. So I said, wow, let me apply. [CHUCKLES] You know.

(shot 2)

03:09 QUESTION: You and Lynne both went to Andrews.

03:12 WAIHEE: Right.

03:13 QUESTION: And you had been boyfriend and girlfriend in high school.

03:15 WAIHEE: No.

03:16 QUESTION: No.

03:16 WAIHEE: She wouldn't talk to me in high school.

03:17 QUESTION: She wouldn't talk to you.

03:18 WAIHEE: Yeah; but the cold weather, Michigan cold weather does things to most people.

03:22 QUESTION: Warms you up. So you got married up there?

03:25 WAIHEE: Yeah.

03:26 QUESTION: Uh, with—

03:26 WAIHEE: I got—we got married uh, right after I graduated from college. She was teaching in the school system, and I was working in the—in the community uh ... community education program.

(shot 3)

03:36 QUESTION: And then you come back, and you're in Kalihi or ...

03:41 WAIHEE: So we come back—l—Lynne is from Kalihi.

03:43 QUESTION: Right.

03:44 WAIHEE: And the model cities program in Hawaii was uh, built around two designated areas; Kalihi-Palama and the Waianae Coast. And so if you were a resident of either of those areas, the program would give you uh, preference for—for hiring and working with uh ... to Kalihi res—I didn't know that. I mean, I didn't know. That was a bonus. Uh, I didn't know that—that—even before I married her, so it wasn't like a pre-planned this. So I—I didn't marry her for her residency.

(shot 4)

04:15 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] Fair number of young Hawaiian politicians are in fact working in that community action program.

04:25 WAIHEE: Yeah; actually a bun—a—a number of people. We all come back at the same time, a number of Hawaiian activists. I mean, Henry Peters, the former Speaker of the House, Bishop Estate Trustee; he was the uh, community advocate. He was one—the big shot, actually. Um, uh, on the Waianae Coast uh, Frenchie DeSoto, Auntie Frenchie who was with me in the Constitutional Convention. Uh, she was um ... uh, a community activist on the—on the ... in the Waianae Coast. Uh, let me see; from Kalihi, we had um, oh god ... um ... well, his name was Soli. You—you remember—you know Henry Nihi uh ... Niha—Nihiu. He—he was very active. He—they—they were very active in the Kokua Kalihi uh, Kokua Kapalama Valley movement, which actually predates most of the activist movements in Hawaii. Um, Pete Thompson; Pete Thompson, who is now a stockbroker and—but still a s—uh, political social activist ... on the side. [CHUCKLES] He was uh, you know, was pa—part of the gang. But there was a lot of people. Um ... uh ...

(shot 5)

05:45 QUESTION: Well, couldn't one argue—I mean, I found myself talking to Kekuni Blaisdell about this yesterday. Couldn't one argue that, for example, your own interest in community action, and then coming back here and through community action programs on the Waianae Coast and Kalihi-Palama, where you find people like Henry Peters and the people you've just mentioned yourself, Frenchie and Pete and so on, that being a part of the United States and being beneficiaries if you will of some of those great society programs, that there was really an incubation of Hawaiian talent and Hawaiian political skills and a lot of Hawaiian renaissance going on in that era, but in terms of politics, one could argue

that it was incubated in these programs.

06:34 WAIHEE: I—I—I think to a certain extent, tha—that—that's correct. Um ... but the Hawaiian movement was still sort of finding its way. Uh, and uh, and to a certain—and you know, uh, sort of um, um, in—in—in the sense that social action programs in those days and in that context was—was—was thought of uh, as um, were thought of as um, socioeconomic. So you could actually take what we were doing and apply those anywhere. And to a certain extent, you know, those of us that came back from the mainland had to sort of readjust, 'cause we had our own kind of like missionary burden. And we—we—you know, I learned all this stuff in Benton Harbor and I'm coming home to save all you people who didn't have the good fortune of going to Michigan. Because it was the same programs. You just reapply it, and you taught people how to write grants, and you did all this funny stuff. But you were living on the day-to-day life what was actually going on. So in that context, there were a lot of people, and um, the Hawaiians, uh, Pai Galdeira was involved with us in those days. And Pai actually started the movement that uh, called the Hawaiians right about the time that we were all incubating in the model cities program, who maybe wa—took the first step towards something a little different. When—they—they—they—they were still socioeconomically oriented, but they ... wanted to focus in on Hawaiian homes, and ... Bishop Estate and ceded lands. Now, right about that time, as you know, Matsy Takabuki gets appointed trustee and the Hawaiian community goes bonkers. And so those two things sort of fold into each other. **(08:38)** And so ... y—you know, yeah, there was an incubation period of activists, there was a place for activists to go that was sort of legitimate that would get paid, that you could get into the system, and a lot of the movement ... a lot of the mo—you know, movements uh, started back then. The Hawaiians, aloha movement, bla-bla-bla-bla-bla. But it really, in my opinion, wasn't until we get to Kaho'olawe that you actually have something that's uniquely Hawaiian. Because it was with Protect Kaho'olawe experience that you finally put the spiritual side into this socioeconomic milieu. Because you see, when we were in model cities ... and Henry Peters was advocating for the Waianae Coast, I mean, he—he ... it wasn't only for—for native Hawaiians. I mean, uh, you know, it was for everybody that lived in that socioeconomic ... area. And you know, uh, uh, and as I said, there was a lot of transferability. Now, there were some clever people around who thought it might be better to have activists on their side politically than um, than running around, you know, holding protest marches like Pete Thompson was doing in—in uh, Waioli Valley and that—and Soli was doing out at uh, he—Henry was doing out at uh, at Palama. And you know, Frank Fasi was a clever guy. And—and Frank Fasi hired a guy called Bob Dye, and they kept looking for these potential advocates. And you know, why not integrate them into city political system. I mean, these guys are mad about the system, why not

get 'em so that they would be protesting Jack Burns as well as uh ... uh, as well as everybody else. It was—it was a strategy that to a certain extent worked.

(shot 6)

10:38 QUESTION: (10:41-11:02-ZOOM OUT from CU to MEDIUM) I want go to the statehood thing for a minute. Statehood is a unifying thing. Guys coming out of World War II, wearing their uniform, whatever their background, whether it's Bill Richardson or Dan Inouye. They're American, equality, become part of the United States, become a state, any kid can be president of the United States. But then the civil rights movement, particularly the last part of it, and the community action things, and Kaho'olawe and so forth. They [UNINTELLIGIBLE] to ethnic studies program at the UH, our friend in Palaka Power, this spins toward—is a centrifugal thing. Individual groups going out, not being shuffled together; right?

11:40 WAIHEE: Y—ye—yes and no. You know. I—I—I think uh, that—fir—well, first of all ... uh, uh, you know, I—I don't want to miss one point about the statehood. And that in my life, anyway, it was a very h—unique and high moment. I mean, th—th—when statehood occurred in Hawaii, I don't think at that moment there was any l—person that I knew of or ever heard of that doubted that that was a m—a good thing that occurred. I mean, we literally—you know, I was—I think uh, I think you're right. I mean, I was sixth or seventh grade, we actually literally stopped the school. School let out, the kids went downtown to little Honokaa, and people were driving their cars up and down the street, tooting their horns, and we were walking around, you know, like cheering and celebrating. I mean, this was like a huge, spontaneous. I mean, that—none of this had been orchestrated. Nobody knew exactly when this would occur. Um, and I remember the—just the announcement being made, and I remember the teacher telling us again on that day, (12:48-13:13-ZOOM IN from MEDIUM to CU) that we were um, now equal. I mean, it—it—it really was a kind of uh, uh, you know, an epitome. I mean, it wa—it was—it's—it's like ... at that moment, people really felt like they were American. And they—and it meant something, and they were equal with the rest of the country. And this ... for a time afterwards, there was this kinda euphoria that was in Hawaii. And so the good thing about statehood was that you—out of that, euphoria it was okay, it was okay. It was not only okay, it was encouraged to talk about the best of American values. The best of American values were s—and—and I—and I—and I'm trying to put this into—into something, because today it seems so passé. But in those days, you had all these teachers, daily telling you what America meant, what the constitution meant, what voting meant, what being equal meant, what—all of these things. I mean, you had a guy

running for office, whether Republican or Democrat; Hawaii is unique. Hawaii is special. Hawaii was the place where we had ... harmony, where everybody was u—was unique and uh, an—an—and uh, special. And—and that uh, we were all equal. (14:25) And so you—you gotta see statehood as, yes, as a unifying event, but also as a time for reinforcement of values. Now, by the time you get to the 60s, and the country is questioning the value system, then some of that stuff comes back to Hawaii, with the usual time delay. You know. We—we actually get into the 60s in Hawaii in 1970. Like ten years late, when—when many people start returning home, like myself, from the mainland. And we talk about a different experience. Well, uh, that uh, uh, of a—of a different experience in—in this country. Or many people come—start coming back from Vietnam. There were a lot of the people that I went to s—high school with that started returning from Vietnam, and—and their disillusionment. And they started coming back, and then we start talking. But in a way, it's their own—you know, it's kind of a mini-version of the—of the 442nd coming home. Those people returning from the mainland from colleges and those coming back from uh, from Vietnam. And they bring with them an experience ... that not—is not necessarily consistent with these value systems. Now, uh, you know, on one level, it can look like that's a kind of a uh, force that is ...uh, setting people off in—in many different directions. But on another level, you can see this as uh, a chance to reinforce the American dream. I mean, the fact of the matter is, the people who came back didn't say dump America. They said, we've got to be consistent with the American ideals. And—and—and most of the arguments, the socioeconomic arguments and everything that was made was made in that context. That you're not realizing the full potential. (16:28) So uh, so ... I don't think you saw vulcanization take place. Because even in the heat of the Hawaiian movement, when we s—begin to see the emergence of sovereignty as an issue for native Hawaiians, we still have this core belief that was expressed to us on a daily basis back in 1959, that this is still a special society where you can right some of these wrongs, and still have a harmonious uh, space for everybody to live in. That somehow this can all be done. You know, an—an—and which is a little bit different than what happens in Yokosla—uh, uh, Yugoslavia ... when the country falls apart. Or what happens uh, you know, somewhere else.

17:19 QUESTION: Right.

17:20 WAIHEE: Now, I'm not saying—and what I've discovered also is that there are other moments and places in America where maybe those types of things happened. But I think this is the only state where I can actually say it happened statewide. You see, you know, so statehood is

the—is a moment. It's a special moment, it's a s—celebration, but it's really—you know, the—the first year afterwards ... was really a reinforcement. You couldn't be—you couldn't live here without getting a heavy dosage of civics.

(shot 7)

17:56 QUESTION: We need more of that. [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

17:57 WAIHEE: Yeah; actually. You know, an—and so y—you get back and—and—and so we—you know, I remember when uh, when I went to Michigan, I was actually cocky about that. That you know, uh-- [CHUCKLES]. I wa—this is cra—you can—this is a funny thing. There—there was a—in those days, these things were big issues. So there was a big forum about interracial marriage. Uh, uh, uh, this interracial marriage—and you know, nowadays that would be so politically uh, incorrect. But back in you know, 1965 or 64 in—this was the kind of like the—the avant-garde liberals were out there, you know, basically to promote the agenda that it might be okay. Right? So they had this big forum about interracial marriage, and the big knock about interracial marriage or intercultural marriage was that the, you know, the—the children may feel somehow m—uh, out of place in all societies. Right? And so uh, you know, we're just sitting, and we're sitting in the room talking about this stuff. And—and uh, and you know, somehow it came up that obviously I was the product of a mixed marriage, you know, native Hawaiian and Irish and a little Chinese, and whatever else happened to be coming along the ships in those days. And—and you know, an—and—and—and so the—the guys—the moderator called upon me. He says, well, this gentleman here from Hawaii, you know, bla-bla-bla-bla-bla. Uh, uh, you know, uh, you're a product of a mixed marriage. I said, Yes, I am. And he said, how do you feel? You know. And I said, superior. [CHUCKLES] I feel like I'm better than all you guys in this room. And I meant it. That was the—the dangerous part about that, it wasn't a lie. I came from a very special place, and where the American values actually existed. So we could tell people in Michigan there was another place in this country where the people actually were equal. Now, you know, it was—it was a rude awakening is when you find out later on that may not be true for everybody uh, in this state. But that's what we believed.

(shot 8)

20:07 GENERAL CONVERSATION

20:20 QUESTION: John, tell me a little bit about our first law school. You decided to go to law school in 19 ...

(shot 9)

20:25 WAIHEE: '73.

20:26 QUESTION: 1973 and you're in the first law school class.

20:29 WAIHEE: M-hm.

20:29 QUESTION: Is there any discussion in that—I mean, now we're fifteen years from statehood practically or fourteen years from statehood, and is there discussion then, you're all studying law and so forth, is there discussion among law school students about Hawaiians and rehabilitation of the Hawaiian community or reparations or sovereignty or any of those things at that time?

20:53 WAIHEE: Yeah. [20:54-CLEARs THROAT] Yeah, obviously there—there is. And there's a lot of discussion. Um, but about Hawaiian issues, native Hawaiians issues and about sovereign—but you know, sovereignty sort of evolves. I mean, it's—there is discussion of it, but as an issue, it's—uh, it evolves. It almost—uh, we evolve, just like the movement. Um, the—the—the class itself had uh, I think, six Hawaiian students. And you know, and we had uh, we had um ... we felt an obligation to—to make sure that those issues were a part of our uh, uh, discussion.

21:31 QUESTION: Can you remember some of the others?

21:32 WAIHEE: The students?

21:33 QUESTION: Yeah.

21:34 WAIHEE: Yeah; Alan Hoe uh, uh, uh, Butchie Correa, Kumu Vasconcellos, uh, Melody McKenzie eventu—uh, she came in the second year. How many is that? Myself, Alan Hoe, Kumu Vasconcellos, Butchie ... uh, Hayden Burgess.

21:51 QUESTION: Oh; sure, Hayden.

21:52 WAIHEE: Hayd—Hayden was there. Hayden was the first to sneak around talking about sovereignty. He—he—he really um ... he would—ps-s, ps-s, ps-s. What? We ought to overthrow the government. You know. [CHUCKLES] And restore the Hawaiian nation. Okay, Hayden; you first. [CHUCKLES] You know, I mean—you know, but—but—but Hayden was uh, he—he—he uh, yeah, obviously there was that, but it was also part of a bigger context. I mean, the truth of the matter is, the class of 1973 saw itself as sort of the heir—in a real way, uh,

I never expressed it this way, but uh, but in a real way saw—saw itself sort of the heir of the state—heirs of the statehood generation. I mean, we—there was a history to the—to the evolution of the law school, and—and founding that revolved around this ide—the—the Chief Justice and others going down to the Legislature and actually selling them on the concept ... that in terms of equal opportunity for Hawaiian students, for Hawaii's students, we ought to have a law school. And that future leaders of the state would be coming from this law school. I mean, that—that—that was actually sold uh, an—and—and—and again, you know, this may sound a little hokey, but back then people actually bought that stuff, and believed it. And I believed it. And—and—and the thing about the first class was, it included a lot of people who actually worked on the community effort or on the political process to get the law school started. So that when we k—kind of all arrived there, you know, an—and it was sort of an interesting class, because there was Hayden Burgess, there was me, and there's all these people. I mean, there's Russell Nagata, who becomes, as you know, uh, uh, now a judge.

23:52 QUESTION: M-hm.

23:53 WAIHEE: And was my comptroller for the state. You know, the first day I saw Russell, when I met Russell, he was sitting there in green fatigues with a black armband, you know, just coming out of some protest in Chinatown or something. 'Cause you know, he was gonna change the system.

24:10 QUESTION: M-hm.

24:11 WAIHEE: So yeah, it was uh, in that kind of context, this was fertile ground for Hawaiian issues.

24:16 QUESTION: M-hm.

24:17 WAIHEE: And Hawaiian and our insistence that there would be a Hawaiian presence. I mean, this is the only school in the country that has a diploma that is issued in a—in a language other than English. You know. I mean, just little stuff, as well as major stuff, and Hawaiian studies, and—and—and—and—and self-governance. I mean, Randy Vitousek was there. Randy was an ally, and he had a stake. Randy Vitousek's grandfather was the biggest powerhouse of the Republican monopoly of these islands for fifty years. People, you know, would go over to Old Man Vitousek's uh, office and get—and get uh, get their orders. These—you know, he was the guy that Inouye and the rest of these guys threw out. But his grandson is part of our group. And the first thing that we did was,

we bonded. Because we were all the heirs of statehood, of the statehood dream, and of the future of Hawaii. And that we were gonna play a part in its future.

(shot 10)

25:19 QUESTION: John, your class graduates in nineteen seventy ...

25:25 WAIHEE: Six.

25:26 QUESTION: In 1976. And then two years later, you run for a seat in the Constitutional Convention of 1978. There you're gonna create something called the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, which some people who we've talked would argue is not about equality at all, it's about inequality. It sets up a [UNINTELLIGIBLE] they went to court about. Uh, it—

25:51 WAIHEE: Yeah, and—

25:52 QUESTION: --sets up a separate distinction. And somebody after we taped them the other day came up to me and said, you know, statehood was not about—the Hawaiians didn't understand that statehood was about equality, not about inequality when they get special treatment. How do you respond to that? You went into that Constitutional Convention and you and Frenchie created the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and now Hawaiians are supposed to be treated different from the other folks.

26:20 WAIHEE: Well, fir—you know, first of all, it—it um, uh ... y—you know, these are—these things are in the eyes of the beholder. I mean, to—to—to—to Hawaiians, this was not uh, part of equality was the ability to rectify the past. I mean, the next time you don't think you need rectification to go along with apology, you know, when you get a traffic ticket, go and apologize to the judge instead of paying the fine. (26:53) What—what you really have, what the Office of Hawaiian Affairs was, was it was an attempt to allow Hawaiians to control the resources, which the state constitution and which the federal government had allocated for their benefit. And prior to 1978, the Hawaiian Homes program, which was the program set aside, which is as I indicated to you part of a—of a homestead program targeted to the people whose lands had been taken away uh, for—back for reallocation, the ceded lands revenues which were targeted for the benefit of native Hawaiians—again, these were resources that had been taken away from their public usage—was controlled by everybody but native Hawaiians.

(27:52) So the—the real context to see Office of Hawaiian Affairs in ... without its drama, without this idea of you know, elected officials and so forth, is you know, is in the concept of—of uh, maximum citizen participation of the 1970s. Which said that people's resources

allocated to benefit people are best and most effectively used when the people themselves that are beneficiaries manage it. And that was the genesis for the I—for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Now, in that process of how will this management take place ... why not an election. Because this is the American dream. Everybody—this is about democracy. So why should we have a governor or somebody else appoint these trustees. Why not have that done by the people themselves. And for the first time in one hundred years, Hawaiian resources became managed—began to be managed by uh, n—native Hawaiians, elected by native Hawaiians, selected by native Hawaiians. And that was the [UNINTELLIGIBLE]. (29:14) Now, is that fracturing the society? I don't think so. It's no more fracturing the society than to correct an injustice, or to bring about equality by making sure that everybody starts off on the same ... level. What is important to people individually, as groups, don't become less important because we all have to be harmonious as a society. When the thing—when my—in my opinion, what would undercut the statehood dream is when one group attempts to dominate another, to use resources to ... uh, to exclude anybody out uh, uh, uh, of the benefits of society. But to enhance what you have, to make your culture or to make your—your uh, uh, uh, better, more productive, more efficient; that's the American dream.

Democracy
for
OHA.

30:22 END

Interview

JOHN WAIHEE

Reel 3

(Shot 1)
00:05

(CU) GENERAL CONVERSATION

(shot 2)

00:22 QUESTION: Okay; you were in the most [UNINTELLIGIBLE] political career, from State Representative to Lieutenant Governor, to Governor in—

00:32 WAIHEE: Yeah.

00:33 QUESTION: --six years. Six years. Uh—

00:35 WAIHEE: Ignorance is bliss.

00:39 QUESTION: You've become the first Hawaiian Governor after statehood, and sovereignty becomes something. The sovereignty movement over the next eight years is something you had to deal with as a Hawaiian Governor. How do you find yourself ... how did you find yourself and how do you find yourself today wrestling with the idea of Hawaiian sovereignty within the context of Hawaii being a state of the United States?

01:09 WAIHEE: Uh, you know, I—I don't—I didn't see it as wrestling. You know, the go—a governor, any governor ... and I've said this many times, and I think that sometimes when you start off as being Governor, you—you probably ... think it, but you don't know it until you've sa—served in that office for a while. But any Governor's first task is to maintain the uniqueness of this society. That's more important than any else—anything else the Governor does. To have a society where everybody feels that they are a part of, and that they—and—and I think that uh, that special quality which is part of Hawaii um ... has to be something that has to be nurtured and done. When anybody, anybody—uh, and it doesn't ... whether they're Native Hawaiian or non-Hawaiian, feels that for some reason less than being a participated in—uh, participant in the society, you got a problem. You not only have a problem, you got—you have an obligation to sort of fix it. Now, it's—uh, we—we focus on Native Hawaiian issues because—and I'll come back 'em, because they were um, they're the most no—notorious. But another

example, which actually occurred during Ariyoshi's time, was uh, what—what happened when the Legislature passed the bill to cut off Federal fund—I mean, State funding to schools that contained uh, that—that had a high proportion of military students. Because of the fact that the Federal government was not giving us the correct amount of—of uh, of um, impact aid. And—and jo—and uh, Governor Ariyoshi, to his credit, vetoed the bill. This was the part—the bill. The Federal government was bringing um, bringing—sending all these troops to Hawaii, wouldn't send us money, they were taking these military brats—quote, unquote—and—and this is the kinda conversation that was going on with—to—with taking away resources from local kids. And we had hardly enough money to pay for the kids of Hawaii; why should we pay for these kids. And if the bill was passed, they would have done that. And George vetoed the bill. And he did the right thing, because no child in Hawaii, whether they're in the military or born here should feel less than the other children in the classroom. (03:54) Now, with Native Hawaiian issues, you get into the same kind of situation. You get into a situation where a particular group of people, because of the—the cultural and historical circumstances of their origin, feel less than being fully—uh, a full participant in society uh, in—in Hawaii. And what do you about it? Now, one of the—the—when you deal with the issue of sovereignty, I think we first have to recognize that this nation, America, the great country that we became a part of, a—a state of, as a matter of policy from its very—from its founding recognized the individual sovereignties of native peoples. That in this country, the only native people that did not have their historical sovereignty—and I keep using that word deliberately, which is really uh, m—m—a way of saying self-governance—recognized were Native Hawaiians. Every, single other group in uh, indigenous group in this—in this country was recognized. Now, that's the inequality. Not the fact that you're creating an Office of Hawaiian Affairs. Not the fact that you're—you—you're—you're—you're talking about Hawaiian sovereignty. The—the—the inequality is that it doesn't already exist, when it does for everybody else. And see, that's why I don't—in my opinion, there was no tension. Because that had nothing to do with making somebody better than somebody else at the expense of somebody else.

(shot 3)

05:54 QUESTION: Am I to assume that you approve of this Akaka Bill?

05:58 WAIHEE: Yeah; I—I—uh, you are to assume that.
[CHUCKLES]

06:01 QUESTION: Well, may I ask in a way so you'll say it. Tell me why the Akaka Bill is a good thing.

06:06 WAIHEE: I think the Akaka Bill is a good thing because it is a step in the right direction. Like most legislation, it's not necessarily the end zone; it's not the place where you want to—uh, you know, the ultimate end of this process. But it is a step in the right direction, because it recognizes ... it recognizes the—the—the political status of Native Hawaiians. And if we didn't do anything else but that, it would be an important step.

(shot 4)

06:44 QUESTION: When you were Governor, I remember one time seeing you—I guess it was at Kahoolawe on TV, putting on traditional dress and walking in a—

06:53 WAIHEE: Yeah.

06:54 QUESTION: And—

06:55 WAIHEE: And everybody yelling about the fact that you really ought to go out in the sun before you put on a malo, or something—

07:00 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] And your face, of course, looking—

07:04 WAIHEE: Uh, you know, the most horrible thing was walking around with uh, the little sock marks on your feet when you're barefooted. Because then they know you only went golfing.

(shot 5)

07:18 QUESTION: [LAUGHS] Was your being Governor at the time of the Hawaiian renaissance, the sovereignty movements, was that a Hawaiian education for you? I mean, you had an awful lot of people coming at you from various Hawaiian groups, coming at you from various directions.

07:33 WAIHEE: Yeah; you know, um ... [CHUCKLES] ... I think that um ... well, I—I—you know, people who disagree with you, and actually c—criticize you um ... provide you—provide a real benefit, a real political benefit. I think—you know—you know, this is really weird. First of all, nobody likes to be criticized; okay? And it's irritating and bla-bla-bla-bla-bla. And all the normal emotion—emotions are invol—involved. But if you back up from there just a little bit, politician's best friend is his opposition. Because his opposition allows him to go further than he would have been able to go, in a direction he may want to go, if he didn't exist. Now, if everybody thought I was the radical, we

could not do burial councils, we could not do um [CLEARS THROAT], you know, uh, all—all of the repar—uh, the settlement issues that we did. But because I had a group of people yelling and screaming out there, saying this is not enough, this is not enough, this is not enough, it's possible that we went further than we would have even thought was possible when we started the journey. And I remember s—having a discussion, actually, with Norma Wong on this thing and uh, Harold Matsumoto, you know, and—and saying, (You know what; these guys, they're nuts, but they're our nuts, and they're gonna make it possible for us to do some things here that otherwise would not be possible.) See, that's the secret about opposition. And when a politician learns that, he just—that's Graduate Course 405. M—m—most people never learn that.

09:32 QUESTION: And they just oppose.

09:34 WAIHEE: Yeah; they oppose. They get—they get caught up in all the—nobody likes to be criticized, nobody likes to be doing this and this and this. But you know, I'm serious. Without the opposition, you can never go as far as you may want to go.

(shot 6)

09:45 QUESTION: Do you have any—looking back and having worked as Governor and then being a very astute observer, and having lived for thirteen years of your life before statehood, is there anything about **(09:55-10:02-ZOOM IN to tighter CU)** pre-statehood Hawaii you miss?

10:02 WAIHEE: Well, y—you know, as I mature [CHUCKLES], I miss everything about the times that existed when I was young. Uh, you know, it wa—it was just a—it was a different time. I mean, uh, and we are—and—and right now in my life, I have a tendency to—to—to—to reminisce a lot about—about a time where it seemed like more people knew each other, issues were—issues were clearer, and that um ... there was a feeling of a kind of se—security and—and—and a—and a—and a different pace. I mean, I—you—there—yeah, there's this ... I miss a lot of that. On the other hand, this is a really good time to be in Hawaii, because it is exciting and it is different, uh, things are moving. You know, in that slower Hawaii, my father would be yelling at the Hawaiian Homes Commissioners, you know, every two months. Now these people can yell at them every day. Uh, I don't know if we're making any more progress than he did, but you know, things are faster, things are exciting. This is a great time.

11:12 QUESTION: Did you ever get any criticism when you were—

11:18 WAIHEE: A lot. [CHUCKLES]

11:19 QUESTION: No, no, not—

11:20 WAIHEE: It doesn't matter what you say, but yeah, a lot. Yes.

11:23 QUESTION: But criticism that you were, because of your Hawaiian-ness, that you were too responsive to Hawaiians and that you weren't playing an equal ballgame.

11:35 WAIHEE: Well, I—I think that—that probably came up, um, but most people didn't say it to me. (11:42-11:57-ZOOM OUT to less tight CU) But you know, it was hinted from time to time. But I—I—I don't know whether or not that was that much uh, uh, of a—of an issue on the substance. (11:54) I—I think the time when—in uh, in all candor, the time when that may have become an emotional issue was during the observation of the overthrow. When uh, for better or for worse, I decided that for three days um, you know, only the Hawaiian flag would fly over the State capitol. Um, I think um, it—it—that would be the—that was the—the one time when uh, I think some people may have thought I crossed the line uh, as Governor. Uh, you know, um, and m—and—and it was em—it—it kinda was em—em—emotional. And uh, for sometime after that, even when—when I was in office, that would—would come up a lot. At—at one point in time in my life, I was gonna become an am—ambassador to um ... this was really funny. You know, I was gonna—I think I was gonna be uh, ambassador to Indonesia. Um ... and I remember going down and talking to Strom Thurman, and some people thought, some of the people in the State Department thought that uh, that would cause an issue for me in—in Washington. Um, it—it turns out it didn't. You know, because these old Southern boys that uh, you—you know, the flag raisers, they all understood the flag thing. I mean, they were raising Confederate flags up, and I appreciate Confederate flag, and I don't even equate the Confederate flag the same, but they were waving it all over. They were more worried about the fact that judge—judge—Supreme Court Justice Moon had issued—uh, Levenson had issued this dec—decision on gay marriages. But anyway, you know, this—this flag thing was big in Hawaii. It made the national news for a little while, but it remained in some quarters of Hawaii for a long time. And as far as I know, may—may even be there today. Now, as an emotional thing, it probably was the one thing the Native Hawaiian remember the most ... as being uh, you know, uh, an act. And uh, an—and—and uh, you know, I don't know whether that was the best exercise of judgment, but it sure felt good.

14:06 GENERAL CONVERSATION (14:10-14:16-ZOOM

OUT from CU to MEDIUM, PANS; 14:36-14:50-ZOOM OUT to WIDE and PAN to crew, stands, mic; 15:13-15:23-ZOOM IN to CU)

15:14 WAIHEE: No, that—that—that one there caused a lot of emotion. Uh, uh, uh, not a single—nothing else ever even shook people. Not really. They may philosophically, you know, the—but that one thing ... um—

15:28 QUESTION: Were they military people writing in? 'Cause it certainly—

15:31 WAIHEE: Well, no—

15:31 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

15:33 WAIHEE: [UNINTELLIGIBLE] some people (**15:33-15:37-ZOOM IN from CU to EXTREME CU of subject's hands**) who just didn't feel—feel good about it.

(shot 8)

15:37 QUESTION: [UNINTELLIGIBLE]

15:38 WAIHEE: And you know, and actually you can—I can appreciate that. (**15:40-15:51-SLIGHT ZOOM OUT and PAN to subject's hands and arms**) I mean, because they were some—there were other alternatives. Um, we could have um, you know, lowered it to halfmast or something like, you know, the Federal Building. But that seemed a little chicken. You know, I wasn't gonna run again, so ...

15:53 QUESTION: [LAUGHS] (**15:57-16:01-CU and PAN to subject reaching for cup; PAN to face and PAN to hands**)

15:59 WAIHEE: [CHUCKLES] But it was funny. That—that—meeting with Strom Thurman was r—actually happened. 'Cause I went to see him, you know, and I was—I was ready to go as ambassador, I was waiting for my confirmation. And uh, so I go to see Thurman. And Strom Thurman, you know, he sets up this meeting, and uh, we talked about it. He says—and uh, you know, we talked about if he had any problems with me. He says, No, I don't have any problems with you; I have a problem with your President, and I don't intend to confirm anybody for two years. And that's when I ...

16:24 QUESTION: Is that what happened?

16:25 WAIHEE: Yeah; oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Because he wouldn't—he didn't confirm anybody for like ov—over two years. And I said I couldn't

wait around that long for this ambassadorship, (16:33-PAN to CU of hands) right? But then we talked about things, and he talked about the fla—and I said—he says, Ah. So I asked him; I said, You know, is that gonna cause a problem? He said ... No, we understand all about the flag here.

16:44 QUESTION: [LAUGHS]

16:46 WAIHEE: And uh, we get into that all over the South. You know, we understand all about that. These Yankees don't know about the flag thing, but we understand about the flag thing. So I said, Okay. (16:49-16:55-subject takes sip of water)

End Interview

(B-Roll 1)

16:59 GENERAL CONVERSATION (16:58-17:04-ZOOM OUT from CU to WIDE of set; subject stands up)

(B-Roll 2)

17:12 crew member with still camera sits at set

17:19 room tone (take 1)

B-ROLL

(B-Roll 3)

18:10 CU of golfing with Clinton photograph

18:25 PAN to family photo (CU-people wearing leis); ZOOM IN

19:02 PAN BACK to golfing photo (CU)

19:11 PAN BACK to family photo (CU)

19:20 PAN BACK to golfing photo (CU)

19:25 QUICK PAN BACK to family photo (CU)

19:36 PAN BACK to golfing photo (CU); ZOOM IN to Clinton detail in photo (EXTREME CU)

20:00 PAN to Waihee detail in photo (EXTREME CU) and Clinton

handwriting on photo (**EXTREME CU**); **PAN** around

21:08

PAN BACK to family photo (**CU**)

21:21

PAN BACK to golfing photo (**CU**)

21:27

ZOOM OUT to shot with both photos (**MEDIUM CU**)

21:41

PAN LEFT to plant (**MEDIUM CU**)

21:44

END