

LIFE IN THE U.S.

HAWAII

It's somebody else's paradise

By Winona La Duke

Volcanoes border the entire Pacific Ocean, and Hawaii sits in the middle, 3,000 miles from anything. Although the U.S. puts Hawaii in a small box beside California's Catalina Island and Alaska, it is really a separate and struggling geopolitical entity.

Hawaii is the last frontier of an era of U.S. expansion, given statehood in 1959, 18 years after Pearl Harbor and the U.S. entry into World War II. Today on all eight of the Hawaiian islands, the people and the land are simply trying to survive in what has become someone else's paradise.

Hawaii is the darkest state in the union—less than 18 percent of the population is Caucasian. Hawaii is also the most militarized state and is the "brain" of the Pentagon's Pacific Command. And it serves as headquarters for military activities that control more than half the earth's surface, from the west coast of North America to the east coast of Africa and from the Antarctic to the Arctic. From his headquarters at Camp Smith, near Pearl Harbor, the Commander in Chief-Pacific (CINCPAC) directs all components of the U.S. armed forces in an integrated command. CINCPAC also directs separate, unified commands in Japan and Korea.

There are more than 100 military installations in the Hawaiian islands, with fully 10 percent of the state and 25 percent of Oahu under direct federal control.

Hawaii is the loading and re-loading base for all of the Pacific. In Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, Hawaii's largest industrial enterprise, fuel rods are replaced in the Navy's nuclear powered submarines. In 1972 Oahu alone was the storage site for some 3,200 nuclear weapons. Representing the second largest source of income for the state, the 50,000 military personnel based on the islands help contribute a whopping 35 percent of direct revenues.

Sometimes Kaho'olawe does not even appear on airline maps of the Hawaiian islands. It is the only National Historic Monument utilized year-round as a bombing range by the Defense Department.

Kaho'olawe is Hawaii in microcosm. For centuries, it has been a monastery for Hawaiian religion, the sacred departing place for traditional voyages to Tahiti, 3,000 miles away. In 1941, it was taken by the Defense Department. The people—farmers and ranchers—were moved out and the military moved in.

For 43 years now, the island has been a bombing target for an expanding variety of imaginative military exercises. The latest exercise is the RIMPAC maneuver for all Pacific-rim countries. Coordinated by the Seventh Fleet, the maneuvers are extensive, both in terms of exercises and personnel. At last count some 22,000 combat personnel, 225 planes and 41 warships from participating countries were involved, all of them using Kaho'



Tourists learn to surf on Waikiki Beach, one of the most developed resort areas on the islands.

olawe as ground zero.

Since its inception in 1974, Protect Kaho'olawe Ohana ("Ohana" means "family") has led an escalating struggle to reclaim the island. By 1976 the island was the site of litigation over its cultural significance to native Hawaiians. After the Navy began a court-ordered archeological survey, at least 544 separate religious sites were discovered on the island. The Ohana contends that at least four times as many sites are there, many within the bombing range.

By 1981, the Ohana had signed a consent decree with the Navy, an 18-point agreement providing increased access to the island and

gradual demilitarization. This year the Ohana brought the 3,000th visitor to the island.

"...I was kissing people I didn't even know. Then I saw how many tourists started coming to our coast. I quit. I was afraid we were going to get evicted again...."

—Georgette Myers, native Hawaiian, formerly an airline employee

One of the biggest problems with Hawaii is that it is a series of islands. That is why people love Hawaii, and that is also why they can't stay. There simply isn't enough room for everyone and everything. But money talks, and one of the biggest mouths in Hawaii is the tourist industry or, as its proponents call it, the "happiness industry." Haunani Kay Trask is a professor of American studies at the University of Hawaii and one of the most vocal native Hawaiian nationalists. Of particular concern to Trask is the tourist industry, responsible for an estimated 30 percent of Hawaiian labor force employment and (directly and indirectly) 52 percent of the state's gross product.

Trask sees the tourist industry as a form of prostitution: "Tourism is not made to sell *haole* [white] culture. It's here because we are the native people of this *aina* [land]. It is our culture that tourists come to see. It is our land that tourists come to pollute. That is the secret. Without Hawaiians, without beautiful Hawaiian women dancing, there would be no tourism...." Trask continues, "It deforms the culture, so Hawaiians think that to dance the hula is to dance for tourists.... Hawaiians grow up thinking that our culture is a *haole* interpretation of culture...and if you smile real

nice, some *haole* is going to take you out."

Tourism has made some native Hawaiians feel like monkeys at a zoo. In January 1983, for example, the state bulldozed houses of people in Makua for a state park. Makua is the beach at the bottom of an alluvial valley on Oahu. On the mountain above, the beach the military has a bombing range, where a satellite communications station was installed in the early '80s. To the Hawaiians, the idea of a state park at Makua is more than a little ironic. Not only did the state bulldoze houses and arrest people to put in this "recreation" site, but the Hawaiians who were forced out had to wade through live ammunition that washed up on the beach during 1982's Hurricane Iwa.

When the state destroyed the Makua houses last year, 12 families remained as squatters on their own land. "The state constantly rips off our land, then turns around and calls us 'squatters,'" says Mililani Trask, an attorney. In another case at Halo Mohalu, a Hansen's disease (leprosy) patient facility, the Department of Health razed the entire facility in September 1983, again to create a recreational area.

On the island of Molokai, the Kalaupapa peninsula has been the site of another leprosy colony for over a century. Patients were sent there as soon as the disease was identified, and most have lived their entire lives at Kalaupapa. Although the state Health Department has cut back the operating budget at Kalaupapa, tourism is booming in the settlement. Since leprosy is virtually eradicated, someone figured that visitors would be interested in touring the historic site. Donkey rides and helicopters to the peninsula are now available.

Shelly Mark, director of Ha-

waii's state Department of Planning and Economic Development for 12 years, explains the tourism predicament. "Ownership of the land has shifted to corporations off the islands. Rate of return on investment has become the most important thought. There is a conflict between the life of the land and sea versus the life of the corporate boardroom. Tourism drives up living and land costs for locals, but provides only low-paying, low quality jobs."

"...We can barely pay house rent and they build apartments. They only make more rooms when they can make farms. With inflation now, hard to buy tomatoes, carrots. Instead of building those kind buildings, let the Hawaiians farm. You cannot eat 'em, those buildings."

—Wai'anae Coast Hawaiian

Development has taken a heavy toll on Hawaiians and the land. Generations of living on islands have made them "accommodating—we had to learn to get along better." Haunani Kay Trask explains this phenomenon as colonization. "This is not America, this is a colony." The establishment of sugar and pineapple plantations marked the first wave of colonialism. The military and finally tourism mark the next waves of colonialism. "The transformation of the Hawaiian people and their land into servants of tourism is called 'commodification.' It means turning a cultural attribute or person into a commodity to make a profit.... Almost all of us in the Hawaiian movement have done the song and dance for the tourists, worked in the hotels. We have all been commodified," Trask insists.

In *Aloha Aina*, a newspaper of the Hawaiian movement, another Hawaiian puts it differently:

"We have been denied access to our traditional means of survival by a colonization process that interrupts the pattern of learning to survive and substitutes learning to serve. Unknowingly, we pay a high price for our Western assimilation in terms of our future choices. The cost of a healthy capitalist economic system requires that we steal from our future to maintain our high standards of living. When a fishpond is dredged and filled for resort development and construction jobs, we destroy a generations-old resource as a sacrifice for short-term jobs and luxury developments. When our agricultural areas are left without water so that golf courses can be kept green and scenic, we lose the opportunity to subsist on our lands."

Since the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani by Samuel Dole (the fruit magnate) in 1890, foreigners have always staked their claims. Making Hawaii U.S. territory brought the Pacific Command and the integration of the Hawaiian plantation state into a worldwide agricultural network. Finally, with statehood, Hawaii's most recent invader is the visitors' industry, marketing happiness. Each generation in Hawaii has seen new imports from the mainland.

The result is outside control. The Robinson family claims ownership of one of the islands (Ni'ihau), Dole "owns" Lanai, the Defense Department claims Kaho'olawe and the military "owns" 10 percent of the remaining islands.

"We have seen it all," says Mililani Trask, who has been active in numerous commissions, legal cases and other ventures for

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Thomas Neff

Theirs Be the Power

By Harry Caudill
University of Illinois Press,
189 pp., \$12.95

**Welcome the Traveler Home.
Jim Garland's Story of the
Kentucky Mountains**

By Jim Garland
University of Kentucky Press,
231 pp., \$23.00

By Peter Gottlieb

Few enterprises have shown capitalism in as harsh a light as the coal industry. And in few places has the coal industry been as merciless in exploiting people and land as in Appalachia.

The coal industry in 20th-century Appalachia has spawned few broad-minded employers but many bull-headed millionaires; little peaceful collective bargaining but much bloody conflict between miners and operators; hardly a single prosperous county but dozens of abandoned towns. Eastern Kentucky, the area of Appalachia that Harry Caudill and Jim Garland examine in their books, has been transformed by coal mining in the past 100 years. From a relatively homogenous and unstratified society before industrialization, mountain society has separated into have and have-not groups. Caudill portrays the haves; Garland the have-nots.

Caudill traces the careers of the most prominent men who made fortunes in Appalachia. He does not describe the many lesser landowners and mine operators who struggled for wealth in the same time and place, concentrating instead on the handful of investors who gained control of eastern Kentucky's resources.

Caudill credits John C.C. Mayo more than any other individual with opening eastern Kentucky to industrial development. Mayo was born in 1864 and grew up on mountain farms. He taught public school, earned a degree at Kentucky Wesleyan and passed the state's bar exam—all before he was in his mid-20s. He began to invest his modest savings in options on timber and mineral rights. To obtain these, he offered hill farmers cash for the right to purchase the natural resources on their property.

Mayo became a master at persuading even the most obdurate landowners to sign away their title to the wealth of their land. Few people knew as well as he how powerful was the sight of cash to his impecunious neighbors, and how little they realized what riches lay on or below the surface of their land. With his options in hand, Mayo prepared to unleash a tidal wave of economic growth on his birthplace.

Mayo exchanged his options for stock in eastern corporations, and he lobbied for changes in Kentucky statutes to smooth the transfer of control over natural resources from the hill farmers to his clients. These included many renowned capitalists and corporations—John D. Rockefeller, Johnson Newlon Camden, Clarence W. Watson, the Northern Coal and Coke Company and Consolidation Coal.

Caudill describes other entrepreneurs who envisioned eastern Kentucky as a center of coal, iron and steel production. But he makes clear that none before Mayo had succeeded in laying a foundation for rapid development. Though Mayo played the role of serpent in Caudill's Appalachian Eden, the author treats him more kindly than he does Mayo's capitalist clients. To de-

scribe the latter, Caudill uses phrases that once characterized the grasping masters of American finance and industry. Caudill compares Mayo not to robber barons, but to popular heroes and imaginative, ambitious natives of mountain society.

When Mayo died in 1914, the industrialization of his homeland was gathering momentum. Caudill vividly describes what happened when railroad lines finally reached the territory that Mayo helped put into outsiders' hands: "...a juggernaut suddenly struck the primitive eastern Kentucky counties.... The region became an El Dorado...and men bore down upon it from around the globe.... Whole valleys were drained of young men as the Kentucky hill people turned from subsistence farming to new lives as coal miners." Between the beginning of World War I and the Depression, the boom in coal mining attracted new corporate investors like International Harvester and Ford Motor Company.

Caudill traces the changing ownership and organization of eastern Kentucky investments from the decline of the original "moguls" through the '70s. His information on more recent major investors in coal, oil, natural gas and timber makes the later part of his book as valuable as the early part is colorful.

Though the names of absentee financiers have changed since the turn of the century, Caudill shows that their control over eastern Kentucky has not. Indeed, through mergers and stock purchases, the concentration of economic and political power in Appalachia has increased greatly. Strong bands of interest now connect the investors, their companies, educational and cultural institutions of Kentucky and the state government. He informs the reader of the meaning of this increase of power in the hands of *Rough life of coal miners explored in Garland's memoir.*

APPALACHIA**Histories of the powers that be**

the outsiders.

According to Caudill, every effort to safeguard human life and protect the environment has been frustrated when it has challenged Kentucky's "coal combine."

Author Garland tells a different story. He was one of the laborers whom Caudill's moguls hired to make their investments profitable. Born in the eastern Kentucky coalfields in 1905, he grew up among an increasingly uprooted population. His father's vocations represented the native mountain society in transition. He was a part-time farmer, part-time coal miner, Primitive Baptist preacher and strong supporter of the United Mine Workers (UMW).

Like many of his contemporaries in the eastern Kentucky mining camps, Garland had little schooling, participated actively in the Primitive Baptist church, moved frequently from job to job and tried to improve his condition by joining the UMW. Unlike many other miners in the '20s, he stuck to the union after it failed to organize his district. While other union men were turning in their membership cards, Garland served as president of the last active local union in eastern Kentucky from 1926 to 1929. When the Harlan County mine wars broke out in the early '30s, Garland assumed the leadership.

The mine wars that abruptly changed his life were only one episode in a long history of bitter conflicts between employers and workers in the coal industry. The

Harlan County dispute arose partly because employers in other coalfields had succeeded in breaking union contracts and lowering miners' wages. When Harlan County operators tried to follow suit by decreasing wages below the abysmal levels they had already reached in the early years of the Depression, the miners rebelled.

Garland and thousands of others revived the UMW in the spring of 1931, staging rallies and strikes to demand restored wages. But the UMW deserted Harlan miners after a gun battle between union men and deputy sheriffs in the town of Evarts. The Communist-led National Miners Union (NMU) then came to Harlan in the summer of 1931, attracting members among thousands of former UMW members who had been blacklisted by employers and evicted from company housing in the spring rebellion. Garland was one of these. By fall 1931 he was leading a local strike committee and organizing other miners into the NMU.

In preparation for a district-wide strike, the NMU organized throughout Harlan and neighboring Bell County during the rest of 1931, distributing food and clothing to miners and their families as well as publicizing the miners' desperate condition to the nation. The strike began on Jan. 1, 1932, and the repression of NMU activity, which had been strong up to that time, grew even more violent. Arrests, beatings and evictions culminated in the murder of Garland's close friend

Harry Simms, a 19-year-old New Yorker who had come to Harlan County to help with the strike.

With deputy sheriffs in pursuit of him and the strike crumbling, Garland decided to flee Harlan County for New York City and help raise money for needy miners. He returned to his native region a few months later to salvage the NMU local branches and continue battling, but the union could not be fully revived. After trying to support himself and his wife Hazel by running his own "dog-hole" mine, Garland again left Kentucky with his wife to return to New York.

From the mid-'30s until he retired, Garland's experiences resembled those of many other workers. He hustled jobs during the Depression. In World War II he moved to the Pacific Northwest to work in a shipyard. After this job, he opened his own broom and mop factory in Washougal, Wash., hiring handicapped people to work in it. In 1966 he sold the business and began working for Folkways Records, collecting songs and stories from the mountains of Kentucky.

Garland began writing his memoir in winter 1967. His daughter, friends and interested historians finally brought the manuscript to a publisher's attention. When he died in 1979, however, it was still not finished. Julia Ardery edited the manuscript, making few substantive changes.

Garland views the eastern Kentucky to which he returned in the '60s in terms similar to those Caudill uses to describe Appalachia in the '70s: a spoiled environment, a depleted and debased population, depressed industries owned by absentee corporations. Despite this similarity in outlook, Garland's and Caudill's understandings of eastern Kentucky history differ substantially. Caudill, the muckraker and publicist, sees predatory economic interests disrupting a stable, agrarian society. Garland, the rank-and-file activist, interprets pre-industrial mountain society as dynamic even before the coal operators arrived.

Of these two approaches to Appalachian history, Garland's is the more refreshing. He challenges long-established notions about the isolation of hill people, the origins of mountain feuds and the strangeness of pentacostal religious sects. All this is informed by the author's underlying political view: in a mountain society sharply divided between the employers and the employed, unity among miners, farmers, students and the unemployed is the key to future progress.

These two authors disagree on what the future holds for their native region. Caudill is extremely pessimistic: increasingly powerful machines will strip resources from above ground and below the surface, altering the landscape radically, ravaging soil, streams and farmland. The hill people will desert the land that was home to their families for centuries, leaving only small settlements of machine operators and engineers.

Garland also despairs but realizes the possibilities for change represented by his own life: "If that union [UMW] goes out of existence, I will guarantee that the working people will construct something to take its place.... We're not going back to corn bread and bulldog gravy." ■ *Peter Gottlieb is head of the labor archives at Pattee Library, Penn State University.*

