

Lend Lease Episode 14 Notes and Links - Hawaii Communists, the Hawaii Democratic Party, and how to build a multi-racial workers' political movement in the United States

- Context: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Overthrow_of_the_Hawaiian_Kingdom
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_Hawaii (1893 coup to 1898 annexation; failed counter-revolution in 1895 under native leadership)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newlands_Resolution
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_of_Hawaii#History
1900 Elections *Leading up to the election of 1900, it became apparent the radically nationalist [Home Rule Party](#) became the most popular. Republicans who had been rejected for the unpopular overthrow of the monarchy and promotion of white supremacy, offered a [coalition](#) between the Democrats and Republicans. Democrats refused the offer and Home Rule Party came to power. But the election of 1900 was based more on animosity toward the Republican Party for dethroning the monarchy than the Home Rule Party's functionality once in power.^[7] Due to the extremism of the Home Rule, they were ineffective. Similarly, the Democrats were also consumed with infighting.*
During the Big Five Oligopoly *The plantations needed labor and the Native Hawaiian population was insufficient to fill the demand. Immigrants from around the world such as Puerto Rico, Korea, and most particularly Japan and the Philippines were brought to Hawaii. In response to the flood of immigrants, Democrats became more [nativist](#). Democrats like McCarthy and [Oren Long](#) pushed a compromise of allowing [migrant workers](#) that would eventually return to where they came from rather than establish themselves in Hawaii.*
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massie_Trial
 - Officer's wife Thalia Massie claimed she was assaulted and robbed walking home, several locals were picked up but acquitted due to lack of evidence. Whites then murdered one of the acquitted and beat up another
 - Policeman Burns angered over the 10-year Manslaughter verdict reduced to 1 hour sentence by Republicans
- Territorial Delegate and future Governor John A. Burns (Dem) constructed a coalition with the Communist Party, ILWU (longshoremen), Japanese-Americans (including the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and 100th Infantry Battalion veterans) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_A._Burns
- 1946 Sugar Strike
 - <https://libcom.org/history/1946-great-hawaii-sugar-strike>
Under the leadership of the ILWU, about 26,000 sugar workers and their families, 76,000 people in all, began a 79-day strike on 1 September 1946 that completely shut down 33 of the 34 sugar plantations in the islands. For the safety of the workers during the strike, the ILWU negotiated with plantation owners so that no workers could be evicted from their industry-provided homes. They also ensured the plantation owners that all essential workers would remain on their jobs, such as sanitation and power workers.

- <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/post/1946-sugar-strike-rise-hawai-labor-unions#stream/0>
ILWU worked to unite workers of different races/ethnicities; ran meetings in different languages “English, Japanese, and Ilocano at the bare minimum, and sometimes also Visayan” - William Puette, Director of the Center for Labor Education and Research at the University of Hawai‘i – West O‘ahu
Benefits (housing/medical/pensions/wages) were rights workers fought for, not gifts from the bosses/owners..
- Hawaii Democratic Revolution of 1954, followed 8 years of direct action and general strikes against the Big Five sugarcane companies (who had staged the 1893 coup and later US annexation) and the Republican-dominated territorial legislature. Burns, originally a police officer back in the 1930s, was a key leader. Burns confirmed decades later that the Communist Party in Hawaii had provided critical training and support in the late 1940s because they saw him as a genuinely working-class organizer & future political leader, although he was extremely careful at the time to never state any kind of communist ideology within the Democratic Party. (The FBI did arrest several leading Hawaiian communists in 1951 and HUAC was monitoring the growing movement from 1949 onward.) The militant dockworkers also began organizing inland plantation workers so that they could decimate the power of the Big Five companies by halting production & transport. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii_Democratic_Revolution_of_1954
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Five_\(Hawaii\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Five_(Hawaii))
- Burns was then elected 2 years later to Congress as delegate and in 1959, statehood was achieved. Strike campaigns were kept up continuously until mid-1958. After the Democrats seized the legislature in the 1954 elections, they still had to contend with the federally appointed Republican Territorial Governor Samuel Wilder King who vetoed their bills 71 times.
- Burns machine brought together Asian Americans and Hawaiians to build power for the Democratic Party, again overcoming racial/ethnic divides. Also, citizen children of immigrants grew up and got the vote, voted Democrat.
- Dixiecrats were vocally opposed to the Hawaii Democrats because it became very apparent to them that Hawaiian statehood would almost certainly result in the election of a non-white Senator (indeed Republican Hiram Fong was elected as one of the first two US Senators from Hawaii and by 1964, Fong was a presidential candidate. Also in 1962, Dan Inouye was elected as the 3rd Senator)
- <https://harvardpolitics.com/united-states/why-hawaii-is-a-one-party-state/>
- https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Revolution_of_1954/#Rise_of_the_Democratic_Party_In_Hawai.27i