

The Band's Protest

The provisional government demanded that members of the Royal Hawaiian Band, originally founded during the reign of Kamehameha III and funded by the Kingdom's government, sign oaths of loyalty to the new government swearing that they would not support the Queen or her government.

When band members refused, their leader warned that they would be fired and soon be eating rocks for food. But rather than swear allegiance to the provisional government, the band members walked away from their jobs and their paychecks.

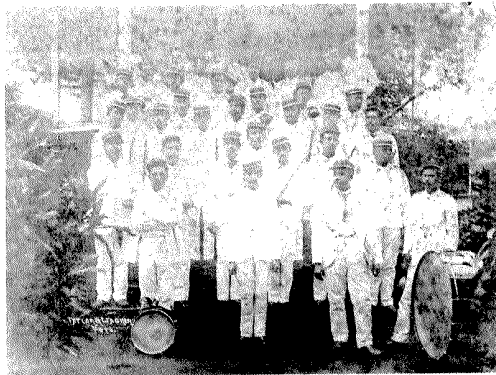
This protest inspired the famous composition by Ellen Keho'ohiwaokalani Wright Prendergast, *Mele Aloha 'Aina*, Song of Love for the Land, in which the lyrics state:

*'A'ole a'e kau i ka pūlīma
Ma luna o ka pepa o ka 'enemi
Ho'ohui 'āina kū'ai hewa
I ka pono sivila a'o ke kanaka*

No one will fix a signature
To the paper of the enemy
With its sin of annexation
And sale of native civil rights

*'A'ole mākou a'e minamina
I ka pu'ukāiā a ke aupuni
Ua lawa mākou i ka pōhaku
I ka 'ai kamaha'o o ka 'āina.*

We do not value
The government's sums of money
We are satisfied with the stones
Astonishing food of the land.



Rather than take an oath of allegiance to the new government, members of the Royal Hawaiian Band resigned and the group was disbanded. Hawai'i State Archives