testimony on Mauna Kea and TMT

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April 16, 2015

Aloha University of Hawaii President, David Lassner, and members of the University Board of Regents

My name is Jim Albertini. I am the president of Malu 'Aina Center for Non-violent Education and Action. Our non-profit organization in Kurtistown has been growing food to share with people in need and working for justice, peace and aloha 'aina for the past 35 years. I am also the secretary of Ohana Ho'opakele, an organization seeking to build Pu'uhonua as alternatives to prison which disproportionately lock up Native Hawaiians.

I am one of the 31 people arrested on Mauna Kea on April 2, 2015 seeking to protect the sacred temple – Mauna Kea, from further desecration by construction of the $1.4 billion Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT).

My background is Catholic Christian. I've had 17 years of Catholic education, graduated from a Catholic University and studied and taught theology in Catholic schools.

The arrests on Mauna Kea took place during what is called Holy Week in the Christian calendar, a week that commemorates Jesus death and resurrection. Also within Holy week is the important biblical story of Jesus entering the Temple in Jerusalem and driving out the moneychangers who were exploiting the people and desecrating the sacred.

On April 2nd I went to Mauna Kea to stand with others who believe as I do that Mauna Kea is sacred. I went to stand in solidarity with Native Hawaiians who are asking that their spiritual beliefs, religion, culture, and traditional practices be taken seriously. I went to the mauna to add my voice in saying enough desecration. I went to the mauna to say: if we are going to live in a pono way, the sacred must come before dollars, profit, jobs, etc. Mauna Kea is not a commodity. It is time to honor, respect, protect, and aloha Mauna Kea. It is time for aloha 'aina to be the guiding light for Hawaii and the world and time to cancel TMT. If money has become your false god, then go bulldoze your own temple – Wall St. the big banks, pick a Fortune 500 company Wallmart, McDonalds, Lockheed Martin, but No TMT on the sacred Hawaiian Temple –Mauna Kea.

Recently, after more than 30 years of geothermal development in Hawaii, the Hawaii County Windward Planning Commission finally agreed to do a study on the social/psychological impacts to Native Hawaiians from geothermal drilling into Pele. Isn't it time to do a similar study on the social/psychological impacts to Native Hawaiians from telescopes on Hawaii's most sacred temple – Mauna Kea?

Mahalo.

Jim Albertini