

Máua Faleauto first speech Pacific Law & Constitutionalism and Customary Land Tenure Conference

No notes - unprepared speech

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My first statement is a response to Professor Tony Angelo because he spoke about love and I thought that was very, very important and then this will link in with what Aliímuamua had to say.

Within that love there comes a fierce integrity. Now the reason I say that is because the Professor gave a definition of colonization as government, but you see I am a person, who is both of mixed blood - Samoan - I am Samoan - you can see that (MF raises the back of his shirt to reveal his peá) but I am also 13% Scandinavian.

I am also Ashkenazi Jewish as well and I also have African blood surprisingly. I have Papua New Guinea blood and Melanesian blood, we went down that way. But you see because one of the definitions I have heard through the education and history through the sociology I have heard is that all empire is based on theft and murder.

Now the reason I say this and it is so important is that we must not go easy upon ourselves.

Look I have ancestors I can turn to as I `moe manatunatu` I talk to my ancestors. I can talk to my Polynesian ancestors and I have their view. But I can talk to my European ancestors. I know the thrill they had in going to a new land where there were natives - taking their land.

I know that the church came in and wooed - some of my relatives wooed natives and then our armies came through. Now, the reason I mention this is because we must be fierce with ourselves. Let's be honest. Let's be honest our future is based on looking at what has gone on in the past.

Now I will move on, because I want to talk about Human Rights...Human Rights, they are important, equality - look at Article 15 of our Constitution it talks about protection from breaches of discriminatory legislation. So, if you think about this, all Samoans are equal - we as Samoans can appreciate that.

So what is this Torrens System that says that all of the land of the whole aiga is suddenly going to be in the arms of one man?

What was the right, the justification? The Samoan principle certainly doesn't say that.

My palagi understanding of the history of the Torrens System certainly tells me: How right can it be that 99% of an aiga just like in Aotearoa in NZ when individual title came in. I feel sorry for my, my iwi relatives, who were sitting out in the backblocks just like their ancestors had done for 400 years, suddenly in Wellington somebody signs a document - no more land and then what happens - the army turns up and says this isn't yours.'

That's not true! That's not fair!

But you see the reason for understanding our history with a fierceness of integrity is so that we can move forward.

So, we can't be tricked. Because you see one of the things that disturbs me most, because you really drew it out of me Aliímuamua.

How much do you love your aiga? How much do you love your Palagi relatives? Is it enough to tell them the truth?

That you can't steal the land from 99% of Aiga and think that they won't enter the death march that we have seen happen here in NZ.

Or even look at what happened, what they did to the Apache. Break them down so their leaders instead of worshipping, worshipping their belief in God - and the love of their Aiga - their family.

They gave them cows so that they loved their cows more than the people.

It is this concept of materialism that we must understand.

If a Chinese billionaire walked in the room now and said to every one of us, " Now I will give you a million dollars a year for the

rest of your life but there is a sacrifice. You sell out your family and your land. Are there any Aiga in this room who are like the

matai of old - who - the family., the family is most important. More important than whether a Chinese investor makes more billions

because in a thousand years, who will rule Samoa? Will it be our Aiga living off the resources and enjoying the nurture of our Samoa, the gift from our ancestors?

Or will we find that Samoa becomes the land of the Saina and the Palagi?

That would be a tragedy, wouldn't it?