

Marines Ban Makahiki

By Nadine W. Scott
Star-Bulletin Writer

Tentative approval for a Hawaiian religious festival this weekend at Kaneohe Marine Corps Air Station has been withdrawn, the Marines said today.

Capt. Bill Wood, base public affairs officer, said he told festival organizer Sam Lono today that approval was being withdrawn because Lono did not answer the Marines' letter setting forth conditions for holding the makahiki.

Wood said Lono told him the festival would go ahead without approval, but Wood said that festival participants would be stopped at the base gate.

"There's not enough time left now to plan it," Wood said.

He said that the public would be allowed on base as usual for other weekend events, including youth football games and a bicycle motocross competition.

Lono, a kahuna from Kaneohe, wants to reactivate the ancient Hawaiian temple to the god Ku and his counterpart Hina on the Marine base.

He had planned to hold a Lono O Ka Makahiki Festival this weekend on the three days of Ku — *Kukahi, Kulua and Kukolu* (Saturday, Sunday and Monday.)

The Marines wrote Lono Oct. 1, setting forth 15 conditions to which he had to agree in order to hold the festival.

In an interview yesterday, Lono said he did not agree with the

conditions, but acknowledged that he had not answered the letter. He said that he plans to go ahead with the makahiki with or without approval but "whatever will be, will be."

"IF THEY'RE going to stop me, they'll have to arrest me at the gate," he said.

Lono could not be reached for comment today after his meeting with the Marines.

The Marines' announcement said that Lono had failed "to agree to conditions required to ensure safety, security and sanitation during the event and removal of religious artifacts following the ceremonies."

Lono had asked participants to bring pohaku (stones) from their yards to be used in rebuilding the heiau adjacent to Pyramid Rock.

But the Marines' Condition No. 2 said that "no permanent construction will be permitted on board Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii."

It also said that "all religious artifacts, rocks, ornaments, altar pieces or other items of religious significance brought by festival participants must be removed from Marine Corps Air Station, Kaneohe Bay, following the event. Should any items of property remain after the festival, the United States Marine Corps will dispose of these items in any manner it deems appropriate."

Lono said he feels that means that "they could bulldoze the pohaku into the sea!"

He said he has already received stones from Maui, Molokai and Kauai. "How can the people come back over here and get their stones and take them back?" he asked.

"Under the Religious Freedom Act we have every right to be there," he said.

CAPT. WOOD said denial of the request for the festival does not prohibit religious worship under the provisions of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. The announcement said "future requests to worship will be given every consideration."

He said that Lono's group had been allowed on the base many times in the past.

The Marines planned to require all participants to register when entering and leaving the base, and to indicate whether they would spend the night (in tents or campers) adjacent to the Pyramid Rock beach pavilion.

No surfing was to be permitted. Net fishing was to be allowed "only in conjunction with actual religious ceremonies," according to the conditions contained in a letter signed by Col. M.H. Sautter, commanding officer of the base.

Condition No. 13 said, "If problems are encountered with large numbers of festival participants failing to abide by the conditions listed herein, the festival will be immediately terminated by me."

Also, all plans were "subject to cancellation" should they interfere with military operations.



Sam Lono: Set to butt heads with the Marines