

Honolulu

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H-3

What Price? What Purpose?

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What price? What purpose?

Ecologists hate it, Hawaiian activists curse it, and heaven knows what will happen when you drive through its electromagnetic field. Despite all that, H-3 is becoming reality

H-3, O'ahu's "final" freeway, has arrived. It represents, to date, the largest and most hotly contested public works project in Hawai'i's history. It is also probably the world's most expensive stretch of road, the all-time monument to America's relentless car culture.

Whether you counted yourself among the "all" who need it, as in the "We All Need H-3" bumper stickers, or whether you were among its defeated opponents, the new freeway is a fact.

Drive to the Kāne'ohe side, look up into Ha'ikū Valley, and there it is. Ed Hirata, the recently departed director of the state Department of Transportation (DOT), calls it "an engi-



Above left: One of the preliminary H-3 signs, which was shot up in protest and removed by the Department of Transportation. (Photo provided by author)

By **Steven Goldsberry, Clemence McClaren and Tamara Moan**



removed

H-3 runs through Ha'ikū Valley on massive concrete piers, some higher than 100 feet.

Photographed by Brett Uprichard



Above: A banana patch sprouting from ancient taro terraces—which were, until Hawaiian activists protested, slated to become an H-3 off-ramp. Above right: A forest of rebars grows to support an H-3 pier.

neering wonder. We are creating a scenic resource.” Rick Ziegler, former president of the now dormant Stop H-3 organization, calls it “an insult, a huge, hideous, disastrous monstrosity, the saddest rape ever suffered by this tiny island.”

Although the road goes 15 miles, the most visible segment cuts through Ha’ikū Valley and curves around the base of Pu’ukeahiaKahoe, a summit above Kāne’ohe. Over the last two years, Windward motorists and Kāne’ohe residents have observed the freeway workers chop down ridge lines at Hospital Rock and cover the bared earth with erosion control “blankets” that from afar look like AstroTurf, but up close look like a Brillo pad that runs for hundreds of yards. These plastic blankets do not decompose; the regenerating forest will grow up over them.

Also visible is the new temporary bridge crossing Likelike Highway, built to carry the trucks bringing “muck” from the tunnels in back of Ha’ikū. Muck is the basalt rock blasted and mined from the tunnel bores. The growing stack of basalt will provide the base for H-3’s Kāne’ohe Interchange.

On the other side of the 350-foot double-barreled Hospital Rock Tunnels lies the Ha’ikū Viaduct, the largest H-3 structure. It is beginning to resemble something from a ’50s sci-fi flick, a gigantic cement centipede crawling past the fluted green cliffs on massive columnar legs. The engineers call these legs “piers.” Ha’ikū has 23 pairs of piers, some extending more than 100 feet above the valley floor. “Truly,” Ziegler says, “it’s a monster.”

“We’re very proud of the construction of Ha’ikū Viaduct,” says Dennis Higa, the DOT’s construction coordinator for H-3. On a field trip to the site last November, he pointed out the details: “Each pier rests on a rebar cage mounted on a concrete pedestal that is rooted by piles to solid rock. We drill a shaft and pour the concrete down to 170 feet. We didn’t want to do pile driving because it makes too much noise and there are houses close by. It’s expensive. Every detail of the project is expensive, but we’re doing it the best way possible.”

No one knows for sure what the final cost of H-3 will be.

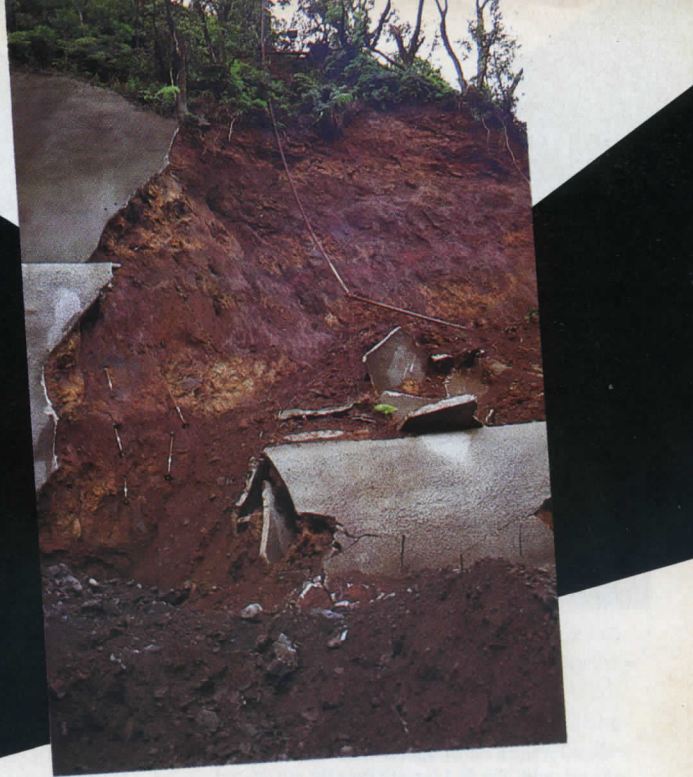
It started as a \$12 million project but has mushroomed, thanks to more than 20 years of court battles and inflation, to \$850 million. For the 15-mile stretch from Hālawā to Kāne’ohe Marine Corps Air Station, that comes to \$56.6 million a mile.

But some feel the \$850 million figure, set in 1987, is far too low. U.S. Sen. Robert Stafford, D-Vt., chaired the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works that studied the project in 1986. He remembers why his committee recommended rejection of H-3: “We figured it would end up costing \$100 million dollars a mile. It seemed to the committee that that was a great misuse of federal dollars.” Some H-3 critics claim the final cost will break \$1.2 billion, bringing it to about \$112 million per mile.

Stafford became so committed to wiser use of the money that he wrote an open letter to Mayor Frank Fasi and Gov. George Ariyoshi, the two most public combatants on the H-3 issue, urging them to get the funds transferred to more appropriate transportation fixes: improvements on Pali and Likelike highways and a fixed rail system for Honolulu.

Ariyoshi attacked the senator for meddling in Hawai’i’s purely local affairs. H-3 was Ariyoshi’s pet project, and he would say later that the one important failure of his administration was that H-3 did not get built before he left office. (More so than the pesticide residues in Island water and milk, the deteriorating educational system or soaring Island housing costs?)

There were reasons for Ariyoshi’s knee-jerk response to Stafford. He had been recently mocked by Fasi who threw a “funeral” for H-3 on the City Hall lawn. Dressed in a clerical collar and standing next to a cardboard tombstone that read “R.I.P. H-3,” Fasi, in front of a crowd of reporters, pronounced the freeway officially dead. Ariyoshi was gravely insulted by Fasi’s shenanigans, as was Sen. Daniel Inouye (back in Washington fighting for H-3 legislation). A fiery determination rose in both men. The funeral is now remembered not for H-3’s death but its rebirth.



Left: Somewhere in the Luluku amphitheater was Kukui-o-Kāne, the largest heiau on O'ahu, now probably buried under H-3. Photo by Mahealani Cypher. Above: A cave-in above the Hālawā portal of the North Tunnel.

Although DOT officials rarely use this justification today, H-3 was originally supposed to be a defense highway, connecting Kāne'ōhe Marine Corps Air Station with Pearl Harbor. (H-1 connects the now dismantled Fort Ruger at Diamond Head to Hickam and Pearl Harbor; H-2 goes to Schofield Barracks.) Lurking behind the original Federal Highway Act—passed in 1956 during the Eisenhower administration—was the idea of providing rapid ground transportation between U.S. bases in case of enemy attack.

Of course, even by 1956, the nuclear age had made World War II-style trucking of munitions and supplies obsolete. As historian Gavan Daws points out, "On the first day of World War III, Pearl Harbor will be Ground Zero. There won't be a lot of people driving H-3 that day."

Beyond the military considerations were the economic. The Great Wall of China, after all, was a military white elephant. As a construction project, however, it strengthened the Chinese central government and taxation system for centuries. So, too, H-3 would be the biggest public works project in Island history, with 90 percent of the bill paid by the federal government.

And then there were the political considerations. The highway might relieve gridlock for increasingly road-weary Windward commuters, but it would certainly strengthen the political control of the state's Democratic Party, which had recently knocked the predominantly landed white Republican oligarchy from power. The Democrats were made up of working-class people moving off the plantations and into the burgeoning city—the kind of

people who commuted, the kind who had jobs in construction and related industries.

Democratic governor John A. Burns decided that Hawai'i needed this "defense highway." And, according to Ziegler, Burns "so powerfully convinced his hand-picked successor, George Ariyoshi, about the importance of H-3 that Ariyoshi made a promise just before Burns died that he would have his highway built no matter what." (Despite repeated attempts, Ariyoshi could not be reached for comment.)

A third man joined Burns and Ariyoshi in promoting H-3: Sen. Daniel Inouye, a figure so central to the issue that the road became known in Washington as "Danny's Highway."

The original H-3 was slated to run through Moanalua Valley. Its first main opponent was Frances "Patches" Damon,

Mrs. John Dominis Holt, scion of the famous Damon Estate and founder of Moanalua Gardens Foundation. In many ways, she represented the old oligarchy, the white land-based economy, in contrast to the Democratic politicians—Burns, Ariyoshi and Inouye—who represented the new, more cosmopolitan, oil-based economy.

Mrs. Holt took up the H-3 fight because the freeway was set to run through her beloved Moanalua Valley.

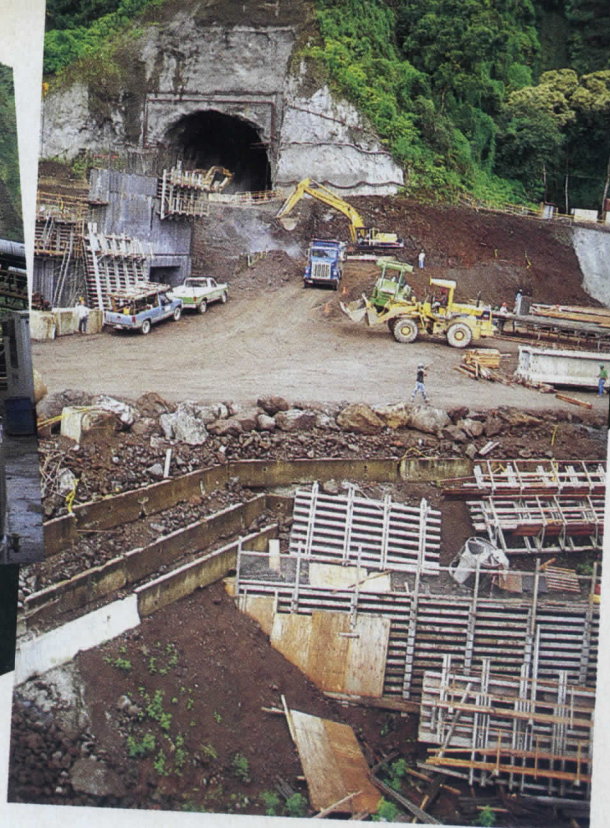
A place of enormous botanical and cultural significance, Moanalua became the rallying point in the early Stop H-3 movement. The first ally to Mrs. Holt was Paul Weissich, who directed Foster Garden for the city. On a field trip into the valley in 1970, he found 40 nearly extinct native plants. He recalls standing with Mrs. Holt "on a hill in the rear of the valley, watching the patterns the rain made. We had just tried to determine the route where the road would go. Patches turned to me and

**"We kept shooting them down
in court, so they took away
our bullets."**

—Boyce Brown



Above: A truck full of "muck" removed from the H-3 tunnels.
 Above right: The H-3 tunnels from the Ha'ikū end.



said, "It isn't here yet, and it is not going to be, either."

For her fight she drew on her training as a lawyer and on the tremendous wealth of her family's estate. She proposed, instead of a freeway, a 3,000-acre park of unspoiled beauty that encompassed all of Moanalua. She relied heavily on the argument that the remains of the ancient settlements in the valley should be preserved, the first of many Hawaiian culture issues that would slow H-3's progress.

That same year, 1971, a Ha'ikū resident named Robert Walls got interested in the proposed freeway that would come within 1,000 feet of his home. He heard about a model of H-3 on display at the State Library and wanted to see it. But by then the press had reported an informal poll conducted by the librarians was running 3-to-1 against the freeway, and DOT officials had taken the model back. Walls asked if he could see it, and was told it was damaged and would take at least a year to repair. (No one today seems to know what happened to the model.)

Eventually Walls revived the Ha'ikū Village Community Association, and that group, along with Life of the Land, Moanalua Valley Community Association, Moanalua Gardens Foundation, and a clutch of prominent citizens headed by Mrs. Holt, banded together to form the Stop H-3 Association.

Stop H-3 hired attorney Boyce Brown to litigate. Brown had already begun preparing files on the project on his own. "My fear was the terrible damage H-3 would do to the environment," he recalls, noting that as far as he's concerned the accelerated silt run-off into Kane'ohe Bay has already begun.

Brown battled the DOT by challenging their Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Gavan Daws, who served as president of Life of the Land in '73 and '74, recalls Brown's role: "A long time ago in the environmental movement, when no legislator could pronounce ecology, the EIS was a fairly new art form. The EIS the state produced on H-3 was insultingly incomplete. Boyce kept finding technical irregularities in the state's documents and getting delay after delay, forever. It was a long, long

campaign—longer than World War II, Vietnam, longer than most marriages, longer than a murder sentence. He could be an extremely wealthy lawyer now if he hadn't spent so much of his professional life fighting that thing. He was, and is, a genuine hero."

Brown's strategies paid off in 1976 when the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals held that Moanalua Valley was entitled to protection as a historic site under federal law. But it turned out to be a Pyrrhic victory. DOT moved plans for the road to the next available valley, North Hālawā, doubling the estimated cost to \$600 million, adding 2 miles to the length and making for longer, more complicated tunnels.

The prospect of their efforts actually causing more damage to the ecosystem threw the environmentalists into a funk. But at least they had set a precedent. If federal statutes protected Moanalua, they could be used to protect other areas and the whole project could be dumped.

Obviously, that never happened. The U.S. Department of Transportation approved the new route in 1980. There lay ahead seven more years of court battles, hearings, public and private meetings, a lot of yelling, betrayals, rallies, curses, news articles and editorials, loss of friendships. To no avail.

Today you can see H-3 taking shape along that 1980-approved route. The freeway begins near Aloha Stadium and shoots straight up the grade into North Hālawā Valley. Less than a mile of the twin double-lane thoroughfare has been completed here, but the access road stretches all the way up to the tunnel site.

North Hālawā is a stunning example of a subtropical leeward valley. Cut by a single gradually descending stream, it features rounded ridge lines and gentle slopes. The valley is a designated conservation area (as is all the land under the freeway route). Its forests and groves include 'ōhi'a, 'awa as tall as trees, kukui, hau, Christmas berry, African tulips, mango trees and royal palms. It is one of the last places on O'ahu where maile



Above: H-3 slices across Ha'ikū Valley. Below: A miner in front of the Hālawā portals.

lau li'i can be gathered, the small-leafed maile so prized by lei makers.

Before the access road, the only way into North Hālawā was a trail. The 5-mile hike from the valley mouth to its head took eight hours. One way. Now the work trucks make the North Hālawā Valley run in 10 to 15 minutes.

The beginning of the freeway's first viaduct spans the site of the recently moved Animal Quarantine Station. The cement piers that support the structure, the Hālawā Quarry Viaduct, stand about 40 feet at the tallest. The building of this structure stopped for a while because, on June 5, 1990, four workers fell

when a girder toppled off two of the viaduct piers. One man died, and three went to the hospital in critical condition.

"Anciently, there were several heiau at the mouth of Hālawā," says Hawaiian activist Mahealani Cypher, "and I wouldn't be surprised if that accident happened because they're on sacred ground there."

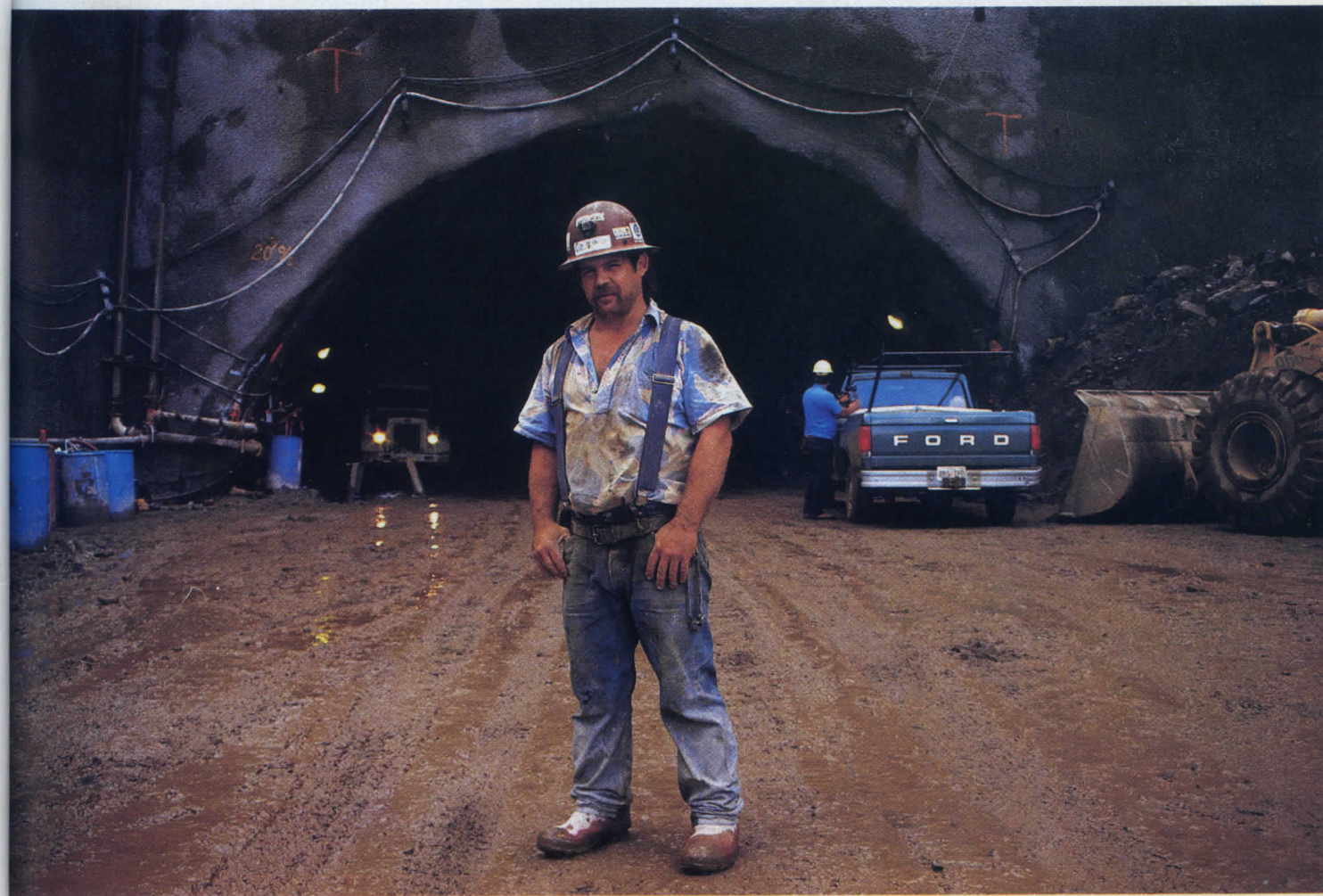
The remains of whatever ancient temples might have stood at the valley mouth were scattered decades ago, before Hawaiian activism forced developers to evaluate a property's archaeological significance. But in North Hālawā there are "in excess of 60 sites," says Paul Cleghorn, formerly project director for Bishop Museum on H-3.

Cleghorn's one-time colleague at Bishop Museum, Scott Williams, says, "There are extensive ruins in that valley. We had no idea how densely populated North Hālawā was until we started seriously digging."

The most important finds so far have been a series of rock enclosures that were part of an *ali'i kauhale* (chief's house complex), several basalt mirrors, adzes and flakes, and a single artifact described as one of a kind: a stone bowl with a protruding head and face.

A world of controversy has attended all the H-3 archaeological disclosures. Lilikalā Kame'eiehiwa, a Hawaiian Studies professor at UH, is angry about what H-3 has wrought: "It is a terrible desecration of my native culture," she says. "This is my land. Those are the monuments of my ancient people the DOT is running the freeway through. Would any-

CONTINUED ON 44



one dare to build a highway through the pyramids?"

Supposedly the freeway route was thoroughly surveyed a decade ago, and the EIS claimed that nothing of archaeological significance would be affected. "How come this work wasn't completed before construction started?" wonders Kame'eleihiwa.

Cleghorn maintains that the DOT is being as considerate as it can about preservation of archaeology. "It sounds perverted," he says, "but were it not for H-3 there might not have been funds to do this work. The people at DOT do listen."

Donald Duckworth, Bishop Museum's director, agrees, pointing out that "by the time H-3 is completed, more resources will have been put into the field—\$25 million to \$30 million—than in the entire history of archaeology in Hawai'i."

But the archaeological effort has been fraught with problems. Within the last 18 months, four of the most prominent archaeologists on the freeway corridor projects have left their jobs: Williams, Cleghorn, Aki Shinodo and Robert Spear. (Spear, who could not be reached for comment, left amid a flurry of speculation that he, like the others, was compelled to quit because of policies about the H-3 digs.)

Several members of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) got involved, and insisted that a planned ramp that would have cut into a corner of the *ali'i kauhale* site be moved. The DOT complied.

Some Hawaiian activists feel OHA has not done enough, pointing out that OHA is a state agency and highly politicized. For a while, OHA had its own archaeologist, Earl "Buddy" Neller. Says Kame'eleihiwa, "It really bothered us the way OHA handled Neller—an honest, eminently scrupulous archaeologist telling them the truth about all these important sites. They kept shutting him off so he just quit."

Neller is the fifth prominent H-3 archaeologist to leave the project. The loss of all the original researchers—and the deadline pressures to get the highway built—could compromise the scientific study. "I'm afraid," says Cypher, "that when the project is pau in '94, we'll get an incomplete archaeological survey written mostly by people who weren't involved with the actual work."

Meanwhile the trucks roar along the Hālawa access road, a few feet from the digs. They are heading to the tunnel site, where another viaduct will lift the freeway from the valley floor to up to 60 feet before it slides into the portals.

"Around the portals we're using colored concrete," says construction coordinator Higa, "specifically pigmented to blend with the natural rock. The drilling and dynamiting is by the Austrian tunneling method, and we take out the rock in 4-foot increments. We use shotcrete to secure the exposed rock and soil."

Outside the Hālawa portals you can see the shotcrete on the exposed ridge sides. Last fall, dowels anchoring the shotcrete loosened, bringing down a small cave-in of cement, rocks and dirt. One of the miners on the job said, "I can't remember why, but our crew didn't get up there that day when we were supposed to. If we had, we might have all been killed."

At least 13 Hawaiian-style blessings have preceded work on various segments of the H-3 since the first ground-breaking in '89, all dedicated to securing good fortune. But there are also curses. Kame'eleihiwa, at a site meeting with several DOT officials, called on the Hawaiian gods to destroy the freeway and collapse the tunnel. "I've prayed to Kānehekili, the thunder god manifestation of Kāne," she says. Kame'eleihiwa sees the crumbled shotcrete facade and the cracks that recently appeared in the ceiling of one tunnel as the unmistakable imprint of Kānehekili's thunderbolts.

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Former DOT chief Hirata attributes the cracks to normal setbacks to be expected on a project of this sort. "We brought in an expert, and he said the cracks weren't dangerous. We know what went wrong with the cracks and the cave-in, and we're correcting the problem."

From Hālawā the two tunnels turn south through the mountain, run downhill slightly for nearly a mile (the Wilson Tunnels are only six-tenths of a mile) and emerge high on the cliff wall in back of Ha'ikū Valley.

Arguably the most spectacular valley on O'ahu, Ha'ikū is geologically described as amphitheater-headed, which means it was formed by waterfalls and plunge pools cutting into the windward side of the old Ko'olau shield volcano. The green cliffs, set in a tight semicircle, feature fins and flutes of such remarkable beauty that the ancient ali'i considered Ha'ikū a resort, a cool upland retreat where they could listen to the birds and watch the clouds spin over the ridges.

"I loved that valley," says nature photographer Brian Hood, who lives on the Windward coast. "It was so picturesque. I think if people knew how the freeway would look, with that giant span of concrete destroying a very scenic valley, they'd have fought it tooth and nail."

"It comes down to aesthetics," says Kame'eiehiwa. "You have people who are essentially foreigners—non-Hawaiians—making decisions in these Islands and they have no appreciation for Hawaiian aesthetics."

Hirata disagrees. "Both Hālawā and Ha'ikū are beautiful valleys, but I don't believe the freeway will detract," he says. "It actually opens up spectacular views."

Besides the loss of its pristine appearance, Ha'ikū presents another fascinating problem for H-3. The route of the freeway takes it directly through the OMEGA antenna field in the valley. OMEGA is a worldwide system of eight stations broadcasting VLF (very low frequency) navigational signals.

To produce its signal, the OMEGA station in Ha'ikū pumps 150,000 watts of electricity into its signal antenna. The antenna itself is huge, a base of copper wires embedded in the ground (on a map these look like a spider web reaching out hundreds of yards into the valley) and a series of cables ascending from the station roof to the ridge summit 1,000 feet above. Each burst of electricity for the signal takes 10,000 watts, leaving the remaining 140,000 watts to dissipate in the field,

so the air around the valley is charged with electromagnetic residue.

H-3 comes out of the tunnels at the back of Ha'ikū and goes under the cable span and over the copper spider web, smack through the electrified antenna field.

When Rick Ziegler found out about the dangers to workers and motorists exposed to OMEGA charges, he figured he had another weapon for Stop H-3. According to Ziegler, a series of confidential letters, written in 1966-67 between Gov. Burns, Sen. Inouye, the DOT and the Navy, made clear that the Navy, which at the time ran the station, regarded the H-3 route as dangerous. Twice, it turned down the state's request to run H-3 through the antenna field because of the possibility of lethal shocks and unknown radiation effects. Ziegler claims it took Inouye's help behind the scenes before the Navy finally relented, providing that the state assume all liability.

The freeway opponents reignited the OMEGA issue, illustrating their concerns by going up into Ha'ikū one summer night in 1982, carrying long fluorescent tubes in their hands. The tubes lit up just from the electricity in the air. The *Star-Bulletin* ran a photo, captioned, "The Force Is with Them."

By '86, the issue had focused on the dangers to the construction workers who might spend years working in the antenna field. Mark J. Hagmann, an electronic engineer who has published more than 40 papers about the effects of electromagnetic energy on the human body, studied the OMEGA situation and said, "There are going to be a lot of lives lost, some of them in subtle ways that are very difficult to understand. No one has ever tried to construct a highway in a strong electromagnetic field. I'm not saying it couldn't be done without loss of life, but it would be very difficult."

Hagmann also worried that motorists who would eventually drive through Ha'ikū might experience microshocks from the metallic surfaces of their cars. People with pacemakers could have serious problems.

The DOT responded by bringing in its own expert, Boynton Hagaman (no relation to Mark Hagmann). As project manager for all eight OMEGA stations worldwide, Hagaman understood the difficulties, but felt they could be solved. "Those fears everyone was talking about are totally unrealistic," he says. "An electric field is easily reduced to negligible value. You could even walk under a tree in Ha'ikū and find

the electricity generally attenuated because the current flows to the ground through the tree. We could shelter H-3 with vegetation and effectively reduce the charges."

Instead of vegetation, Hagaman suggested covering the freeway lanes in Ha'ikū with a box-shaped cage of 3/8-inch diameter wires spaced about 4 feet apart—a device called a Faraday shield. "We scale-modeled it and measured the fields," he says. "It's almost as effective as a solid surface."

Boyce Brown contends the Faraday shield isn't enough. "If there's an accident that rips the shield, the wires cross and it turns into an antenna, concentrating the charge."

"Brown is wrong," says Hagaman. "The shield will still work if some of the wires are damaged. It poses no hazard of any kind."

The shield won't go up until H-3 is complete. Meanwhile other precautions—grounded equipment, special boots and clothing—protect the workers. "As long as they follow correct procedure up there," says Hagaman, "no one will get hurt."

Around the bend from Ha'ikū is another site of powerful energy, this one spiritual. The strongest emotions about H-3 find their center here, at Kukui-o-Kāne Heiau. In ancient times, Kukui-o-Kāne (the Light of Kāne) was probably the largest temple on O'ahu. If its adjoining structures are considered part of the complex—a notion archaeologists can't agree on—it was larger even than the great Pi'ilanihale Heiau on Maui. Its structures date to 500 A.D. Thomas Thrum first recorded the ruined platforms in 1915, followed by Gilbert McAllister in 1930. A 1928 photo of the Lulūku area (inland Kāne'ohe) clearly shows the walls of a major heiau where McAllister mapped Kukui-o-Kāne.

"No one argues that the heiau existed around that spot," says Paul Cleghorn. "Precisely where is the problem."

Well before McAllister's observations, in 1916, the Libby, McNeil & Libby Pineapple Co. scattered the heiau stones and planted pineapple on the site. The crop failed, Hawaiians said, because of the desecration. At least part of the overall complex was further destroyed with the construction of Likelike Highway in the '50s, but there were no Hawaiian activists to cry out then.

After H-3 work began, several Hawaiian groups, led by Lilikalā Kame'eiehiwa, protested. "We wanted them to at least realign the road and spare the site," she says. "The OHA archaeologist, Buddy

H-3: WHAT PRICE?

Neller, managed to get the DOT to move a ramp to save some taro terraces. But they wouldn't budge for Kukui-o-Kāne. Basically OHA didn't care; the trustees are mostly Christian."

The site, officially designated G5-86, became the center of an intense dispute. Jane Allen, currently Bishop Museum's principal archaeologist, published a 1987 report, *Five Upland 'Ili*, declaring the site was agricultural terraces, not a heiau.

Neller counterattacked. He even secured a handwritten letter from the aging McAllister, confirming that the disputed site was the one he recalled as Kukui-o-Kāne. But then the state sent a team to McAllister's home in Texas and videotaped the old man while they questioned his memory until he modified his position. Neller found the state's action distasteful: "You should see the tape. It's pathetic."

Although several DOT officials accompanied Kame'elehiwa on a field trip to the site, reviewed her submitted reports and listened to her testimony in public meetings, they finally accepted Allen's view that the site was not Kukui-o-Kāne.

"As you know, Lilikalā is not an archaeologist," says Hirata, "and we have to rely on our archaeologists."

DOT chose to "salvage" the site by recording and burying it, which is an accepted archaeological procedure. Kame'elehiwa remembers, "The day they buried Kukui-o-Kāne, they invited us up to witness it, I think to rub salt in the wound."

Just down the hill from Kukui-o-Kāne lies Ho'omaluhia Park, an area that became enormously important to the Stop H-3 cause.

Ho'omaluhia Park began as a flood control project and, between 1966 and 1974, the park boundaries gradually increased to the present 450-acre size. Each new expansion took into consideration the proposed alignment of H-3, but despite the fact that the park had been designed to accommodate the freeway, Boyce Brown challenged the legality of an interstate traversing park land.

A federal statute stipulated that on federally funded highway projects "special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands." In '78, the courts ruled H-3 failed to do that at Ho'omaluhia. In '82, the highway was ordered stopped. Brown knew that the ruling was ironclad.

It looked as if H-3 had been stopped forever.

But the state proved relentless. "I guess a momentum builds on something like this," Brown says. "Since '65 the Democrats had been promising labor the H-3 contracts were around the corner. It was their dogma, their power source, and they had to stick by it."

Because the state kept losing to Stop H-3 in the judiciary ("They never beat us in court," says Brown), the politicians sought help in the U.S. Congress.

Sen. Inouye and Rep. Daniel Akaka moved to introduce a bill that would exempt H-3 from the environmental laws. It was at that point that Sen. Stafford's committee conducted its hearings. "Stafford was told by Inouye's office there was no opposition to H-3 in Hawai'i," says Brown.

Attorney Cynthia Thielen, Brown's associate, remembers getting a call from Stafford's secretary: "'We found your name on a list,' she said. 'Is anyone in the Islands against H-3? We have a hearing in two days.'" Thielen was on the next plane to Washington.

In Washington, Thielen was joined by a Hawaiian kupuna and Wayne Gagne of the Sierra Club. David Weiman, an environmental lobbyist hired by Mayor Fasi, and Rick Ziegler were already there working against H-3.

Although they were outmanned and outspent, the small knot of anti-H-3 activists pulled off a miracle. Stafford's committee recommended that the traffic funds not be used for H-3.

And then, says Brown, "We were double-crossed by Inouye. He said whatever the committee decided, he'd abide by. Then he went ahead and tacked the H-3 exemption onto an appropriations bill."

Of Brown's accusation, Inouye says simply there was "no such arrangement."

"We debated H-3 on the Senate floor into the wee hours of the morning," Stafford recalls. "Sen. Inouye, whom I consider an able and honest guy, argued for what he believed his constituency wanted. I argued for what my committee wanted."

On Sept. 23, 1986, the Senate voted 78-16 to attach the Inouye H-3 exemption amendment to the resolution. On Sept. 25, the House voted to pass the bill, 201-200.

Ironically, the single deciding vote was cast by Hawai'i's newest congressman, Neil Abercrombie, who'd won a special election to replace Cec Heftel, who had resigned to run for governor. Abercrombie had lost the 1986 primary election (his current stint began in '90), but for a few months he was a member of the House.

"Neil could have been the difference," says Brown. "He let us down."

"Everyone knew he was against H-3," adds Ziegler, "and we were stunned by his vote."

Brown let Abercrombie know how angry he was. "I sent him a telegram saying you lost more than an election, you lost your balls."

Abercrombie responded by pointing out that he'd always opposed H-3 and had voted for transferring the H-3 funds to other projects. But, he says, "As a political issue H-3 was over when I came to Congress. It was a done deal. But the resolution contained a section on disarmament that represented the very first Congressional action on that issue. It may come as a shock to Boyce Brown, but limiting arms is at least as important as this highway. If I had voted no, the resolution might well have gone back to committee and returned without the disarmament stuff. H-3 was a political lock and would come back untouched."

Oct. 18, 1986, President Reagan signed the resolution. Tucked into its back pages were two little paragraphs that exempted "Danny's Highway" from the environmental laws.

"As soon as that exemption went through," says Brown, "I saw 15 years of work completely blasted. We kept shooting them down in court, so they took away our bullets."

Brown and Thielen tried to get the H-3 exemption thrown out as unconstitutional. The 9th Circuit Court ruled against them. Boyce Brown, exhausted and disillusioned, moved to Europe.

Last fall Ho'omaluhia Park experienced serious erosion as a result of accelerated run-off from the H-3 work areas upslope. It should be said in defense of DOT that its engineers are working hard on the problem: Concrete buttresses, silk fence sediment traps, and an array of geotextiles are now in place to slow the water.

Of greater concern is what kind of impact clearing a 1,000-foot-wide corridor for the freeway will have. About 797 acres would go, including nearly 40 acres of banana farms (the evicted farmers were relocated). Much of that stripped land girds Ho'omaluhia, which is already affected by the clearing of 600 acres for its new neighbor, the Minami Golf Course.

"What worries us most is how the large removal of the tree canopy will alter the rainfall," says park director Michael Kristiansen. "The water vapor rises from the canopy and actually attracts rain."

When the trees are gone, that attraction is gone too.” (This is the ancient Hawaiian principle *Hahai nō ka ua i ka ululā’au*—the rains follow the forest.)

“The freeway will bring a lot of noise, too,” says Kristiansen. “H-1 noise has destroyed Foster Garden. Here the sound is going to hit the mountain and bounce back. In terms of ambience it will be devastating. The whole concept of Ho’omaluhia as a place of peace and tranquility is compromised.”

Herb Tateishi, who formerly managed H-3 for the DOT and now holds a similar position with the coordinating construction company, Parsons Brinckerhoff, claims that the freeway noise will be muffled by earthen berms set between the lanes and the park boundary. “Over the years we’ve addressed every issue the freeway opponents have raised,” he says. “We live here too. We want the best for this island.”

Of course, people’s view of the best differs. And many H-3 opponents fear the freeway will bring a whole string of subdivisions along its route—a tendency historian and artist Herb Kane calls “the Californication of Hawai’i.”

The state promises that H-3 is part of a balanced development plan and assures Windward residents that it will not promote the rampant building, the McDonalds and gas stations everyone fears will pop up along the route. It’s conservation land. It’s a park freeway, meant only to move traffic through a corridor of preserved forests and clear-running natural streams.

Even among H-3’s staunchest foes, no one argues that it won’t be a beautiful drive, over the rain forest of North Hālawā, through a “state-of-the-art” tunnel, out along the green fins of Ha’ikū’s cliffs—Faraday shield above you, OMEGA station below, Kāne’ohe Bay’s silted waters shimmering in the distance—around the bend with buried heiau beneath your wheels, down through the Lulukū banana patches cradled in a fluted amphitheater, past Ho’omaluhia’s quiet groves, through a narrow pass that opens to reveal the quarry where H-3’s pre-fab concrete viaduct sections were poured, then downhill toward Mōkapu Peninsula—where Hawaiian legend says people were first created. Mōkapu is now the site of the Marine base; the freeway ends at its gates. A beautiful drive.

Says Boyce Brown, “If you want to risk traversing an electromagnetic field and sacred ground that carries kahuna curses, enjoy the ride.”

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