seven children (five girls and two boys), the youngest of which was Mary (9), the Nakamuras must have feared the worst when, after the waves from the tsunami had withdrawn, their daughter could not be found. She was listed as missing for a day or so later. Unable to locate their tiny daughter struggling in the current when last seen by her brother, 13 year old James as they fled the house, the parents drove to the Shinto Shrine near the cemetery in Laie. Called the Inari Temple, this temple was the second to occupy the spot. The priest was Totaro Nakayama whose son Tom still lives in Kahuku and provided information for this paper. Totaro was asked to help locate the by now undoubtedly deceased girl, using supernatural means, since all man’s efforts had proven futile. Two of Mary’s older sisters, Kimi Yoshida and Hatsue Tanaka told me that although the Nakamuras were Buddhists, not Shinto, the priest’s inspiration was equal to the task for, by following his directions, Mary’s bloated body was found in a cane field under debris left by the flood. A neighbor in Camp Number Three, Mrs. Hisashi Hirata, confirmed that first an arm, then the rest of the body was uncovered. Strangely enough, family members told me the doctor’s report indicated Mary died of shock and was not drowned.

Two further details were confirmed by these three survivors of the tsunami, mentioned earlier. Mary was considered by her teachers at Kahuku Elementary School to be a very bright, even precocious child. Of all the nine family members, Kimi Yoshida wondered aloud to me, why would Mary, the only Methodist in the family, be taken? Finally, nature’s irony had the last word. Had the Nakamura family remained in their home, rather than fleeing down the road, they would not even have had their feet wet. The waves moved two makai houses over with the other six but left those six of Camp Number Three high and dry.

According to Asako Nakamura, in the Buddhist tradition, Mary and her father, who died in 1984, were cremated. Mary’s ashes were kept at home on the family altar for a time. Today their earthly remains lie side by side in the Pikake section of the Mililani Cemetery. Asako, more than 80 years old, resides in the Kahuku Senior Citizens housing as of this date.

The destruction caused by the waves at the nearby Kahuku Air Strip was widely documented. The base had been built at a cost of five million dollars. It suffered heavy damage and the effect of the waves was quite unusual. Many pounds of fish, lobsters, and eels were found in the area after the water receded. Moreover, in roughly circular areas three to five feet across, blocks of pavement were lifted so as to make conical hills a foot or so high. Observers noted that the pavement rested on sand, and the raising of the blocks of pavement was a result of hydraulic pressure. How the water penetrated the pavement and why the pressure was greater under the pavement than over it remains a mystery (Shepard, MacDonald, Cox).

A second death due to the tsunami is made more dramatic by another geographical quirk. A few hundred yards Haulea side of Pats at Punalu'u was a home in which Mrs. Kimaka Kikaha lived. Nearly one hundred years old, she was an invalid and lived with her daughter and granddaughter. Mrs. Kikaha’s daughter Margaret Ilis, who has since passed away, was that fateful Monday morning on her way to Schofield Barracks with her nephew Simeon Kanae when, as she later said, she "realized something was wrong with the ocean. I turned back but didn’t get home in time to save my mother." When the waves struck, Mrs. Ilis’ eldest daughter, Helen, tried to save both her baby and her grandmother but when the second wave washed into the house she could not keep all three of them afloat. At that point, Margaret, who told the story to the Honolulu Advertiser, said grandmother Kikaha begged Helen to save herself and her baby. "I’ve lived my life, let me go" were her last words before she was sucked into the churning waters and seen no more until her dead body was uncovered from the wreckage of their tiny home (HA, 4 Apr, p. 2). This crippled and courageous woman might have wondered at nature’s irony had she known before she died what investigators later confirmed; that same force which
propelled the waves that took her life at Punalu'u, sent the highest waves to strike any of the Hawaiian islands crashing onto the shore on the Hamakua coast, at Waipio, the very place where Mrs. Kimaka Kikaha had been born! (HSB, 4 Apr, p. 9).

Following a business arrangement still maintained in 1987 between Mormons and Borthwick, Mrs. Kikaha's funeral service was held at Borthwick Mortuary, on Thursday, April 4, 1946. The widow of Kuamohelelani Kikaha was buried in the Diamond Head Memorial Park. Surviving her were her daughter Margaret, six grandchildren and one great grandchild (HSB, 4 Apr, p. 9).

About three miles down the coast toward Kaneohe from this drowning site lies beautiful Kahana Bay, though it was a scene of devastation by 7:15 a.m. the Monday of April 1. In 1946 the land had long since passed into and out of the hands of Mary Robinson Foster from the hui of Latter-day Saints Hui Ku'ui Aina o Kahana. The Mormons there still worked the fishponds under Sam Pua Ha'aheo, already almost a legend, but Bishop trust had control of the property. It was to be a while yet before (Kilo) Joseph Kekona took the lease of the Huilua pond (Kelly p.6)

The very shape of the valley, that which help give it its picturesque beauty and fertility, may well have been a contributing cause of the tragic deaths which occurred there that April Fool's Day, 1946. Under the usually moderate waves of the bay lies a submarine trench which appears to have caused the waves of that tsunami to strike with particular violence along both sides of the bay (Shepard, MacDonald, Cox, 421). It was there on the southeast side near the fishpond that the William Isaac Kanakanaui Jr. family, William, Grace, and their three children aged three, two and one, lived in a tiny house. One report said the waves were three in number and struck at 7:00 a.m., 7:07, and 7:14 a.m. (HSB Extra, 1 Apr, p. 1). Grace (Mamo) Ha'aheo's husband had left for work with Hawaiian Electric Company by the time the water struck. Apparently, it was not the height of the waves, but the sheer volume of the water which proved disastrous. A road construction superintendent, John S. Townsend, observed the tsunami a few miles away at Ka Oio Point near Kualoa. The waves came at ordinary speed, he said, but back of each wave was a solid mass of water which picked up trees and took them right over (HSB, 3 Apr, p.2). At Kahana near the headland east of the bay, the water rose 17 feet and threw large blocks of coral onto the beach and even across the road (Shepard, MacDonald, Cox 442).

It is interesting to compare disaster accounts today with that at Kahana forty years ago. Had the 1946 tsunami occurred in 1986, we would be surprised not to see a television reporter, his microphone thrust into Mamo's face, asking her how she felt when she realized she could not save her babies. The extant accounts from that period are mercifully spare in both number and detail. One wonders if people then were simply more sensitive to tragedies like that of the Kanakanauis, recognizing the need for privacy on such occasions. Three days after the tsunami, on Thursday, April 4th, the newspaper carried a front page picture of Grace under which the caption read, "her loss was greatest" (HA, 4 Apr 1, P. 1). But it was Mamo's father-in-law William Isaac Kanakanaui who told the story. On page four of the Star-Bulletin he explained:

I am the granddaddy of three little ones who were in the loving arms of their poor mother while struggling with the heavy tidal waves pounding their little home on the beach at Kahana Bay. Had their mother not caught a large pine tree on her way out to the deep after her three little ones were knocked out of her cold hands, she would also have drowned. She clenched to the tree and the waves were rushing under until the rushing water died off, only to find that her home and her loved ones had vanished forever (HSB, 4 Apr, p. 4).

Some accounts suggest the bodies were found in the fish pond. Mamo, pregnant with her fourth child, (she died bearing her seventh) went into shock and it was feared she might lose the child she was carrying. Since that child,
William Isaac Kanakanui IV, would not be born until seven months later, in November. Mamo's obstetrical problems must have been those associated with early pregnancy. (William Isaac Kanakanui IV later married Maggie Broad of Laie. I am grateful to her for information included in this paper). The bodies were located and transported to the jungle training camp in Green Valley where some 24 army personnel were still stationed. Futile attempts were made to revive William Isaac III, 3 years old, Sam Puaaheo, 2, and little Ah Moe Kawaiahao, only 1.

No photographs of or statements from the father of the children appear in any of the newspaper or journal accounts. It is possible he too may have been in shock, simply unavailable when reporters were present, or the irregularity of his habits may account for this omission. Yet he went on to outline Mamo and to remarry later. He is buried near his parents in an unmarked grave in the Hauula Cemetery next to the ruins of the stone church.

The transportation of the dead babies to Green Valley camp provides the natural transition to the concluding chapter in our story. About three miles up the left fork of the valley on the Hauula side of the road was this jungle training base which had only 24 soldiers left over from the war.

Military-civilian relations were as problematical in 1946 as they are now. In the same month as the tsunami, a Hauula boy, Moroni Kamai, was shot and critically wounded in a brawl with soldiers on Punaluu highway. An area of six acres in Laie as well as a residential portion of Waipahu had just been removed from "off limits" for military personnel. Civilians seemed to feel that soldiers had been spoiled and the soldiers that civilians had lived very selfishly during the war (HSB, 3 Apr, p. 6). Feelings were aggravated after the tsunami when military heavy equipment operators simply followed their officers' orders and demolished buildings as they bulldozed them off the roads where they had been left by the waves rather than drive around them, make an attempt to move them back to their original sites, or even just push them out of the way. But the behavior of the military generally after the tsunami rightly came in for high praise by the refugees.

Reports of additional waves on the way compelled the army to remove everyone between Laie and Kualoa up to the camp where they were housed in two large wooden barracks and tents which the army brought in. The Honolulu Advertiser said that PX privileges were extended to refugees, although the number present as listed by that newspaper appears inflated by at least a third (HA, 3 Apr, p. 1). Three thousand cots were set up and at least $6,000 worth of emergency rations expended. There were four mess halls serving "B" and "C" rations. Schooling was provided for the children present; transportation also was made available by military vehicles; chaplains were brought in representing several faiths (HA, Apr 3, p. 1). Army engineers even installed oil burning water heaters (Army 10).

The locals sense of humor was apparent in their reports concerning their treatment. "Some of us are getting better food than we've ever had in our lives and yet they call it emergency rations. Tomorrow they plan to feed us garrison rations, chicken and steak, etc." (Army 7). But while a carnival atmosphere may have prevailed temporarily, it was colored with tragedy for many had lost at least some property, and everyone must have been affected by the deaths, four of them children. Records show that despite the generous and even heroic army efforts ably backed by the Red Cross, the number of refugees at Green Valley camp declined drastically each day. The army personnel present declined daily also, though at a slower rate than civilians. A week after the tsunami, only 220 civilians remained, matched by 21 officers, 427 enlisted men and 39 vehicles. It is supposed that the non-military people represented those unable to return to their destroyed homes. On the 23rd of April, there were still 69 people from five families at the base (HSB, 23 Apr, p.5). As usually happens, the refugee situation faded from the newspapers when the sensational elements which made it newsworthy were gone. Thus, the exact date when the last refugee left the camp is difficult to determine. Today the camp itself is but a memory. In fact, with each passing month, it seems, those who recall the disaster from first hand experience are fewer;
Mary Nakamura's mother is the sole surviving parent of those who lost their lives on the North Shore.

A summation recalls a line from John Donne's famous poem *A Valediction Forbidding Mourning* in which he notes that cataclysms, "moving of the earth," as he calls them, cause men to "reckon what it did and meant." It is well to consider Donne-like if the voice of the waves of the sea in 1946 speaks any messages for our day. It is possible that the intervening years have been only an illusion? Consider that two days after the tsunami the entertainment page of the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* featured a movie "Teen Age," the come on explaining that the film showed modern youth on the rampage. On the same day, another, "Colonel Effingham's Raid" was advertised by an illustration of a woman, her skirts blowing up a la Marilyn Monroe, the enticement, "it started like this." The following scene shows Joan Bennett and Charles Coburn in an embrace, the words explaining "they finish it like this." Pretty tame stuff in 1987, we say, at the same time recognizing the ageless and continuing source of the appeal.

Looters too, were part of the 1946 disaster, though the one reported apprehended by police was clearly less sophisticated than looters in our day. In an area where 42 homes had been completely demolished, 45 needed major repairs, and 67 minor ones, the looter, whose wife admitted he had been acting strangely lately, was arrested a second time. In his possession were toilet bowls and wash basins! (*HA*, 5 Apr, p. 1). A Kalihi Valley man, he was committed for mental observation.

Consider further that the sports pages for April 1, 1946 show the headline "Tough Samoan Team Outroughs Rivals in Matfest." Do the names of the winning tag team of this so-called professional sport which is undergoing such a renaissance in the 1980s sound familiar, Vilai Su'a and Al Lolota'i? The losing roughhrousers Bill Venable and Harry Dellis found "the Samoans too big, too tough, too strong, and too much." The writeup clearly shows that professional wrestling tactics have not changed; most of the damage was done by forearm smashes.

One of the most ominous and portentous articles in the *Star-Bulletin* of April 1, 1946 almost makes one wonder if there has not been some mistake. It read "Robert Levy, merchant seaman was charged with importing a quantity of marihauna" (sic). Yet still another note raises the question whether or not the voice of the waves of the sea has taught us anything. The day following the 1946 tsunami, the *Honolulu Star Bulletin* headline spoke of the need for an investigation into the lack of warning for what territorial delegate Joseph R. Farrington called the worst peacetime disaster ever in Hawaii (p. 1). Last spring, May 1986, despite some advanced warning that a tsunami of dangerous proportions was approaching, not only did the threatened wave not arrive to cause the damage feared, but the city's emergency communications system failed to function properly, resulting in an investigation not completely resolved even now.

A poet has wisely said: "Experience deepens our insights into the past, and we feel we never understood or appreciated it thoroughly while it was the present" (George Eliot 459). Current events make it amply clear we have not adequately understood or appreciated the events of April 1, 1946. But at least one thing is certain; the voice of the waves of the sea will speak again.
NOTES

1Honolulu Star Bulletin. "History of Tsunamis in Hawaii is One of Death, Destruction," 8 May, 1986, A3. Hereafter references to this evening newspaper will be HSB and will be parenthetical.

2Honolulu Advertiser. 4 April, 1946, 2. Hereafter references to this morning newspaper will be HA and will be parenthetical.

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Interviews conducted in 1986-87, principals listed parenthetically.

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