

Territory of Hawaii v. Ahakuelo, et. al, trial transcripts for November 18, 19, 20, 23, 25, 27, 30 and December 2, 1931.

On October 12, 1931, five youths were indicted for allegedly kidnapping and raping Thalia Massie, the wife of Navy Lieutenant Thomas Massie. Two of the youths were Hawaiian, two were Japanese and one was Hawaiian-Chinese. The ensuing trial is officially known as Territory of Hawaii v. Ahakuelo, et. al,¹ and began on November 16, 1931. It is often referred to as the Ala Moana case because this is the name of the street where Thalia Massie claimed she was assaulted. Thalia Massie's testimony begins in the first transcript on November 18th.

There was overwhelming pressure to obtain a guilty verdict against the defendants. When the jury could not reach a verdict after three days of deliberation, Judge Steadman insisted they deliberate further by giving them an Allen charge – known as a “dynamite charge”—a strong admonition to seek consensus and deliver a verdict. Judge Steadman later admitted that he kept the jury deliberating because he wanted a guilty verdict.

The jury deliberated for four days with over one hundred ballots being taken but it was unable to reach a verdict and the judge declared a mistrial on December 6, 1931. It was the longest jury deliberation in Hawaii's history up to that time. The mistrial was denounced by the U.S. naval personnel in Hawaii as well as by mainland politicians and the majority population in the United States.

¹ Territory of Hawaii v. Ahakuelo, Crim. No. 11782 (1st Cir. Ct. Hawaii 1931)