

# Honolulu Star-Bulletin

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## Bishop land purchase will be good for Hawaii

**T**HE Bishop Estate's purchase of 30,500 acres of Hamakua Sugar Co. land may have been the best possible outcome of the demise of the sugar firm. As the most powerful Hawaiian institution in the islands, the Bishop Estate can be expected to administer these lands in a responsible manner, with a view to the long-term interests of the community and the Hawaiian people as well as its mission under the will of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop of educating Hawaiian children.

The estate's announcement that it would put the bulk of the acreage into agriculture should allay fears that the Hamakua Coast would be turned over to developers of luxury resort projects. Board Chairman Myron Thompson's statement that the aim would be to devote much of the land "to long-term use compatible with surrounding Hamakua communities and the Big Island economy" should be welcomed. The identification of tree crops, cattle pastures and diversified agriculture as potential uses seem entirely appropriate. These activities could take up much of the economic slack left by Hamakua Sugar's closing without changing the character of the area.

The Hawaiian activists who protested the previous sale of the lands to the Western Farm Credit Bank should be pleased that the property will be in Hawaiian hands. The Bishop Estate certainly should be more sensitive to Hawaiian concerns than a mainland bank.

The estate has done much to defuse the issue of mandatory conversion of leasehold condominiums to fee simple on Oahu in the past two years by selling the fee to thousands of condominium owners on a voluntary basis. The proceeds of those sales may have helped finance the estate's successful bid of \$21 million for the Hamakua Sugar lands. In both cases, the estate has acted in the best interests of the people of Hawaii, Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians alike.