



ces a seat

## The Takabuki

TAKABUKI

Who are the Hawaiians today? In 1959 the year of Statehood, a part-Hawaiian teacher noted that "there is a developing opinion that something can be done to help the Hawaiian people."

Indeed in modern times, the Hawaiian people (including those with only a fraction of ethnic Hawaiian ancestry but who identify themselves with the Hawaiian people) have been characterized with sad statistics. Although constituting less than 1/3 of the total population, the Hawaiians "have the highest rates in all the negative statistics—drug abuse, prison records, desertion rate, juvenile delinquents."

But while the majority fall into the lower strata of society, two particularly significant groups have emerged since Statehood.

One is the growing middle class of Hawaiians as the front-running political force, replacing the older Hawaiian elite traditionally associated with missionary and sugar planter haole elite, the Republican Party, and descendants of the Hawaiian alii. Many of this new group, while still attached to the older Hawaiian values and traditions such as the Kawaiahae Church and the Kamehameha Schools, have been influenced to change these institutions by the thoughts and actions of the second group—Hawaiian youth.

Although local Hawaiian youths still continue to wage gang wars, drop out of school, take drugs, many of them are "discovering a sense of their own unique identity" whose "spirit of defiance and protest focuses on political fighting."

Tom Gill in a recent speech recognized them among the "long-standing minorities who have often been used and shunted aside" and as one of the "new people" who will bring about "the change (that) is coming."

But most of all, three significant things should be noted among members of these two groups—they are 1) educated, 2) organized, and 3) progressive.

#### BATTLEGROUND

THE MAKINGS of a political showdown probably began with a letter from The Hawaiians to Chief Justice William Richardson on April 6, 1971. The letter stated that "the decisions about the use to which Estate land is

put affects many traditional Hawaiian values including, for some of us, even the ability to live where our families have lived since Hawaiians first came to these islands." The letter asked for qualifications and criteria in the selection of a trustee.

On June 18, 1971, Matsuo Takabuki was appointed by the State Supreme Court as the new Bishop Estate trustee to replace the late Herbert K. Keppeler who had passed away in March, 1971.

By Monday of the following week, criticism of the new appointment was voiced by many Hawaiian organizations and leaders including: the Hawaiians, Kokua Hawaii, The Friends of the Kamehameha Schools, the Reverend Bill Kaina of Christ, and the Reverend Abraham Akaka of the Kawaiahae Church. Akaka called a mass meeting of the heads of all Hawaiian organizations for Tuesday evening, June 23, 1971.

Takabuki made no comment to the daily press.

Richard Lyman, Jr., president of the Bishop Estate's board of trustees, stated that "the trustees have no voice in the election of a trustee" and declined to comment further, except to reiterate the will.

A Burns administration aide was reported to "cite faith in (the Supreme) Court," and said that the Governor would decline to comment directly on Akaka's statements made to the press.

The Race issue. From the beginning of the meeting called by Akaka which drew an incredible crowd of about 700 Hawaiians, there was a recognition that the Hawaiian community, regardless of its internal diversity, was being dealt a "challenge" as the "have-nots" of the State.

And from the beginning, there was a recognition that Takabuki represented "certain political and economic vested interests" whose position of being the "haves" had often been at the expense of the "have-nots."

There was no question that the Hawaiians were united on their stand to deal with the challenge. And there was little question that the "legal approach" would be the strategy, although it was "preferred that Takabuki resign."

The big question was how to

meet the challenge.

What about the Bishop Estate?

And what about the man Takabuki and what he represented?

The leadership of the Ad-Hoc Committee generally refrained from "criticism of the workings of the Bishop Estate" (see box at right, KOKUA HAWAII) which along with the Hawaiian Homes Commission was recognized as the "last two Hawaiian things."

When Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Kazuhisa Abe early this year came out with an individual opinion on the "discriminatory admissions policy" of the Kamehameha Schools, it only complicated matters for the leadership who received calls and letters urging the (Ad-Hoc) committee to drop its law suit against the appointment process.

There was great fear among the Hawaiian community that the Bishop Estate would "be lost to them if the suit continued" and if they continued to demand State action.

It was therefore agreed by the lawyers for both sides, that the suit be settled out of court, according to Col. Curtis Kekoa chairman of the Hoc Committee, and it is at this point presently.

As for Takabuki, he was clearly seen as a member of the "power elite" (that is) "no different than the structure that governed Hawaii's 'plantation society' of a quarter century ago." However, a critical difference was that a quarter century ago, that "elite" was haole, while today, some felt, it was also Japanese.

Soon after the formation of the Ad-Hoc Committee, representatives went on radio to comment on the Takabuki appointment. According to one of the two groups that later withdrew their support of the committee, Takabuki was "denounced on his race and religion."

The Class issue. More than any other racial group in Hawaii the Hawaiians, coming from a subsistence economy whose social and political systems were based on cooperation and communalism, encountered the greatest "adjustment" problem to their "role in a stratified society in which competition and private property were encouraged."

# uki comes by fire

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## uki issue in groups discuss uki appointment

The effects are still seen for today's Hawaiians in their "social disorganization" - crime rate, broken homes, drug abuse, school drop-outs.

If the Bishop Estate is recognized as a potential "Hawaiian political and economic stronghold" it should also be recognized in Hawaii's "stratified society" that its trusteeship has consistently represented "the class interests of those with wealth and power." In the past the trustees have been sugar planters and missionary interests. Today, they are coming to reflect the interests of the so-called "New Establishment" of political, financial, and development groups.

Furthermore, if changes are to be made in the Hawaiian community, as for example, transforming the Kam Schools from "a highly regimented school" for less than 5% of some 50,000 part-Hawaiian children in Hawaii to a "liberal curriculum school for higher education" for the majority of Hawaiian children, there must be a recognition on the part of Hawaiians and the larger local community, that regardless of their income level or place of residence, the Hawaiians as a group represent the powerless class of "have-nots" in this State, alienated and isolated from the primary interests of the "New Establishment."

And that this "New Establishment" is not primarily Democratic, not primarily haoles and Orientals but is based primarily, as in the past, on common interests of wealth and power.

### COMMON GROUND

The likening of today's

"power elite" to the old "plantation society power structure" has its significant parallels.

The old plantation system of divide and conquer maintained power by keeping the racial groups segregated and fighting among themselves. In 1909, the Japanese struck on the plantations of Oahu alone. They lost the strike.

In 1920 the Japanese and Filipinos both struck, but as separate groups. They did not recognize the commonality of their aims.

When the Hawaiian community, regardless of the origin of the statements came out with racial attacks on Takabuki as a Japanese, they only isolated their struggle from the rest of the local community. Their failure to solicit help and to educate other ethnic groups about their issue with the appointment only further isolated them.

Just as the Japanese workers who struck for "Japanese" wages and housing and ignored the working and living conditions of the other races, the Hawaiians failed to recognize and take advantage of the importance of the Bishop Estate to all people, as stated by Bertram Kanbara:

"The Bishop Estate is one of the world's largest and most significant charitable trusts, imposing on its trustees immense responsibility for the administration of holdings so vast that the trustees' activity directly affects not only the beneficiaries of the trust, but the whole State of Hawaii."

Hawaiianews

on Takabuki

### AD-HOC COMMITTEE FOR A HAWAIIAN TRUSTEE

According to Col. Curtis Kekoa, chairman of the Ad-hoc Committee, "the whole aim behind the committee was not to fight the appointee, but the appointing process."

"We are thinking ahead to the next appointment," he said in a recent interview, "we have nothing against the man as a person."

Kekoa explained that the Hawaiian people were primarily interested in having "the opportunity to be heard on matters concerning them." The present appointment process for a trustee "has no community voice."

The present appointment process of trustees to the Bishop Estate dates back to a 1917 ruling. According to Kekoa, the Supreme Court, as designated by Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop's will, appoints the trustees.

Therefore, the Ad-Hoc committee has filed a suit against the Supreme Court and the trustees of the Bishop Estate in hope of changing the appointment process and allowing a public hearing of future appointments.

The Ad-Hoc Committee views Takabuki's talents and expertise with high regard, but felt that he could have "been hired as an economic consultant" for the Estate, rather than be appointed as a trustee.

Regarding the reactions of the individual Hawaiians against Takabuki, Kekoa explained that those views expressed were incorrectly attributed to the Ad-Hoc committee. He noted, however, that the "reaction was representative and symbolic of the Hawaiians' outrage" in a number of ways:

- 1) the appointment represented "continued domination and control by non-Hawaiians" of Hawaiian matters;
- 2) it represented "the present power structure of the State (and) the oppressed minorities;"
- 3) and it symbolized a "kind of red flag saying that no Hawaiian was qualified for the position."

Takabuki

## THE HAWAIIANS

"The Hawaiians," one of the largest Hawaiian groups organized in the State, initiated action on the Takabuki appointment issue as an individual organization by sending a letter to Supreme Court Chief Justice William Richardson asking for the "criteria in the appointment of a trustee," said Pae Galdeira, State chairman of the organization.

"The main concern of our organization," said Galdeira, "was due process in the appointment of a trustee."

Having met with Takabuki personally for five times, Galdeira stated that "I can honestly say as far as I believe Takabuki will be an asset to the Bishop Estate."

"I believe he is sincere in his efforts," continued Galdeira, "in bringing Kam School to the kids in poverty areas. That's where I see Takabuki's heart is at."

Galdeira noted that since Takabuki's appointment, changes that he spoke of in talks with Galdeira are being made. Takabuki plays "a big role in the use of the Estate's assets (because) he's got the 'know-how,'" said Galdeira.

The Hawaiians were the second organization to pull out of the larger Ad-Hoc Committee for a Hawaiian Trustee. The reason for their withdrawal was that "their objection to him was not on the basis of his being Japanese."

## KOKUA HAWAII

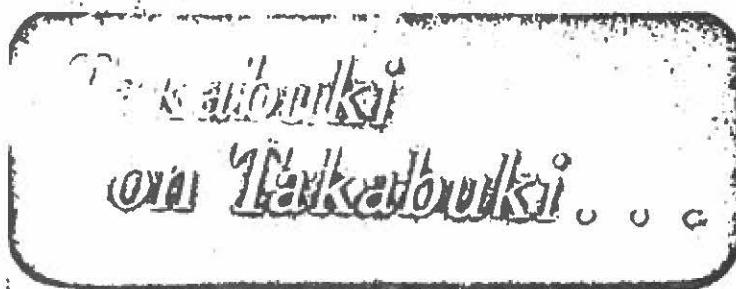
According to Joy Ahn, one of Kokua Hawaii's representatives to the Ad-Hoc Committee, their organization "supported the idea of opposing Takabuki as a trustee to the Bishop Estate, but for different reasons."

"We felt that the Ad-Hoc Committee was in a strong position to make a complete assessment of the workings of the Estate," said Ms. Ahn, "and to point out that the administration was lax in its job to help the Hawaiian people, especially the poor."

A press release issued last July when Kokua Hawaii withdrew from the Ad-Hoc Committee stated that "Matsuo Takabuki is a product of the system that causes people to be poor. We don't need him. Takabuki is closely aligned with the State leadership; he has many questionable relationships with business and real estate interests."

In an interview held last week, Ms. Ahn explained that Kokua Hawaii's involvement in the Takabuki issue was based on three main concerns:

- 1) that the opportunity be created for "constructive criticism" of the workings of the Bishop Estate "in actually serving all of the Hawaiian people;"
- 2) that opposition to Takabuki be based on his political and financial alliances "as a member of the ruling class" rather than on his "racial and religious background;"
- 3) and that the effort be made to unite and "involve the grass roots Hawaiian communities such as Nanakuli-Waianae and Kalihi-Palama" instead of "only those Hawaiians who were members of Kawaiahao Church and alumni of Kam Schools" to participate in the decisions of the Ad-Hoc Committee.



## TAKABUKI

No comment.

(Matsuo Takabuki was called by reporter Miyasaki, requesting an interview to discuss his views on his appointment to the Bishop Estate in the context of this series on Hawaiians-Japanese inter-ethnic relations. He said that he "felt very strongly" that his "taking a stand" or "responding" to the "incident" would only "polarize the groups" and "that is why I have kept silent during the proceedings, and would prefer not to comment."