

Trustees Make Statement for Kamehameha Students, Grads

The splendid spirit of the student bodies of the Kamehameha Schools, and the loyalty and interest of alumni, alumnae, faculty and others are valued by the trustees of the Bernice P. Bishop Estate. Because of their deep regard for these intangible assets the trustees desire to issue the following statement to all members of the student bodies, past and present.

Recently the trustees have been the target of another unfair attack. Charges of incompetence and selfish desires to enrich themselves at the expense of the estate and the schools have been read again into the records of the territorial legislature. The charges were similar to those hurled at the board of trustees during the 1943 session of the legislature. Continued attacks of this character, if unanswered, may in time tend to undermine the splendid school spirit now existing. Such attacks are dangerous to the schools.

Mrs. Bishop left her properties for the creation and maintenance of the schools she desired to create for you. You are the beneficiaries of her estate, and it is the sworn duty of all trustees to manage those properties in such manner as to derive from them the greatest benefits for the schools and through the schools for you. This responsibility has never been taken lightly or allowed to become secondary to the personal interests of the trustees, as Senator William H. Heen has charged. The past record of the trustees speaks for itself.

Hawaii as a whole and the Bernice P. Bishop Estate as a part of that whole have mutual and inseparable interests. As Hawaii grows and prospers the Estate grows and prospers. And progressive development of the Estate and improvement of the schools must surely react to the benefit of Hawaii. This relationship requires that the two must move apace.

Even before the beginning of these attacks against your trustees plans had been studied and adopted for improvements and expansions of the schools and development of the properties of the Estate. Those plans have been followed as closely as conditions have permitted and as rapidly as has been prudent. Some were interrupted by the war and must await the end of the war. Others are progressing even now. These plans constitute a very considerable program, only a fraction of which has thus far been accomplished. Much work and wise judgment will be required for the greater portion that remains. Management of an estate so large compares with the management and responsibility of the largest business in Hawaii.

With this future program in mind,

that is to derive maximum benefits for both the schools and the community, the trustees have been increasingly aware of the work that lies ahead for them. It is inevitable that more of their time will be required if the plans are to be accomplished. The sharp reduction in their remuneration affected by the 1943 legislature places their level of earnings far below earnings of other business executives with comparable duties and responsibilities. Consequently, because of the important work ahead, it was considered advisable to attempt to obtain an adjustment that would permit some of the five trustees to devote their full time to management of the Estate and administration of the schools. That and that alone was the motive for seeking correction of the stringent situation that now exists.

However, the same sources that guided the actions of the 1943 legislature, sources that overlook or deliberately disregard the increasing responsibilities ahead, frustrated this plea of the trustees by renewing the attack against them.

That is the story of fact from the viewpoint of the trustees. The work that lies ahead for the Estate and for the schools, as well as for the community, will be done because it must be done, if progress is to continue, even though the existing conditions will impose hardship. The trustees pledge to the student bodies, past and present, that they will continue to do their utmost to develop the utmost in benefits for the schools, and they strongly urge all students and graduates to sustain their splendid spirit and loyalty, and their confidence in the integrity of the trustees for the good of the schools and the beneficiaries of Mrs. Bishop's Estate.

The trustees at the time were:

John K. Clarke

George M. Collins

Frank E. Midkiff

Edwin P. Murray, KSB 1909

Joseph B. Poindexter

Statement confirming the students, past and present, as the beneficiaries of Mrs. Bishop's bequest.