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Other Leaders Disagree With Fasi

In Defense of the Business Luncheon

By **BOB KRAUSS**
Advertiser Columnist

It looks like the business luncheon is here to stay in Honolulu in spite of Mayor Frank Fasi's war on luncheon invitations for City employees.

That's the consensus of a Krauss Survey of business and government leaders, which was taken yesterday.

In fact, a spokesman for the Mayor said yesterday that Fasi accepts luncheon invitations himself, including one from the Cattlemen's Association this week.

"You know, he's the Mayor," said the spokesman. "He's got to get out and meet and greet the people."

When asked for Fasi's luncheon schedule for the week, the spokesman said he was unable to supply it because the Mayor often makes spur-of-the-moment decisions about where he will eat and with whom.

Nearly all the business and government leaders questioned said they feel there is

no significance in who pays the check after a business luncheon.

Most of those questioned said they feel the Mayor's policy against City employees' accepting luncheon and dinner invitations is unnecessary. One prominent Demo-

A Bob Krauss SPECIAL

crat called the policy "over-reacting."

Here are the comments:

● Sen. Dave McClung, president of the State Senate — "A legislator's time is so limited that one of the most opportune ways to meet constituents is over lunch, so I'm very much in favor of them . . ."

"Any politician who can be bought for the price of a lunch should not be in politics. There is absolutely nothing wrong with a constituent inviting me to lunch to discuss his problems."

"Should media people including newspapermen expect to be compromised by accepting a free drink or luncheon from a politician? I don't think so. Then why should a politician be compromised?"

"I understand the Mayor's concern. I think he is over-reacting. If he is appointing people to office who can be bought for the price of a lunch, he's appointing the wrong people."

● Sen. Hebdon Porteus, State Senate minority leader — "I'd love it if I never had to have a business luncheon. If you're going to work during the day and over lunch, too, you don't get much time off. I prefer to see a person before or after lunch. But there are only so many hours in the day and if that's the best time to get together, I'll go to a business luncheon."

"Heck, no, I don't think it matters who picks up the check. Absolutely not! I can't see that paying for a lunch would effect anybody's judgment."

"I think the Mayor is entitled to lay down his own ground rules. I may lay down a different set of rules, but I won't say he's wrong."

● Rep. Tadao Beppu, speaker of the House — "I don't eat breakfast, so I have to eat lunch. I don't like long lunches. Unless I'm pressed for time, I'd rather have lunch with friends I can relax with. But it's pretty difficult these days to transact business only during business hours."

"I don't feel there is an obligation incurred over who pays the check."

"I think the Mayor's policy may be too stringent. Sometimes lunch is the only time you can catch a person. I'd say what Frank is trying to do is prevent some one guy from picking up the tab for everybody in City Hall."

● Walter Heen, chairman of the City Council — "I try to avoid business luncheons. They're a waste of time. It's my impression that very little is done at a business luncheon. If you have papers to look over, it's very inconvenient."

"No, I don't think paying the check incurs any obligation. As a lobbying device, luncheons are a waste. I'd

rather spend a morning or an afternoon talking about a problem."

"My reaction to the Mayor's policy is that perhaps it's making a bigger thing than exists as a problem."

● A spokesman for Gov. John Burns — "The Governor usually skips lunch unless there's something he has to go to. That's how he keeps his weight down."

● Circuit Court Judge Masato Doi — "As far as judges are concerned, we are inhibited from having business lunches with future litigants or attorneys. No, I don't think there is any significance attached to who pays the check. If two people feel that a lunch is going to turn into an obligation, they shouldn't be having lunch."

"My reaction to the Mayor's policy? Don't get me into politics. No comment."

● Malcolm MacNaughton, president of Castle & Cooke — "We use business luncheons. About once a week we get the department heads together over lunch to socialize and catch any brain waves floating around in the ether. Then we have visitors."

"The significance in picking up the check is in how much the company is paying out in expense accounts. You

look those things over carefully because Uncle Sam might not allow it . . . and you don't want employees to use every excuse for a free lunch."

"If I was head of the water works at City Hall and took out an inspector, I think they ought to buy their own lunches."

● Roy Kelley, hotel builder and owner — "We don't have business luncheons in our hotels. Too busy. We've got work to do. No, I don't think a lunch incurs an obligation. I don't think anybody remembers it one week later."

"I think the Mayor's policy is bending over backwards. A lunch isn't going to influence anybody. Sometimes it's the only way people can meet with government officials. Office hours are too tense."

● Dan Dorman, president of First Hawaiian Bank — "We use the business luncheon. We have an executive dining room and it's very beneficial. Sometimes we invite speakers and bring our customers. Our officers can eat there only when they bring customers as guests."

"I don't think it's an obligation. And I don't agree with the Mayor's policy. If it involved expensive gifts, yes. But I just don't think anybody can be bought for a luncheon."

● John McDermott, president of the Fawcett - McDermott Associates advertising agency — "I use the business luncheon. Really, by Friday I am generally full for the following week. I use it as a method of contacting clients I don't handle, to learn their problems. It's the reason I belong to the Outrigger, Pacific Club and Oahu Country Club."

"Oh, no, there's no obligation involved. It's such a small thing. My observation is that government people are very circumspect."

"I think the Mayor's policy is kinda ridiculous. The government has a job to do and they need this kind of contact as well as business. You don't get into an obligation by buying a guy a bloody mary and a hamburger . . . unless I'm naive and there are some teahouse parties I don't know about."