

## Website aimed at Cayetano is not being very nice itself

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First off, a website that starts a petition to wag a scolding finger at a former governor, admonishing him to "be nice," is by its own definition of the term, not very nice. It takes a personal shot at Ben Cayetano.

Pacific Resource Partnership, a collective of Hawaii contractors and the Hawaii Carpenters Union, sounded the alarm when Cayetano dared to question U.S. Sen. Dan Inouye's support of Honolulu's rail transit project in a mayoral debate last week. PRP launched a website ([www.beniceben.com](http://www.beniceben.com)) urging voters to reprimand Cayetano and make him eat his words.

Usually when a person is told to "be nice," a power play is going on. Like a parent warning an unruly child, you call into question that person's ability to gauge the social situation. It's akin to calling Cayetano "out of touch." "Be nice" is also something you say to someone who is being brutally honest.

Ben Cayetano should not be nice.

He's at his best when playing the contrarian, speaking his mind and stepping on toes.

"Did you hear what former Governor Ben Cayetano said at last Wednesday's mayoral debate?" the text on the website says — a breathless, gossipy introduction if ever there was one.

It goes on to say that Cayetano launched a "mean-spirited" and "personal attack."

But this is what Cayetano reportedly said:

"Senator Inouye is up at the 30,000-foot level dealing with national and international affairs. ... The senator should take time to go down to McDonald's and talk to the retirees who go there to eat breakfast because it's cheap."

And also:

"He's out of touch, as far as I'm concerned. I respect Senator Ino-uye — he's done a lot for our country and for our state — but we shouldn't defer to him."

That's it? Wow, a personal attack used to be saying something about a guy's mother or the color of his skin or the person he sleeps next to at night. If calling Inouye "out of touch" is a personal attack, some people in Hawaii have been personally attacking the senator for years.

Of all people, Inouye can take it. He absolutely deserves respect, but it is not disrespectful to criticize a politician on a topic as serious and complex as spending billions on rail.

"When Ben Cayetano disrespects Senator Inouye — a man of integrity and honor with a distinguished record of public service — he's disrespecting all of us," the website says.

Please.

None of this is really about being nice or showing respect or Ben going rogue by daring to disagree with The Man. It's about money to be made from rail and the threat Cayetano's candidacy poses to the rail project.