

COOK ISLANDS HERALD

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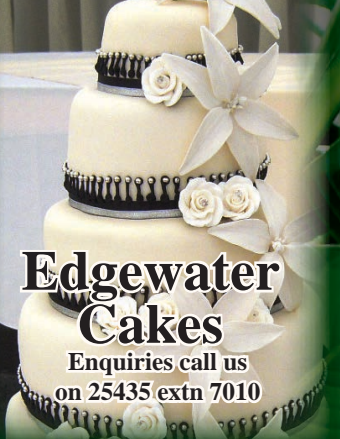
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PM: Cook Islands must stay engaged with SIDS agenda

The country's renewable energy programme and securing the Cook Islands' future development interests are the twin focus of the Prime Minister's efforts this month in the lead up to a crucial international meeting in Samoa, later this year.

The Third International Conference on Small Islands Developing States is scheduled for September, in Apia. Part of the preparatory work in advance of that global conference will take place in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), next week.

The Blue Economy Summit being held in Abu Dhabi 19-20 January will be attended by Prime Minister Henry Puna to ensure the Cook Islands is well-positioned to contribute to the shaping of the global agenda for Small Islands Developing States (SIDS).

"It's important for the Cook Islands to contribute wherever possible to the outcomes of major international gatherings like the Blue Economy Summit in Abu Dhabi," the Prime Minister says.

"The future environment and international agenda for development and growth across all SIDS is being shaped right now and we have to promote our interests."

The Blue Economy Summit is considered a valuable tool to help SIDS pursue more appropriate models for sustainable development. Islands and coastal States have specific and unique challenges that can be addressed under the concept of a Blue Economy – a concept that recognises the values and issues related to

ocean resources like fisheries and minerals, renewable energy potential, tourism growth, shipping, and transportation constraints and vulnerabilities.

The Prime Minister says the Cook Islands has been actively engaged in the broadening SIDS agenda for economic development and sustainability since the late Sir Geoffrey Henry led the country to the landmark United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio in 1992 – the first Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro.

"The Cook Islands has played a strong role alongside the Pacific nations ever since UNCED and its outcomes, particularly Agenda 21 and the principles of the Rio Declaration."

Prime Minister Henry Puna

"We have a duty and responsibility to stay engaged and make sure our long term interests are preserved, and that we help shape our own future."

The Prime Minister says the Cook Islands needs to be as strongly-positioned as it can before the SIDS meeting in Apia and opportunities to boost our profile and case for sustainable development should be maximised.

The Abu Dhabi Summit is being staged as part of Sustainable Development Week in the UAE capital, and the high level gathering will also coincide with the 4th Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). The Prime Minister will be attending the IRENA Assembly as Observer to maintain Cook Islands'

interests in RE development and accessibility to data and international expertise.

The Cook Islands has forged close ties with IRENA over the past year, including strengthening contact with the Agency in Abu Dhabi in 2012, and the Pacific Leaders' Energy Summits in both Tonga, and Auckland.

"High level engagement assures us of access to benefits we would otherwise not be a part of," says Puna.

"Face-to-face negotiations and developing solid working relationships are part of a diplomatic effort, which attracts real results, including financial assistance for our development projects."

The travel costs of the Prime Minister's attendance in Abu Dhabi are being covered by IRENA.



Extracting tax from pensioner bank accounts contravenes Income Tax legislation and Constitution-Bishop

By Charles Pitt

Minister Teina Bishop told the media on Wednesday that he does not agree with statements by Finance Secretary Richard Neves on the legality of the extraction from the bank accounts of pensioners of tax owed on the NZ pension.

Neves had cited section 192 of the Income Tax Act as the authority for Collector of Taxes Andrew Haigh to extract taxes owed from pensioner's bank accounts.

Bishop said he disagrees that s192 enables the Collector to do this because s191 of the Act stipulates the mode of recovery and clearly refers to recovery in the High Court. In other words says Bishop, a High Court order is required.

Bishop said Neve's reference to the NZ legislation is highly misleading because in the NZ Act, there is specific mention of recovery from people's bank accounts. The NZ law stipulates a specific process and spells it out clearly, something which is not done in the Cook Islands legislation.

Bishop points out that s192, the authority Haigh is using, does not refer to any bank or right to

go to a bank and extract money.

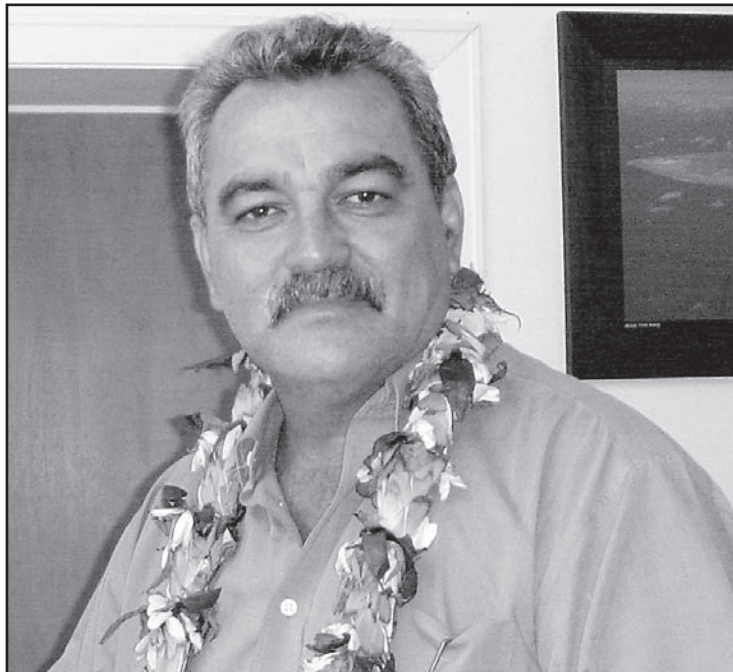
Bishop labeled RMD's move as illegal.

Bishop said the taking of funds from people's bank accounts may also be unconstitutional. He said under s64© of the Constitution, people had a right to own and not be deprived of property. He said a bank account is "property" and s191 of our Income Tax Act was inserted to ensure a process had to be followed to go to a person's property. Bishop said he will research parliament's Hansard records for the intent of s191. Bishop said under s47 of the Constitution no property can be taken except by law. A bank account is property Bishop reiterated.

He said Haigh's actions under s192 without the backing of a High Court Order, contravenes s191 and the Constitution.

Bishop also said Haigh's recent media release in which he says government is not to blame, is naïve. Haigh, as head of RMD, is part of the government said Bishop. It's like saying, "A hand is not part of the body so chop it off."

It is also unclear whether Government Super where contributions are taxed, will be treated as income and be subject to further tax.



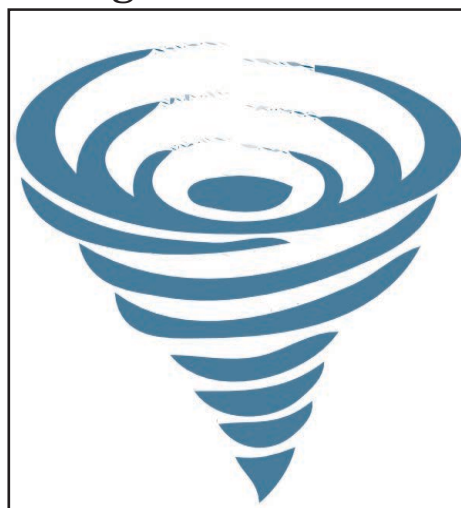
Teina Bishop

Cook Islands Rangers and Guides back from Jamboree

A group of 15 young Cook Island rangers and girl guides members and 3 office leaders attended the Jamboree Flame 14 Camp held in New Zealand from the 4th to the 11th of January. This International event saw the girls take part in a series of different adventures, from kayaking and speed boating to visiting Rainbows End and Tauranga Wonderland. The camp was based at Wesley College, where about 500 other rangers and Girl Guide members had the opportunity to network, socialize and take part in a range of different activities. Office leader Haumata Hosking says it was a very good experience and believes it was very good for the girls in the area of creating new ideas and opening their minds up to experiencing different things. The camp also involved an Individual "Try it Out" day where each ranger and guide had the opportunity to try a series of activities that included archery, pampering courses such as therapy and massage, photography lessons, yoga and zumba. - TeRiu Woonton



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Taking stock after Ian...



Last Friday, the first cyclone and March have been a of the season struck northern danger time in our part of Tonga and it packed a wallop the Pacific. Make sure you with gusts up to 287kph have the following items on (178mph). It tore off roofs and hand:

damaged or destroyed the homes of up to 400 families, killed 1 person, and cut power and water supplies.

It is a timely reminder to us not to be complacent. In the past, January, February

• Torches and candles to see at night.
• Battery operated radio to hear the latest news.

• Food and water us not to be complacent. In that you can store without the past, January, February refrigeration.

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Te Mato Vai + Nenevanomics equals fiscal disaster



Richard Neves



Teariki Heather

While the currency for the cost of the now \$64 million Te Mato Vai (TMV) project are widely publicized the growing concern of how the loan component is to be repaid is either a secret or the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) simply just don't know. The only hint is it will be a user pay utility when completed.

The user pay issue is deliberately being down played by the current consultancy team with the DPM Teariki Heather using the usual Cook Islands Party ploy of emotional rhetoric to gloss over it.

TMV is a work in progress along the lines of a design and build development with specifics still unknown or undecided which doesn't promote public sector confidence. Private commercial developments where the public is not at fiscal risk is acceptable but TMV is as we are constantly reminded is every one's business. Therefore where is the public accountability and transparency?

For a development of such high financial risk the level of public accountability must surely be compatible to the risk extremity.

No private development would proceed in such a haphazard manner and how the New Zealand Government's aid agency can tolerate this approach brings into question their development integrity.

Where is the business plan or financial model that gives the Cook Islands the confidence TMV will not end up a fiscal

convicted tax dodger not noted for having business acumen fobbed off the question and replied to the effect "we'll sort that out when the time comes."

It seems Henry's arrogance or fiscal disability has rubbed itself off onto MFEM secretary Richard Neves who has a similar approach. Neves has a proven record of failing to

loan and NZ are contributing \$15 million leaving the Cook Islands the balance of \$26 million.

First why haven't the details of the China loan been released for public consumption? The failure for MFEM to do so would further exposes the CIP Government's gullibility and lack of discernment regarding PRC's Pacific master plan. What is the PRC loan going to cost the people of the Cook Islands? Why can't this simple question be answered? The public should put this question to the consultation group and until answered in specific detail resist supporting the project.

The most glaring issue is from where is the Government going to source its own contribution of \$26 million? According to reports it will be from budgeted government revenue. Neves failure to balance the books with a \$2 million plus deficit hardly gives anyone the confidence MFEM will suddenly come up with \$26 million over the three years of the project. Just an obvious manifestation Neves and his team are engulfed in Nenevanomics and have no idea how to break out of it.

Neves has a proven record of failing to balance the nation's books and has demonstrated serious short comings in understanding sovereign fiscal responsibility

disaster that seduces us into the waiting clutches of the Peoples Republic of China? With so many unanswered questions and a hurried consultancy or is it marketing exercise, it is becoming increasingly irresponsible to proceed at such haste.

When the question of how the Avatiu Harbour redevelopment loan of \$24 million was to be serviced at \$US95,000 per month as from 2017 the Ports Authority Chairman Mike Henry a former

balance the nation's books and has demonstrated serious short comings in understanding sovereign fiscal responsibility let alone how to appropriate the discipline. Having an economist rather than an accountant as head of MFEM is a realised mistake that will be rectified when Neves contract expires this year in July.

Of the \$64 million for TMV the PRC are contributing \$23.4 million by way of a concessional

Continued page 5

Institutional Strengthening Review for MMR

The Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR) is partnering with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) to review the Ministry's organisational structure.

Independent organisational and governance consultant Marcus Pelto and FFA Fisheries Management Adviser Alice McDonald have conducted institutional strengthening support to Fisheries ministries across the region as part of FFA's services to member countries. They are in Rarotonga this week to help MMR review its current structure and policies.

MMR Secretary Ben Ponia says "the institutional review is an opportunity for MMR to shape its future directions and through feedback from staff and stakeholders, to assess how the organisation can best meet



Back - R Daniel. A McDonald. M Pelto. S Tatuava. N Rongo. I Bertram.

Front - R Tuteru. T Turua. N George. A William

the future needs for the marine sector".

Ponia says it's important that the internal review across all parts of the Ministry also engage

and seek input from external stakeholders across government, Fisheries and the NGO sectors.

FFA's Media Officer Lisa Williams-Lahari is also

part of the visiting team, assisting the development of a communications strategy to strengthen MMR's media, publications and outreach work.

from page 4

What assurances is there that there won't be any over runs and if there is, where is the money going to come from? Predictably the CIP Government if they are able to politically survive will turn to the PRC putting us further into dependent obligation.

If the Cook Islands can come up with \$8 million a year for TMV then this project should have been undertaken with just NZ aid assistance and spread over five years. The failure of Neves for whatever reason to fully disclose the financial business loan recovery plan for TMV is nothing short of an insult to the people who are being burdened with this unwanted debt. With only

Rarotonga benefiting from TMV the rest of the country is going to be also expected to debt laden.

Publicity that Aitu airport is getting a \$4 million upgrade and a \$1.4 million underground cable infrastructure sounds all very good but when were the airport funds appropriated in the budget? Then there is the Manihiki harbour project and incredible \$3 million worth for such a small population, this is nothing short of a waste of priority funding but obviously an desperate attempt by the Prime Minister Henry Puna to hold on to his seat.

Then there are all the new bridges being proposed for Rarotonga. Let's hope no bridges

will be built in the wrong places like the Deputy Prime Minister's Teariki Heather's compulsion to build the emergency jetty at Arorangi instead of the more appropriate Rutaki passage. The very purpose of the jetty cannot be used 52 days (Sundays) of the year even if required to be used by a cruise ship.

The gross failure of MFEM to guide a dismissive CIP Government's undisciplined and reckless expenditure has predictably produced a deficit budget only projected to get further into the red; Nenevanomics is at full throttle towards bankruptcy. All these grandiose projects and where is the money coming from?

After becoming the most taxing government in the history of our self governing (hardly an achievement to be proud of) there is nothing left for the CIP government to tax or fees to increase, we have now trunked and peaked with no genuine signs the economy can be stimulated let alone become sustainable without shedding the bloated public service.

Neves' over pitched budget based upon consumer projections is so flawed it warrants his nick name neneva, every financially discernable person ought to apply prudent measures to keep afloat in a challenging year ahead.

- George Pitt

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Our Frontpage model Collector of taxes, not Government responsible for Tax Administration



Our Frontpage model is 18 year old Tumanava Wilmott, who is here in Rarotonga on holiday and currently working at Raro Freight. She has recently completed school and will be taking a gap year to go to Sydney to earn some good money. Check out our website www.ciherald.co.ck and facebook page: www.facebook.com/ciherald

The Collector of Inland Revenue, Mr Andrew Haigh has clarified that it is the Collector of Inland Revenue who is responsible for tax administration and not the Government of the day. I am responsible for ensuring that Revenue Management collects the right amount of tax from those that should be paying tax. The decisions relating to how we will administer

the tax laws are made within the Revenue Management Division, and not the Government. I

think some people believe that the Government is responsible, this is not correct.

Mr Haigh made this clarification in light of a number of recent attacks on the Government over the taxation of New Zealand Superannuitants. He stated that "all actions taken in relation to this matter have been made with my direct approval". Any suggestions that the Government is responsible are misguided.

Mr Haigh acknowledged the concerns relating to the taxation of NZ pensions. What we have endeavoured to do is contact all of those people in receipt of the NZ Super, to ensure they fully understand the situation. We try to sit down and explain it fully in the first instance. Whilst we appreciate that people may be apprehensive about approaching us, I can assure you that our staff will listen and try to address any concerns. To highlight this point there is now over 40% of the superannuitants that we have identified who are cooperating with us, and many have entered into an arrangement to pay or paid in full. Furthermore, I will consider writing off debt on the grounds of financial hardship upon a written request and having considered the case on its own merits.

As Collector, I must ensure that all taxpayers are treated equally and superannuitants are no exception. We can't have some pensioners paying taxes and others not, this is basic rule of law. Unfortunately there is a small minority who have continued to ignore our approaches and this resulted in me authorising Deduction Notices being issued on bank accounts. I would like to highlight that these taxpayers each received at least four letters seeking their cooperation before I authorised the deduction notices. I acknowledge that the timing of deduction notices is never ideal, but we try to ensure that those having amounts deducted can afford their tax, or will have sufficient funds left for living expenses. Deductions notices are a last resort when taxpayer's fail to take action and ignore our requests. We generally don't issue deduction notices without having contacted the taxpayer on a number of occasions.

Finally, I would encourage all pensioners who have received letters from my office to contact us. Let's work together to resolve this unfortunate issue. My staff will be more than willing to address any questions/concerns that you may have. However if you don't contact us I am bound by law to pursue the matter.



Cook Islands Herald goes QR

The Cook Islands Herald now has a QR (Quick Response) code.

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Cook Islands Party has stand by candidate

The last time the Cook Islands Party registered a standby candidate was in 2004. After the winning candidate in the Murienua by election Kaota Tuariki resigned rather than face a petition lodged by the Democratic Party, the DP armed with 15 affidavits laid a criminal complaint of corruption against Tuariki and his campaign manager Patrick Arioka.

Now that nominations for a repeat Murienua by-election on 19th February have closed the DP have the option of lodging an interim injunction to prevent Tuariki from standing due to the police investigation into alleged breaches of the Electoral Act. The standby candidate Tare Mareiti will then become the candidate should the DP succeed. Mareiti the younger brother of the former Murienua MP Jim Mare is the Chairman of the five member Murienua CIP committee.

Mareiti who is a retired returnee from New Zealand who was a career bus driver in Auckland for many years is a political unknown who doesn't appear to have a personal support base in the constituency. Mareiti is well spoken of by people and they consider him too nice for politics. A better option would have been long time CIP member businessman Temu Okotai who has a solid family support base in Murienua.

Tuariki has had two campaign meetings that were poorly attended in comparison to the responses he had prior to the September 2013 by-election. The fact he could only muster a committee of five which includes him and his wife Poko must be a concern and an indication his resignation may have cost him some of his previous supporters. With the CIP Party



CIP Candidate Kaota Tuariki

government's approval rating at an all time slump mainly due to their ongoing confrontation with the Grey Power Tuariki will have to engage a more assertive campaign.

In the September by-election Tuariki had a very low key passive campaign relying on his large family connections to carry him first past the post. To the surprise of CIP insiders, the former Democratic Party candidate Tuariki didn't pull a significant amount of Democratic Party supporters that he was expected to.

Tuariki's resignation is costing the tax payer another \$30,000 which is difficult to stomach in a time when priority needs like rebuilding the two arson destroyed schools are struggling to access government funds. In addition Tuariki was paid over \$11,000 during the petition stand down period.

It is likely the Murienua by-election will be a referendum on the performance of the Henry Puna lead CIP Government which will indicate their future prospects of a second term of governance.



Demo Candidate James Beer

For the much politically smarter DP candidate James Beer his third attempt to win the seat will need some fine tuning with a greater emphasis on the administration and management of DP resources on 19 February. Beer's campaign committee has identified areas needing attention and is confident improvements will increase their votes. Nearly 100 registered on the electoral roll did not cast their vote last September and Beer's team has a strategic plan to reduce the voter absenteeism this time around. For Beer a failure to win the seat will most likely end his political aspirations so we can expect him to invest maximum intensity.

In addition to his own team Beer is expected to receive wider support from a determined DP who knows how crucial it is to win Murienua. The Grey Power members who have connections in Murienua have pledged their practical support to oust the CIP.

Now under the electoral microscope the CIP team will have to adopt a different approach to their Election Day

activities and method of getting their supporters to the polling booth.

A loss for the CIP will have a huge mountain to overcome; on the completion of the 2010 General Elections the CIP had a commanding majority of eight seats. A loss on 19 February will result in a majority of just two. If the CIP ends up with 13 to DP with 11, factions within the CIP will start to flex their political muscles.

Should self suspended Aitutaki MP Teina Bishop survive the current police investigation for alleged corruption Puna will be pressured to offer the Ministry of Finance to him to preserve the fragile unity of the Party. A failure to pacify Bishop who has the support of three fellow MPs will push the government to the brink of a snap election.

The DPM Teariki Heather will accept the Seabed Mineral portfolio as his settlement not to pursue the leadership of the CIP. With the ministerial changes ensuring a greater unity within the CIP they can collectively set about rebuilding their shattered and tainted brand. - George Pitt

Puna's pensioner reimbursement a cruel ploy - no backtax exemption

The Prime Minister Henry Puna and Collector of Inland Revenue Andrew Haigh's synergised announcements last Friday concerning responsibility for the raiding of pensioner's bank accounts was an unconvincing orchestrated diversion of self absolution for the CIP government.

No doubt self suspended Aitutaki MP Teina Bishop's demand the PM apologises and reimburse raided pension funds pushed the cornered Puna over the line.

Puna's self preserving Pontius Pilate re-enactment is a cheap act that falls short of Oscar performance status and Haigh's nonsensical attempts to claim the credit for dumbest public servant of the year has pushed himself into the front line of Grey Power hostility.

No doubt the very evasive and low profile Haigh was pushed into the front line to absorb the heat from his political bosses. Life will never be the same for Haigh as he has now sacrificed his anonymity in his clumsy attempt to divert public hostility from the politicians. Haigh's self appointment as the Judge and jury over who had "sufficient funds left for living expenses" to survive after their savings were raided is abhorrent and considered by some lawyers as being illegal.

Puna's failure to take the Grey Power's plight seriously has ensured his CIP government will not last a single full term. His weak indecisive leadership and dismissive arrogance has axed the political careers of his marginal MPs, once a powerful influential brand the CIP is now tainted by corruption and become synonymous with cruelty and uncaring. Robbery, thief, raiding and lying are becoming CIP. Puna is now balancing on the fine line of political survival.

Puna's crafted radio announcement and television performance was to admit



Prime Minister Henry Puna

guilt but lay it at the door of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM). Reading between the lines Puna made it clear raiding the pensioner accounts at Christmas was the wrong time and a personal disappointment and now under unforgiveable public pressure he has buckled. The question of when is the right time needs to be answered.

Previously Puna laughed off the political threat of the Grey

it clear after the targeted pensioners were reimbursed they still had to resolve their back tax with Haigh. The Grey Power is not being absolved from paying the back tax but rather it's a matter for Grey Power and MFEM not the politicians who have now wiped their hands of the issue.

It is unclear if those reimbursed will still have to pay their back taxes, if not then they have received a sizeable Christmas

of accusation at the Democratic Party for signing an agreement with New Zealand Prime Minister John Key now he is vigorously pointing the finger at Andrew Haigh an appointment under his command.

Puna is now a flip flop contradiction because though he claims and admits he has no say he also claims he can reimburse the raided savings. Political mumbo jumbo has reached new heights in Cook Islands politics.

On reflection Puna has no track record of leadership excellence or significant achievement. Elected to fix the mess the Democratic Party left the country in, Puna has chosen not to resolve the Toagate debacle, instead pointing the finger of blame to the previous government. Puna is now a serious liability to the CIP Government in the fashion of Julia Giliard and if the CIP want to secure another term of governance Puna needs to be replaced immediately.

Right now if there was a snap election the CIP will suffer a huge loss at the polls, the Party is in need of urgent medical attention to have the slightest

continued page 9

Puna's 2010 Election mantra of "Together we can" now replaced with "I have no say"

Power, writing their protests off as entertainment fodder. At least Puna is taking the Grey Power seriously and rightly so, his ignorance or arrogance should have been buried six months ago. Now under siege Puna is paying the price for being a leader with minimal cognitive ability.

Adamant there will be no amendments to the tax laws for the back taxing Puna made

bonus from the political arm of Government, this is the cruel ploy, the right hand of Pontius Puna gives and the left hand of raider Haigh takes.

Puna's 2010 Election mantra of "Together we can" now replaced with "I have no say" is a shocking admission of poor leadership, not only is Pontius Puna a jet plane leaver he is void of any depth of leadership skills. First he pointed the finger

Raiding of pensioner bank accounts cruel, unethical-Tunui

By Norma Ngatamariki

On Monday, Vice-President of Grey Power, Dennis Tunui, voiced his concerns with regards to the reimbursement of the five pensioners, whose money (tax owing on the NZ pension) was withdrawn from their personal bank accounts.

Tunui says that the five pensioners, receiving the NZ pension, have not been approached and that the possibility of further discussing the matter with Government is virtually non-existent. "When Government (the Prime Minister) announced on Radio Cook Islands on Friday that it was going to reimburse the pensioners, I was suspicious."

A question of when the money would be reimbursed had also arisen during the interview. According to Tunui, a total of \$20,000 had been seized by the Collector of Taxes from Revenue Management Division (RMD) of the Ministry of Financial and Economical Management (MFEM), an act which he describes as "cruel and unethical". As a result,



Grey Power during their recent march on Parliament last year.

pensioners have withdrawn their funds from their bank accounts for precautionary measures. "Will there be any more raids like this? What is Government's true motive behind this?"

Tunui has also discussed the

issue with Aitutaki MP Teina Bishop, who is said to be "dead-set" against the taxation of the pension. "We will not be satisfied until the money is returned." Another issue which was brought to the attention of Tunui is whether or not pensioners will

be able to travel overseas. "A church group had been stopped at the airport because they had not paid their taxes."

"The Grey Power movement is strongly supported by members of the public, which gives us the motivation to continue."

From page 8

chance of survival. An immediate Party conference to clarify the leadership at all levels would be a start to realign the disarray the CIP is in. Puna can't see what he is looking at nor can he hear what he is listening to, its time the CIP got a leader who can.

Just because Cabinet were forced to admit the moral indiscretion of pensioner accounts being raided and the money will be reimbursed that is no guarantee MFEM will follow suit. Pontius Puna has admitted the funds cannot be reimbursed from the coffers of MFEM; one because they may refuse to do so and secondly there is no money to reimburse.

Puna embarrassingly admitted Cabinet's request to Haigh to tone down the harassment of the Grey Power and disregard the back tax fell on deaf ears so

what makes the same Cabinet think Haigh will have a change of mind? With Crown Law boss Kim Saunders backing Neves and Haigh it is expected Haigh under the protection of the MFEM Act will continue to do his job according to the book and the letter of the Law.

For that reason Haigh must be commended. It takes a brave or stupid man to hold their ground and repulse the political interferences and threats from those who can cut you lose once your contract has expired.

The pressured PM said "We have to look for another source of revenue," What he isn't saying is Cabinet has to dip into their Capital Expenditure Fund which currently has a balance of \$150,000, but the catch is the Financial Secretary Richard Neves has to agree to sign off any of it and this uncertainty can

only be determined when he returns from holiday.

This may just be the leverage Neves needs to prompt Minister Mark Brown to extend his contract that ends in July. Neves has expressed his desire and requested to continue in his lucrative appointment but hasn't yet convinced Brown to do so.

Like the television commercial says "When the PM is needed most, he flies away," Roll on 16th January, Pontius Puna will be leaving the building for Abu Dhabi courtesy of Air New Zealand. Any thought that money saved from cancelling this non essential trip could be used for reimbursements is the furthest thing from his mind. He doesn't care, never has and never will.

According to Grey Power vice president Denis Tunui their television commercials will

continue till all raided funds are reimbursed and the legally questionable back taxes are withdrawn. According to Tunui the PM's latest comments are more self serving than with the interests of the old people.

"Puna has become an embarrassment to the country and internationally and he is only trying to divert the anger of the people from himself, he has to stand down as Prime Minister and stop pointing the finger at others, he is a poor leader better suited to a non democratic country."

"Henry Puna sad to say is a cruel person who isn't Prime Minister material, he simply doesn't care about the old people so we don't care about him," said Tunui. "Puna is a scared rat in a corner with nowhere to go; he will reap his reward in due course."

- George Pitt



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 Cook Islands Website: www.health.gov.ck

December 2013 Report.

The ESR Unit, Community Health Services, with the assistance of the Acute Emergency doctors, has been involved with the Hospital Based Active Syndromic Surveillance of the diseases/conditions mentioned below, and reporting them weekly and monthly to WHO.

Table 1. Cumulative number of cases reported from week 1-52, 2013, by syndrome in the Cook Islands

Syndrome	(Total)- Week 1-52 2013	Current Week 52 (23 Dec to 29 Dec 2013)
AFR	1	0
ILI	116	2
Diarrhoea	299	9
Prolonged Fever	2	0
Dengue-like illness	15	0
Ciguatera	24	1

Remarks: No outbreak detected.

Awareness:

1. Always maintain high standards of hygiene to prevent the spread of diarrhoea. Ensure good food hygiene, safe drinking water and proper hand washing.

- Public Health, Rarotonga, is continuing with the monitoring of every flight from Tahiti and the distribution of dengue/Zika awareness pamphlets to passengers. The Dengue and Zika virus outbreak in French Polynesia is ongoing. New Caledonia and Japan have also reported cases of Zika virus with travel history to French Polynesia. An increasing number of dengue cases have been reported in Fiji and also in Kiribati.
- Symptoms for Dengue and Zika:

<u>Dengue</u>	<u>Zika</u>
Skin rash	Skin rash
Fever over 38°C	Fever over 38°C
Pain in the muscles and joints	Pain in the muscles and joint
Pain on moving the eyes/Severe headache	Conjunctivitis
Loss of appetite and weakness	Oedemas of the hands and/or feet

Preventive Measures:

Avoid being bitten by day biting mosquitoes. Rub mosquito repellents on exposed body at day time and ensure your home or place of resident/accommodation is free from mosquito breeding places.

Pacific Updates:**Zika virus (Mosquito borne disease)**

- **New Caledonia** - Since 25 November 2013, there have been nineteen cases of Zika virus imported in travellers arriving from French Polynesia. No local transmission has been reported.
- Cases of Zika virus in **French Polynesia** are reported from the archipelagos of the Company, the Marquesas and Tuamotu. More than 6,600 suspected cases were reported by clinicians as of 3 January, 2014.

Dengue (Mosquito borne disease)

- **Fiji** reports increasing numbers of **dengue serotype 3** cases since 31 October 2013, particularly in and around Suva in the Central division. 406 dengue cases were reported from 31 October to 30 December 2013. More than 10% cases have been hospitalized. There have not been any deaths or reports of severe dengue as defined by the WHO 2009 dengue classification.
- **French Polynesia** is currently facing a **dual dengue serotype 1 and serotype 3** epidemics. As of 3 January, 2014 the total number of positive cases of dengue reported since February is 1,484: 317 cases in October, 245 cases in November, and 368 cases in December. Since the beginning of the epidemic, 14 patients had warning signs, a further 18 severe, including one death in early November.
- An outbreak of **dengue serotype 3** is ongoing in **Kiribati**. Since 22 November, there have been 138 suspected dengue cases, of which 60 (43%) tested positive by dengue RDT or reference laboratory testing.

Measles

- A measles outbreak alert has been issued in Victoria, **Australia** after an infected man came into contact with thousands of people during Boxing Day at a shopping centre in Melbourne.
- Similarly, the **New Zealand** Ministry of Health has confirmed 10 cases of affected people, all of whom have attended a Hip-Hop competition in New South Wales Australia in December 2013.

Influenza

- In the **Northern Hemisphere** countries, while overall still low, influenza-like illness (ILI) activity has started to increase, following seasonal trends. In the **subtropics/tropics**, overall ILI remained variable. In the **Southern Hemisphere** ILI activity remained relatively low, with low level circulation of influenza A (H3), influenza B and A (H1N1)pdm09.

ESR UNIT

Ministry of Health, Rarotonga.

Top achiever seeks work back home

Being back in Rarotonga catching up with family and friends over the festive period has been a great way to round off 2013 for Lena Wong after a hectic few years of studies.

It has been a hard slog through University to achieve her goals though. Leaving Nukutere College after third form in 2001, Lena completed high school at St Cuthbert's College in 2005 and commenced her university studies at Auckland University in 2006 doing a conjoint Bachelor of Arts degree in Film, Television and Media and a Bachelor of Laws degree which she completed in 2011. She graduated May 2012 and completed her professionals and was admitted to the New Zealand High Court Roll of Barristers and Solicitors in October that year.

She opted to continue with post graduate studies working towards a Masters of Law degree (LLM) which she completed in November 2013. Post graduate studies allowed her to focus on specific areas of law she had developed an interest in and which held particular relevance to the Cook Islands and the South Pacific in general. She completed four dissertation papers towards her Master of Laws degree in the fields of Land Law, Environmental Law, Maritime Law and Constitutional Law.

Holding down part-time jobs at Auckland University and at Work & Income New Zealand as a Case Manager whilst studying to minimise her student loan, there has been little time for social life. She does still find time however to work with her church youth group on weekend nights feeding the homeless in central Auckland and encouraging young women to get off the streets and out of prostitution.

After graduating Lena worked at Manukau District Court before transferring to the Auckland High Court midway through last year and continues to hold down a second part-time job. Working and studying seven days a week for the last three years has been the most challenging time for me but it has all been worthwhile and I'm looking forward to my second graduation in May 2014. Lena is looking forward to coming back to live and work in the Cook Islands should an opportunity arise. At 25 years of age she aims to get a few years of work experience before considering studying towards a doctorate in law.

Meanwhile, it's back to work at the High Court in Auckland this week.

On Tuesday Lena's parents received word from Lena that she had achieved a Masters of Laws with Honours – LLM(Hons).



Visiting Cop impressed at how local Police use resources

By Norma Ngatamariki

Detective Senior Sergeant Kareen Vincent is here from Tahiti on the Women Advisory Network exchange program with the Cook Islands Police Force. She arrived here on Monday the 6th of January and departs our shores on Thursday 16th. Vincent deals with sexual assault, rape and domestic violence and has come to Rarotonga to observe, as well as to assist with the Police Force.

"I am very pleased to be here and am thankful for the opportunity," she says. Since her arrival, Vincent has been working in different departments of the Police,

which included working on a practical activity on Friday night. One observation that she has made is that the role of women in the police is of great importance, both to the community and to the Police Force itself. She has been hosted by fellow Senior Sergeant, Rebecca Ellis

"I am amazed at the way this country makes good use of its resources, such as patrolling the entire island instead of just focussing on one particular area." Back home, Vincent is in charge of the Papeete, the capital of French Polynesia with a population of over 26,000, and oversees matters involving abuse.



Detective Senior Sergeant Kareen Vincent

MMR to make small grant funding available for fishers

The Fisheries Development Small Grant Fund (FDFSGF) is now available for the 3rd year through the Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR).

The purpose of the fund is to help small scale developments for local fishers and improve their livelihoods. The funding is provided under a payment made by the Cook Islands Government (POBOC) utilizing a portion of the licence fees obtained from foreign interests for fishing access to Cook Islands waters.

Previous years, applicants were successful in seeking funding for outboard motors, fishing gears and safety equipment. On average between 20 to 30 applicants have received grant funds.

Because of the high level of interest the Ministry has

had to try to put a ceiling on the maximum amount of funding and encourages applicants to consider co-funding arrangements. This year MMR expects that most of the grants will be in the range of \$1,500 each but larger proposals may also be considered.

The director for inshore and aquaculture fisheries Kori Raumea says his team are only too happy to assist with any queries and to providing assistance in completing the application form. He is particularly interested in assisting those fishers in the sister islands whom have limited access to finance.

All fishers are encouraged to contact Uirangi Bishop (rar@mmr.gov.ck) at the MMR office on telephone no. 28721 for further information.

Police Report

By Norma Ngatamariki

Constable Martin Iro provided the Herald with this update on what occurred over the weekend.

In total, said Martin, there were five burglaries, three motor vehicle incidents and five excessive noise complaints. The police responded to all of these events without any mishaps.

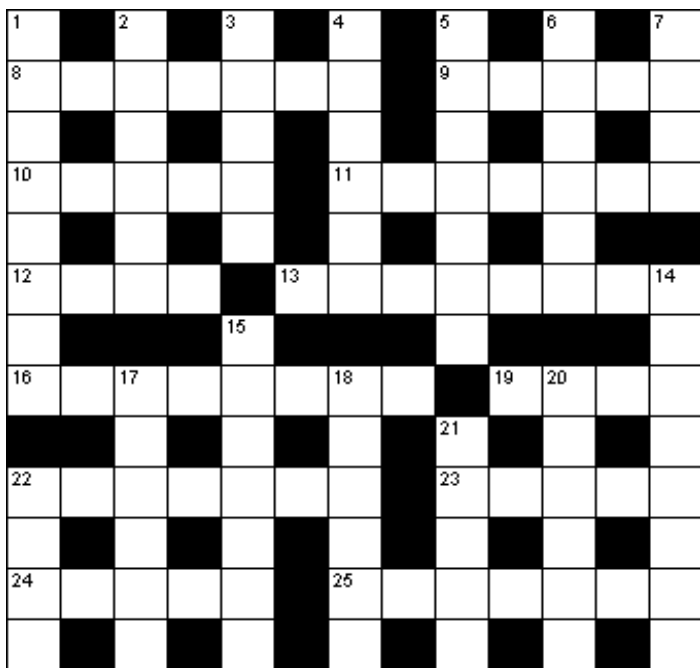
Constable Iro would like to remind people that the festive season is coming to an end and that if you are planning a party, be considerate of those who are living in your area. "We are 13 days into the New Year, so the celebrations should be tamed down."

Another issue that he would like to highlight is the five burglaries which took place in the Takitumu area. Iro would like to urge the public that if they have any information with regards to these incidents to ring the Cook Islands Police on 22499. You will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

Motor vehicle incidents are nothing new to the community, but Iro says that there is still room for improvement. "Please be aware that you are not the only one who uses the road. Stay safe."

Last Saturday, a man drowned while fishing in Matavera. On behalf of the Cook Islands Police Force, Senior Sergeant Rebecca Ellis would like to offer their condolences to the family. Ellis would like the public to be wary and to notify somebody when out at sea.

CROSSWORD



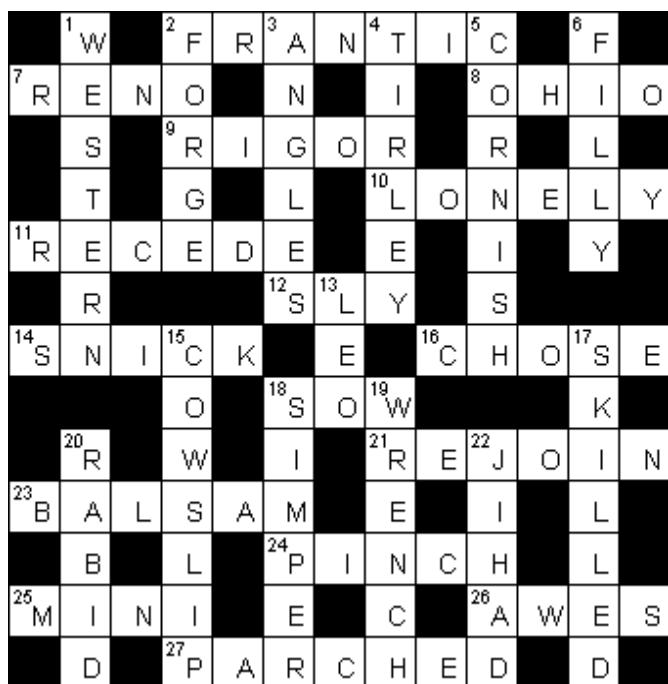
Across

1. Methods (7)
5. Expel (4)
8. Of no use (7)
9. Strategic withdrawal (7)
10. Low shrub (7)
12. Having a hood (6)
15. Portals (5)
18. Climbing device (6)
20. Mother and father (7)
23. Communications satellite (7)
25. Blunder (7)
26. Denomination (4)
27. Pigsty (7)

Down

1. Quest (6)
2. Set of clothing (4)

3. Went in (7)
4. Compass point (5)
5. Last letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
6. Person who tends sheep (8)
7. Consumers (5)
11. Nobleman (4)
13. Pass (8)
14. Do not (4)
16. Young tree (7)
17. Very little bit (5)
19. Seldom (6)
21. The dark (5)
22. Divest (5)
24. Duration (4)



The COMPUTER MAN Tech Tips

Phone 24979 Email: sales@thecomputerman.co.uk

10 things to try when applications won't work with Windows 8

Windows 8 is more forgiving with regard to application compatibility than some of the previous versions of Windows were, but some applications just will not work with it. Thankfully, you don't always have to accept defeat. Although there is no silver bullet that guarantees application compatibility, you can use a number of tricks to improve your odds of getting a stubborn application to run in Windows 8.

1: Create a virtual machine

I will go ahead and get the last resort step out of the way up front. Windows 8 includes its own copy of Hyper-V. If you can't get an application to function in Windows 8, you can enable Hyper-V and create a virtual machine running a legacy version of Windows as a way of running the application.

2: Turn off User Account Control

I haven't experienced any User Account Control (UAC)-related compatibility problems in Windows 8 yet, but I have run into problems in Windows 7. When I first adopted Windows 7, there was a particular dictation application that would not work until I disabled UAC. I have read posts on the Internet from people who have had similar experiences in Windows 8, where disabling UAC resolved a compatibility issue.

3: Install .NET Framework 3.5

When you install Windows 8, version 4.5 of the .NET Framework is installed by default. However, older apps often require an earlier version of the .NET Framework. If you receive a .NET Framework-related error, you can go into the Control Panel, click on Programs, and choose the option to turn a Windows feature on or off. Windows will display a list of the various components you can enable or disable. One of the items on the list is .NET Framework 3.5, which also includes .NET 3.0 and 2.0. Installing this component will likely correct the issue that you are experiencing.

4: Check for application patches

One of the first things you should do upon discovering an application compatibility problem is contact the application vendor and find out if it has a Windows 8 patch available. Sometimes, a patch is all you need.

Devices

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Bureaucrats rule by default

How the Cook Islands Party government lost control of policy making, lost public confidence, lost the respect of the elderly and is set to lose the next election

By Charles Pitt

If a snap election were held tomorrow, there's a good chance the CIP would not be re-elected.

That's because recent events and the manner in which government has handled them have caused the government to lose the respect not only of the elderly but a wide cross-section of people. Not only that, the public now know government treated the elderly badly and the untrue allegations over NZ taxing the pension has undermined public confidence in the government.

Sadly, Cabinet Ministers appear out of touch with the feelings and thoughts of ordinary people over the tactics used to seize money from pensioner's bank accounts.

In handling the issue of taxing the NZ pension, government did a "Pontius Pilate" in leaving the matter to ex-pat bureaucrats. However, this has backfired badly. Now government has lost control of the situation and may only get it back by some drastic reverse action like exempting the NZ pension from tax.

In New Zealand, bureaucrats run the government because of the sheer size of the machinery of government but the NZ Cabinet retains firm control over policy.

In the Cook Islands, bureaucrats once did as they were told by Ministers however, following a trend which was allowed to begin in MFEM, bureaucrats and expatriates at that, now run everything including policy.

Although elected to govern

by a landslide eight seat margin, the CIP is now experiencing difficulty in applying policies set out in their 2010 election manifesto while expatriate bureaucrats engineer policy to fit the NSDP framework.

How did Cabinet lose control of policy?

Cabinet put its faith in highly paid expatriate officials who appeared to know what to do. Once in positions of control, expatriates began recruiting and showing a preference for other expatriates probably because that is the type of person they are familiar with and who looks and talks like them.

By contrast, Cabinet Ministers filled their support offices with family connections, friends, party faithful and other hacks of no real ability and certainly no ability or skills to keep the expatriates under control.

The clearest example of a loss of control over policy is the current row over taxation of the NZ pension.

From the outset some 17 years ago, it had been the policy of successive governments not to tax the NZ pension paid to Cook Islanders returning to retire here. It was an incentive to attract Cook Islanders home. Those who negotiated the arrangements with the NZ government attest to the intent of government's policy at the time.

Although a law was already in place that required tax to be paid, it appears a policy directive was applied. There is some question as to who gave the directions for this "non-tax" policy to be applied. Some

say it was applied by officials not the Cabinet. In any case it was condoned by Cabinet.

That policy continued even during CIP's Sir Geoffrey Henry's tenure as Finance Minister and PM. The long standing policy came to a sudden end in the second year of the current CIP government's four year term.

The CIP is quick to point to an agreement the Demo government signed with NZ in 2009. However, it has now been revealed that under a clause in that agreement, the NZ government will not tax the pension if it is exempted from tax by the Cook Islands government. It is not clear if this is referring to an exemption by law or policy directive. Neither the CIP nor Finance Secretary Richard Neves made any of this public. Their failure to do so has now resulted in a loss of public confidence in government and bureaucrats to provide a full explanation of the facts.

Ask yourself this question, "Why did the no-tax policy not end prior to the 2010 election or in the first year of the CIP's term?" The probable truth is, the government was under pressure to balance the budget and was seeking sources of revenue to do so. How was the head of Finance going to produce the additional revenue needed, and quickly?

Another question which arises is why didn't government give pensioners adequate notice of a change in the policy? How can MFEM demand back-tax for 2011 when at the time, no tax was required to be paid? There should be a legal challenge on this point.

Application of a back tax would raise around \$2 million which incidentally is about the size of the current deficit (\$1.9 million).

Cabinet's faith in the expatriate brigade is now being sorely tested. This group has demonstrated a lack of cultural sensitivity and is perceived by locals as trying to impose a foreign set of beliefs and systems on a society which does not comprehend why their values are being eroded.

Why did not government simply exempt the NZ pension from tax? Apparently the expatriates, in Finance, Neves and Crown Law, Saunders (salary: \$200,000), advised government against it. The reasons have not been publicly divulged but the Herald believes Neves and Saunders advice was that the Cook Islands may lose credibility. If that was the case, the public should be provided with the evidence. Perhaps the fear was, the Cook Islands government would be seen to be buckling to the whims of a small group of noisy protestors. There was also the larger number of those on the local, but smaller pension to consider. However, those on the local pension should realize that they too are under threat from this "taxing" government. For the first time the local pension will form part of a person's income and be subject to tax. This means the taxman can also raid local pensioner's bank accounts if they don't pay tax. It makes sense for all pensioners to stick together and demand their

continued page 24

Letter to the Editor

Renewable energy objectives

Dear Editor
I refer to your article of January 8th and wish to provide you with details of the Cook Islands Government Renewable Energy Objectives and the progress being made to achieve these.

The first objective is the conversion of 50% of the Cook Islands Group to 100% renewable energy sources by 2015. This is to be achieved by the building of renewable energy facilities to supply the energy needs of the six islands of the Northern Group. The project is in the final stages of negotiation and completion of the six projects is scheduled for September 2014. This will meet the Government objective one year ahead of the 2015 date.

The second objective is to convert the Cook Islands in total to renewable energy sources by 2020. Progress towards this objective will take place with the design and implementation of renewable energy projects in the Southern Group which are currently being finalized with the help of ADB.

At the same time projects to increase the amount of renewable energy generation are

being implemented in Rarotonga which consumes over 80% of the energy consumed in the Cook Islands. The implementation of these will be through Te Aponga who will distribute and retail energy from their own renewable sources as well as energy purchased from private sector generators.

Specifically solar projects will be implemented on Government property and rooftops totaling 1300 Kilowatts. The arrangements to allow private sector generators to sell power into the Rarotonga grid are being implemented. It is expected renewable energy will provide approximately 20% of Rarotonga's electricity requirements by the end of 2014.

The conservation and efficiency projects both by customers and by internal supply efficiency within Te Aponga have significantly reduced electrical generation with the expenditure on diesel for generation reducing by over \$1million last year and with a further reduction of \$2million total in 2014.

In summary I believe the current program will achieve the Government objectives for 2015 is making substantial progress



toward the 2020 target and is making a financial contribution at this point.

It would be useful to have an opportunity to comment

on articles of this nature prior to their publication to assist in accurate reporting.

*Roger de Bray
Energy Commissioner*

Historical context of taxing NZ pension yet to be explained

By Charles Pitt

The current Collector of Taxes, Andrew Haigh has publically explained his role in the thorny issue of taxing the NZ pension. He is a public servant, holding a statutory position, whose job it is to administer the laws made by parliament and to implement the policies of the government of the day.

What the CIP Cabinet however, has failed to explain, is why successive governments and successive Ministers of Finance have not ensured that successive

Collectors of Taxes have enforced the legal provisions of the Tax laws since 1990 until now.

Portability of the NZ pension has been in since the 1990s. Its existence and the application of the local tax laws of the time were hardly a mystery to governments since then.

Portability of the NZ pension was a major policy decision by the NZ government, our government of the time were well aware of matter. They would even have had some idea of the numbers of

pensioners involved. Research at the time would have told them this. The question is, why did not successive Collectors of Taxes apply the law since 1990? Did the government of the time apply a non-tax policy? Was it written down?

To say government did not have a list of those receiving the NZ pension until now is no excuse. The government of the day in 1990, was quite capable of asking the NZ government to provide a list.

Surely, some old files exist in archives, that contain information on this issue.

Has anyone looked up the old files? Is government leaving that to the media?

When Sir Geoffrey Henry was Finance Minister, and during the financial crisis of 1996, why did he not order that those receiving the NZ pension, be taxed? It would have provided a cash strapped government with some revenue.

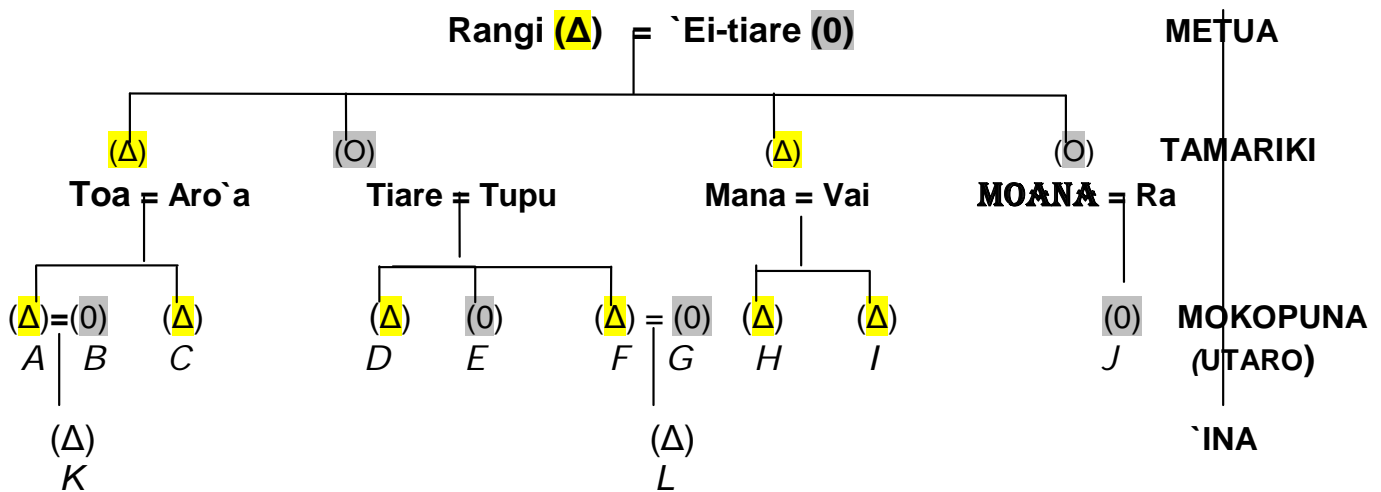
The public deserve a fuller explanation from this government on this issue. Finger pointing and fobbing off onto officials who are only trying to do their job is not acceptable.

TE REO MĀORI

Piri`anga Kōpū-tangata III: Family Kinship III

tātā`ia e Ruter Taripo

Kia Orāna `aka`ou kōtou kātōatoa i tēia `epetoma, ka `ākara `aka`ou tātou i tēia papa`anga ma te `ātuitui atu `i tēta`i au tu`anga piri`anga i roto i tēia kōpu-tangata no Rangi rāua ko `Ei-tiare.
Hello and greetings again to everyone this week, we will now look at the genealogy and then link and identify the members of the family of Rangi and `Ei-tiare.



- 1. `E ngā metua `a Rangi rāua ko `Ei-tiare nō Toa, Tiare, Mana `ē Moana**
Rangi and `Ei-tiare are the parents of Toa, Tiare, Mana and Moana
- 2. Ko Toa rāua ko Mana ta rāua tama-tamāroa, ko Tiare `ē Moana ta rāua ngā tamā`ine**
Toa and Mana are their sons, and Tiare and Moana are their daughters.
- 3. `E ngā tungāne a Toa rāua ko Mana no Tiare rāua ko Moana**
Toa and Mana are brothers for Tiare and Moana
- 4. `E ngā tuā`ine rāua no Toa `ē Mana**
They are sisters for Toa and Mana

UI`ANGA

1. Ko`ai te tama`openga a Rangi mā?
2. Ko `ai tā rāua mata`iapo?
3. Ko `ai ngā tama ō rotopū?
4. `E a`a`a Aro`a rāua ko Vai nō Tiare?
5. `E a`a rāua nō Moana?
6. `E a`a`a Toa `ē Mana nō Tupu?
7. `E a`a`a Tupu `ē Ra nō Mana?
8. Ko`ai i reira tō Mana teina-tāne?
9. Ko `ai tō Moana taokete-tāne,
me kārē ra, tuakana-tāne?

PA`U`ANGA

1. Ko _____ te _____ ā Rangi mā
2. Ko _____ tā _____.
3. Ko _____ rāua ko _____ ngā _____ ō _____
4. `E ngā _____`a Aro`a _____ Vai _____ Tiare
5. `E ngā _____ rāi _____ nō Moana.
6. a) `E ngā _____`a _____ nō Tupu
b) `E ngā _____ rāua _____ Tupu
c) `E ngā _____ a _____ mā nō _____
7. `E ngā _____ rāua _____
8. Ko _____ tō _____
9. Ko _____ tō Moana _____
mē kārē ra, _____



Glasgow 2014 reveals Rugby Sevens Competition for Commonwealth Games

Glasgow 2014 has today (Tuesday January 14) confirmed the teams and pools for the Rugby Sevens competition at this summer's Commonwealth Games.

The sixteen teams who will strive for the coveted Gold medal in front of packed audiences at Ibrox Stadium are Australia, Canada, Cook Islands, England, Kenya, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Scotland, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and Wales.

Reigning champions New Zealand, who have won all four Commonwealth Gold medals to date, have been drawn in Pool A alongside Canada, Nigeria and Scotland.

South Africa (Pool B) and

Australia (Pool D) were both among the medals at the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games and, together with Samoa (Pool C) and England (Pool D), are among the nations determined to challenge the mighty All-Blacks' dominance in Glasgow.

The four Pools confirmed by the International Rugby Board and Commonwealth Games Federation are:

- Pool A – New Zealand, Canada, Scotland, Nigeria
- Pool B – South Africa, Kenya, Cook Islands, Trinidad and Tobago
- Pool C – Samoa, Wales, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia
- Pool D – England, Australia, Sri Lanka, Uganda

A total of 45 games will be contested across two days of fierce competition at Ibrox

Stadium in a fast and furious contest which requires teamwork, skill and stamina as two teams with seven athletes on the pitch go toe to toe for glory in games which last just 14 minutes.

Greg Warnecke, Head of Sport at Glasgow 2014 said:

"Glasgow will welcome most of the world's best Rugby Sevens nations to compete at the Games. The standard of competition will be world-class, the action is fast-paced and with all of the teams playing in each session of competition, it guarantees a feast of rugby action and a brilliant atmosphere all round."

IRB Chairman, Bernard Lapasset, said:

"For 16 years now Rugby Sevens has enjoyed being a

key part of the Commonwealth Games. To compete alongside their compatriots in a multisport environment is a matter of huge pride and honour for our rugby players, who are making giant strides in this new Olympic era. We wish our Rugby athletes all the best in this magnificent international event."

Limited opportunities still remain to be part of the Rugby Sevens crowd at Ibrox with ticket prices starting from just £15 for adults. Tickets are on sale on a first-come, first-served basis online at glasgow2014.com or via the Ticketing Hotline at 0844 826 2014.

The full competition schedule – detailing dates and times of matches - will be announced next month.



The graphic displays the pool allocations for the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Rugby Sevens competition. It features a background image of a rugby match in progress at Ibrox Stadium. The pools are arranged in four columns, each with a pool icon and a list of teams with their respective flags. The teams are: Pool A (New Zealand, Canada, Scotland, Nigeria), Pool B (South Africa, Kenya, Cook Islands, Trinidad and Tobago), Pool C (Samoa, Wales, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia), and Pool D (England, Australia, Sri Lanka, Uganda). A note at the bottom explains the ranking criteria for the teams.

Rugby Sevens Pool A

- New Zealand
- Canada
- Scotland
- Nigeria

Rugby Sevens Pool B

- South Africa
- Kenya
- Cook Islands
- Trinidad and Tobago

Rugby Sevens Pool C

- Samoa
- Wales
- Papua New Guinea
- Malaysia

Rugby Sevens Pool D

- England
- Australia
- Sri Lanka
- Uganda

Teams are snaked into pools based on their playing strength.

The 9 Series Teams (in bold) are placed according to their performances in the HSBC Sevens World Series over the last two years and up until November 30 which includes the first leg of the 2013/2014 HSBC Sevens World Series.

The teams placed 10 to 16 are ranked based on their playing strength in their regions and any participation in the HSBC Sevens World Series i.e. Cook Islands & Papua New Guinea.

These teams are placed in accordance with their regional strengths and their positions within regional competitions.

How to make successful decisions in 2014 and beyond

part 1

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

The purpose of this article is to assist you in making wise, sound and successful decisions this New Year that will benefit you, your family or your household. Success is largely a matter of making good decisions. The problem is, with every decision there is an element of risk "Did I do the right thing?" "Did I make the right choice?" "Was it the wise thing to do?"

The Apostle Paul was a professional at decision making and also at taking risks. Acts 15v.26 reads "Barnabas and Paul are men who have risked their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Because he took risks he accomplished amazing things in life. Many of us have great dreams. Dream to begin a business, to start a new career, to go back to school and get a degree, . But we're afraid to get started because of the "risks" involved. For this article I want us to look from the Book of Proverbs at eight principles, eight steps, or lessons on How To Make Successful Decisions.. This article (Part 1) will cover 4 of these principles or lessons, and next week's article (Part 2) will cover the other 4.

STEP ONE: PRAY FOR GUIDANCE – this is the Principle of Inspiration (motivation or encouragement) Proverbs 28v.26 (Living Bible) "A man is foolish to trust himself. But those who use God's wisdom are safe." Don't just depend on your own opinion. Proverbs 2v.6 "It is the Lord who gives wisdom." You start in any decision making by

Encouragement Column

With Senior Pastor John Tangi

getting God's perspective. How does He see it? The Bible says, there is a way that seems right to us but it messes us up; it ends in death. James 1v.5 says, "If any man lacks wisdom, let him ask God" and he went on to say that, "...the reason you don't have what you want is that you don't ask God for it." (James 4v.2[c])

STEP TWO: GET THE FACTS. Proverbs 13v.16 "Every prudent (wise; careful) man acts out of knowledge." Don't make a decision out of ignorance. Find out all you can to help you decide. Don't assume that what people say is true. Proverbs 18v.13 reads "What a shame -- how stupid -- to decide before knowing the facts!" Think before you act. Proverbs 23v.23 reads "Get the facts at any price" When in doubt, check it out. Whatever it takes! Find out the facts! before you get started. The Bible says knowledge is more important than strength.

STEP THREE: ASK FOR ADVICE Talk to somebody who has already taken the risk. Proverbs 24v.6 "The more advice you get, the more likely you are to win." Proverbs 20v.18 reads "Get good advice and you will succeed." Learn from the experiences of others. Proverbs 20v.5 reads "Counsel in the heart of man is like a deep well but a man of understanding will draw it out." You can learn from anybody if you learn to



draw it out by asking the right questions. Proverbs 18v.15 reads "The intelligent man is always open to new ideas. In fact, he looks for them!"

STEP FOUR: SET YOUR GOAL Proverbs 17v.24 (GN) "An intelligent man aims at wise actions, but a fool starts off in many directions." Do you know anybody like that? You cannot chase two chickens at the same time. You've got to select. In life, if we want to succeed we need to be clear in our minds what to do. Make our "Goals" clear. We need to have a clear cut

purpose. Never take a risk simply to prove ourselves. If you're going to make a decision, you've got to know what you're aiming for.

"An intelligent person aims at wise actions but a fool starts off in many directions." Remember 1) Pray for guidance, 2) Get the facts right, 3) Ask for advice from experience people, and 4) Set your goals. I hope you will find these 4 steps or lessons useful in making successful decisions this New Year 2014 and beyond. May you have a God blessed week. Te Atua te aroa.

Brace yourselves! the NCEA results are here

By Norma Ngatamariki

Argh! The moment that most of us (except for the braniacs) have all dreaded. The NCEA external results are officially out, people! I literally crawled into a ball because I was too scared to sneak a peek at my results. In the end, I couldn't bear it the anticipation, so I grew a pair and finally logged on (this was early in the morning, when no one was on Internet) I was really surprised, both in a good and bad way. Let's just say I wasn't pleased, but I wasn't upset either lol. However, I am proud to say that I have passed NCEA Level 2.

I'm just waiting for the statuses and funny pictures about NCEA to pop up on Facebook. (I love reading those things; they never fail to make me laugh) We, teens, love sharing our experiences with others online, especially whether or not we failed in our exams. The only problem is the

waiting. Since there are about 50,000 kids who take NCEA, both here in the Cook Islands and in New Zealand, that's a lot of pressure on the website (www.nzqa.govt.nz) I remember last year the website had to shut down cause so many kids were trying to log on. I learnt from that mistake this year.

I just want to share this with you, dear reader. I WAS SEVEN CREDITS AWAY FROM GETTING AN EXCELLENCE ENDORSEMENT! That's like, two externals! Gah, it's a really sucky feeling, knowing that you were so close to obtaining the highest qualification but it still wasn't enough. Dang flabbit! I was pretty shocked with myself. I mean all that late-night/early-morning studying, the struggle and the pain were all worth it in the end. I think.

Anyway, let me explain the technicalities of getting endorsed. To get an overall

endorsement, you need to get 50 credits at Merit of Excellence in any subject. To get a course endorsement (that's for one particular subject) you need 14 credits at Merit or Excellence including 3 or more external credits (the exams). That's why kids study so hard for NCEA exams, because the externals carry more weight. I wanted to get a course endorsement in all of my subjects, but I only managed to get three. Oh well. I'm looking forward to what this academic year will bring.

Last, but not least, don't be afraid to check your results. Even if you didn't pass your externals, it ain't the end of the world. Just keep your head high and try harder this year. Oh and for all Tereora College students, both old and new: Year 9 and 13 students, we go to school on Tuesday 28th from 8:15am to 11am in uniform. Year 10, 11 and 12 students go in on



Monday 27th same time, same clothes. School officially starts on Wednesday 29th. NOOOO! It's too soon for my holiday to end! I hope you guys made the most of it.

Poetry

By Tiarn Brown

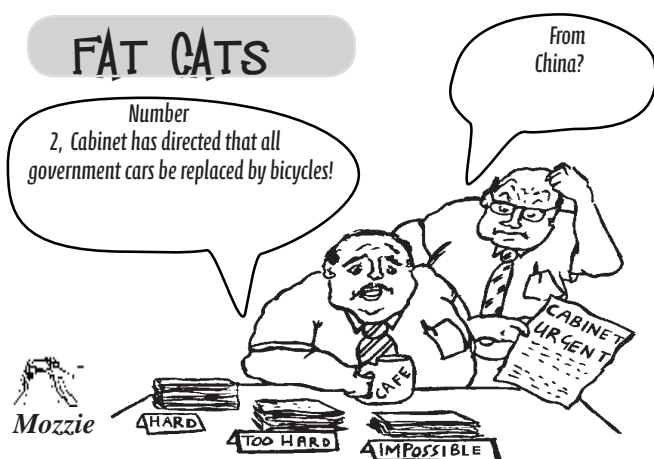
Promises

Been through it all, the happiness and the pain
But somehow they make up the memories that remain
When all hope is gone, you're always there
As a reminder that someone does care
Out of it all came that bond that made us close
Some say it's held way closer than most
The meaningless words, the promises that were broken
All that was said was better left unspoken
Unforgettable, standing out from the rest
It was like learning a lesson, and you were the test
There were the smiles, the laughs, the drama and tears
It was like riding at full speed yet we couldn't change the gears
Don't push any buttons or go beyond that line
Just keep your word and I'll keep mine



Tiarn Brown is a student at Nukutere College.

FAT CATS



Who is the Cookie couple just back from overseas who are living the "Goode" life up in the hills? They are proof you can live a self sufficient life off the land. They plan a totally self sustaining existence, back to Mother Nature, back to basics, without the expense of unnecessary, costly, objects.



Who is the highly paid ex-pat in charge of a major agency of State who lunches on sandwiches and cups of coffee although in receipt of a magnificent salary of more than \$300,000? Another thrifty Kiwi?



Nelson Mandela went to prison and emerged a top political figure. George Maggie went to prison and emerged to later become a political figure. A few days ago, the Bishop whisked Maggie off to Aitutaki for the day. What was discussed? On his return, the Bishop was referring to Maggie as Magdela!



Word to hand is that two more papa'a ex-pats, one an Aussie bloke, has just been hired to run our Customs Division, and one other, a female, as an advisor in Revenue Management. Are there no Cook Islanders capable of doing these jobs or is it a case of a papa'a loaded interview panel picking people who look and act like them? Why is government allowing this carry on? Next thing you know, foreigners will be in

From China?

COCONUT ROUNDTABLE



CHOOKS CORNER

WITH BIG RED



charge of everything! It seems Cabinet no longer gives a blind toss about the "Cook Islands way" and is saying, "You will obey the law as it is written or by hokey, we will employ the papa'a to raid your bank accounts, raid your homes, raid the schools, raid Are Pa Metua, and to hell with the Pacific Way, the Cook Islands way and any other way!" Yes, you will do as you are damn well told by the papa'a bosses!



As the PM's distance traveled becomes astronomic, and his air-points skyrocket, it may be necessary to alter the song on that Demo TV Ad. The song "I'm leaving on a jet plane," may soon need to be changed to the old crooner Frank Sinatra's "Fly me to the moon."



Seems the PM and his Finance Minister have severely underestimated the power of Aitutaki Grey Power. The CIP cannot afford to lose any seats in Aitutaki. Hence the refund, on demand of the Aitutaki MP, of taxes seized from Grey Power bank accounts. The \$7,000 seized from an

Aitutaki bank account was the last straw. It's a slap in the face for Tax officials who are only doing their job but when political survival is on the line, politics will always take precedence.



Is there no end to the Murienua CIP's efforts to embarrass the National Executive of the CIP? The district CIP's antics over the Murienua by-election are hurting the party's image. First there were the revelations of alleged bribery, then came the withdrawal of CIP's MP elect, allegedly on the recommendation of the PM. The taxpayer, fed up at having to foot another \$30,000 for yet another by-election, takes another knee to the goolies with the CIP naming 2 candidates on the ballot paper, one being the candidate who caused all the rucus to start with. There is a possibility a Demo High Court injunction could force that candidate to withdraw but why name him in the first place?



Contrary to earlier reports, the Bishop has not resigned from Cabinet. The Bishop has realized he is of more value to his

backers by staying in Cabinet and in touch with developments! What happened to the letter? Word is, it was torn up! On hindsight, the Bishop now acknowledges, that was the right thing to do!



Can the Cookie rugby sevens team beat Trinidad and Tobago and win at least one game in pool B of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games Rugby Sevens comp? It is unlikely the Cooks can beat the other teams in pool B-South Africa and Kenya. But do not underestimate the Trinidad team-their secret weapon "Calypso" rugby is a force to be reckoned with.



MMMM-Mighty, Magic, Maggie Man of Action would make an ideal Minister for Housing. He knows all about building houses. NZ has a Minister for Housing so why not the Cook Islands? With modern houses come cyclone resilience, renewable energy, water, climate proofing and use of local sustainable building materials. Yes there is more to housing these days and MMMM may just be a good Minister for Housing!

Cook Islands
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Te Riu Woonton

Cyclone Ian devastates Tonga

While the Cook Islands has been safe from Tropical Cyclone Ian, Nearly 8,000 people in Tonga's Ha'apai Group have been left homeless and are sheltering in nine evacuation centre's and 5 hundred tents as authorities coordinate recovery efforts. Mama Kafo from Kafoteria who is from the small village of Holopeka in Tonga will be holding a fundraiser this coming Friday where all proceeds will go to her village of Holopeka where 37 homes and 2 churches have been confirmed destroyed. This Friday, she will be selling her usual plates of food including plates of curry chicken, rawfish and rukau at \$5 and all sales money will be sent to help assist with the most needed necessities such as food, clean water and health kits. -TeRiu Woonton



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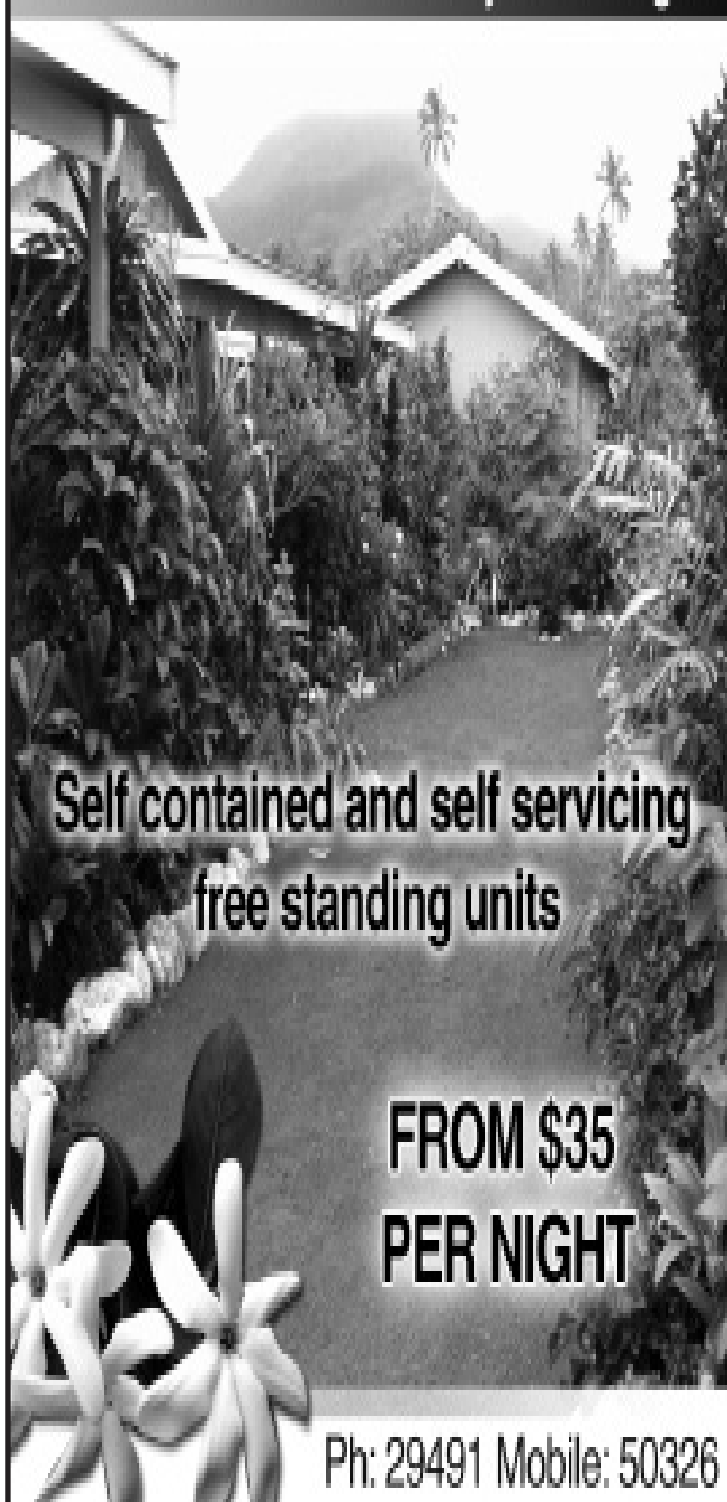
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PUBLIC NOTICE

**PUBLIC NOTICE
TE MATOVAI- CONSULTATION MEETINGS**

When Te MatoVai is completed in three years' time it will provide healthier treated water to the people of Rarotonga locals and visitors alike, and will be an encouragement to development on the island too.

Water intakes will be refurbished, there will be an increase in water storage capacity, water treatment facilities will be constructed, all trunk and ring mains will be replaced and all piping to the boundaries of properties served by the current network will be upgraded.

The final stage will be the establishing the operation and maintenance of the new water supply.

Supplying safe, reliable and affordable water for all is the overarching goal of the water partnership. Naturally before any of the physical work takes place the people of Rarotonga, all of whom are stakeholders, will be kept informed through a series of Awareness and Stakeholder communications activities including public meetings.

The first tranche of Te MatoVai stakeholder consultations will begin on Monday 13th January and conclude on Wednesday 22nd January.

Hon Teariki Heather, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure will lead these meetings.

There are meetings for every group of stakeholders as set out below and all residents of Rarotonga with an interest in the Te MatoVai project are encouraged to attend a meeting.

No.	Audience/Stakeholders	Date	Time	Venue
1	UiAriki/Koutu Nui	Monday 13th January	10am	Atupare
2	Intake Landowners - Te-Au-O-Tonga (Tupapa, Takuvaive, Avatiu)	Monday 13th January	6pm	Sinai Hall
3	Members of Parliament for Rarotonga Constituencies	Tuesday 14th January	1pm	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Nikao
4	Intake Landowners Puaikura (Ngatue, Rutaki, Muriavai)	Tuesday 14th January	6pm	Kavera Meeting House
5	Intake Landowners Matavera, Turangi, Avana	Wednesday 15th January	6pm	Avana Meeting House
6	Intake Landowners Totokoitu, Taipara, Papua	Thursday 16th January	6pm	Titikaveka CICC Sunday School Hall
7	VakaPuaikura Public Consultation	Monday 20th January	6pm	Aroa Nui Hall
8	Vaka Te-Au-O-Tonga Public Consultation	Tuesday 21st January	6pm	Sinai Hall
9	VakaTakitumu Public Consultation	Wednesday 22nd January	6pm	Titikaveka CICC Sunday School Hall

The aim of Te Mato Vai is to provide clean water via an efficient and reliable distribution system with minimal loss, to the people who either live or are visiting Rarotonga; and to manage that process and the system in a cost effective way.

Any enquiries can be directed to either Daryl Rairi 55 064 or Jaewynn McKay 55 486

TENDER

**MINISTRY OF
INFRASTRUCTURE
COOK ISLANDS
EXPRESSION OF
INTEREST****Purchase and Supply of
Tractor for Pukapuka Island
CONTRACT No. C13/18**

The Ministry of Infrastructure Cook Islands seeks registration of interest from Contractors for the Purchase and Supply of a brand new Tractor and Accessories for the Island of Pukapuka.

Registration of Interest will close at 3pm on Monday, 20 January 2014, and must be submitted to the ICI Office in Arorangi and addressed to:

Contact: Solomona Solomona
Project Program Coordinator
Ministry of Infrastructure
Cook Islands
P.O.Box 24321
Email:
solomona@moip.gov.ck
Phone: +682 20321

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Letter to the Editor

Do something Prime Minister!

Dear Editor,
Since Grey Power started, there were 3 members passed away and it made me wonder if it's something to do with those tax men Richard Neves and Andrew Haigh.

I know this much, that the members are stressed out, those two men will be drawing money out from their banks and also, when their reunions coming they will grab it as well. How can you do that, what do you think about how are they going to live on, on themselves and their family, you have to stop doing that

right now.

Someone who came from overseas was telling me if that happened in Samoa they would have stoned you, in Fiji they would have kicked you out in Papua New Guinea they slit your throat, so you better stop doing that to the old people. I don't know why the government employs you two, coming over here with big pays to make these laws. Don't you have any feelings for the old people! Maybe one or two doesn't want to pay tax at all but most of the pensioners are willing to pay tax starting

this year but not the two years back tax. I wish the government employed a Cook Islander that has feelings for his own people like Teina Bishop. I really like you Teina for standing up for your people, can't you kick those two tax men out?

That is why we don't like this Government, the PM has the power to stop those two men for doing this to his own people, what's wrong with you Ministers? Not sticking up for us! Or the aronga mana or the orometua where are you Tutai Pere, say something.

I ask you Prime Minister don't employ anymore papa'a, they get big pays and they don't have any feelings. Employ our own people who have feelings and know the country.

You know Prime Minister, none of the other Prime Ministers let us pay tax, so why are you doing this, you don't care eh? You know, it's really a shame this happened the pensioners are crying out to you and you don't do anything. Prime Minister, you got the power to do something.

Grey Power

One Voice, One Choice

Bureaucrats rule by default

From page 15

pensions be exempt from tax.

In a country of less than 20,000 people, but enormous natural assets, what justification is there for any pension to be taxed? All pensions should be exempt from tax. It should be remembered that those on the NZ pension also contributed to development in this country. The taxes they paid in NZ over many years (since the 1950s) have indirectly come back to assist the Cook Islands through some form of NZAid funding.

If new revenue is required to balance the budget or help fund government operations, look to our assets and develop those further. It is said Cook Islanders are asset rich but cash poor. Correct. We need to look at making our assets work better for us. We have a huge fishery and we only allow 47 boats to fish in it and for a cheap

fee. We have enormous agricultural potential that should be put to use. We are a developing nation not one in retrenchment. So instead of trying to raise \$2 million out of NZ pensions, why not make a slight increase to the foreign fishing license fees instead? Why not bring help in to develop agriculture?

The head of Finance, an economist, is on a salary of more than \$300,000 per annum. Let him earn his money by looking for new revenue streams. It is too simple to cut government spending and tax the elderly. A person on \$5 an hour could suggest that. Instead of punishing ourselves, let's make foreigners pay more for the privilege of taking fish from our EEZ. Get the head of Finance to apply his boundless talent and enormous Australian brain to the task. In fact, why not get everyone employed in

the Finance Ministry to apply their brains.

Cabinet must accept some responsibility for a lack of leadership and adopting the wrong priorities.

It should have been clear from past experience that the first priority is to grow the economy so increased and new revenue streams would pay for infrastructure and renewable energy upgrades. Focusing on infrastructure and renewable energy first has meant committing some \$400 million to these areas without any sign of any comparable economic development to follow that would pay for the loans needed.

Faith in some future income from our sea bed resources is just that, faith. Any revenue from our sea bed minerals is still some 10-20 years off.

Tourism holds possibilities provided we go to the next level which is five and six star level. Focusing on budget

travelers will become more competitive as other Pacific nations come on line like Niue, Tonga, Samoa and Asian destinations become cheaper to attract the new middle class Chinese tourist.

Prime Minister Puna will not want to be remembered as the PM under whose watch, the country fell apart. He must reinforce the traditional CIP spiritual motto of ensuring everyone is aboard the vaka. To achieve this he must affirm the old policy of not taxing the NZ pension or any other pension for that matter. He should instruct Crown Law to draw up the necessary amendments to legislation. If Neves and Saunders attempt to object, their tenure can be terminated.

If the PM does not wish to take action, do the expatriates have any solutions? After all, they seem to be making most of the decisions these days.