

COOK ISLANDS HERALD

16 April 2014 \$2 (incl VAT)

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21 22 29 36 38 39 PB **12**

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Drawn: 12/4/14 Draw num: 3415

13 18 20 21 28 45 SUPP: **23 41**

OZLOTTO RESULTS

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5 17 22 27 29 31 35 SUPP: **12 38**

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PM Puna now exposed and Vulnerable

On the 2010 General Election night the Cook Islands Party was swept into power with a commanding majority of eight Members of Parliament. An over confident first time Prime Minister Henry Puna in the selection of his Cabinet made a political bungle that he now reaps the horror of and that was his failure to accommodate and secure Atiu MP Norman George. Puna fulfilled what he had already circulated among senior CIP officials and supporters, he would not have George in his inner circle team, without any communication, a disappointed George was left totally out in the cold.

After doing more than his share in the campaign George demonstrated his participation indicated a solid commitment to ensuring a victory to the CIP. The least Puna needed to do was to keep George within the CIP frame by appointing him to the Speaker of the House. Three by-elections later Puna is staring down a political barrel of uncertainty with his majority trimmed to a shaky two.

After the Democratic Party candidate James Beer's jolting victory in the CIP resignation induced Murienua bye-election on 19 February, the expected announcement sitting of Parliament was with held by Puna. The petition lodged by the CIP was highly expected to reverse Beer's victory and the legal hype of certainty gave Puna the comfort Parliament could be convened before the petition result was delivered by the High Court.

Puna was buoyant and overconfident Beer could not be sworn in and preceded towards the House sitting, but after the date was set, his politicking and



Prime Minister Henry Puna

public statement confirming his Cabinet Minister's comfort Beer would not be sworn in was rightfully ignored and rebuffed by the annoyed Speaker of Parliament.

any deviation from his thirteen without the support of the

Puna's serious lack of skills of strategic and tactical manoeuvrings within the Parliamentary machinery let alone his inadequate grasp of the Standing Orders and the Constitution leaves his leadership exposed to political exploitation.

Assurances by the CIP engaged lawyer Tony Manarangi, Beer's tenure as a MP was very short term failed miserably to materialise leaving Puna and

Opposition renders the CIP incapable of passing any Bills in the House and vulnerable to being toppled out of power.

Puna's serious lack of

skills of strategic and tactical manoeuvrings within the Parliamentary machinery let alone his inadequate grasp of the Standing Orders and the Constitution leaves his leadership exposed to political exploitation. With only five years elected political experience, Puna is still a Parliamentary novice as during his time as a MP Parliament has not sat sufficient times for him to learn this vital aspect of the political profession. It is doubtful that in five years Puna has more than 80 days of Parliamentary sittings.

There is a lot more too audible performances in the House, the House's operational machinery is learnt and honed under pressure more so than during the normal sittings.

With only the experienced Aitutaki MP Teina Bishop able to guide the PM in the House the rest of Cabinet are lame ducks that have nothing to offer in strategic terms. While the likes of the opinionated Matavera MP Kiriau Turepu have plenty to say outside of the House, he along with the loud mouth DPM Heather are a couple of dumb mice among their Parliamentary peers inside the House where individual intelligence is discerned by what comes out of one's mouth.

Without the former Clerk of the House Rakanui, the Speaker Nicky Rattle is of no help to her appointer Puna due to her own lack of experience. The lazy Henry Puna simply doesn't possess leadership characteristics, the reality of his weak indecisive leadership skills are being exposed and will be his ruin.

Rather than have his leadership tested he answered that question by calling a snap election.

- George Pitt

QR dissolves parliament, elections on 9 July

By Charles Pitt

At 10am on Wednesday 16 April 2014 the Queen's Representative His Excellency Tom Marsters went on Radio Cook Islands to announce that Prime Minister Hon Henry Puna had, under S37(3) of the Constitution, asked him (the QR) to dissolve parliament immediately and call an early general election on 9 July 2014. The QR agreed.

Statement by Prime Minister Henry Puna

16 April 2014

The Prime Minister says the Cook Islands Party Government has put the wishes of the people first ahead of key decisions, which will come into play in the forthcoming year. Those decisions helped determined the Prime Minister's advice to the Queen's Representative yesterday to dissolve the Parliament and hold a general election.

"The early election is due to our respect for the wishes of the people," Puna said today, following the announcement by the Queen's Representative.

"Next year, the significance of our 50th Anniversary and the importance of key events and projects will need the support from a mandate by the people."

The support of the people and the teamwork of the Government require that fresh start, the Prime Minister says.

Puna says the Government's progress and record of achievements over the past few years are the direct result of the strength of his team.

"We've built a very strong foundation of positive achievements, which can only grow and improve."

"Our resolve to do the best we can is steadfast. It's been challenged but teamwork will still be the cornerstone of how we move forward from this point."

The Prime Minister says he remains committed to his team and meeting the people's wishes.

The current government will take up a caretaker role. The QR said the timing of the election would allow time to do the Budget.

The PM's decision follows the

absence from parliament on Monday and Tuesday, of Minister Teina Bishop and Tupapa/Maraerenga MP George Maggie which did not allow the CIP to have a quorum in the House. Bishop and Maggie have been in Aitutaki and are due back in Rarotonga around midday Wednesday.

The Herald understands the CIP caucus met Tuesday night, well into the night.

The Herald spoke briefly to Finance Minister Hon Mark Brown just after the QR's announcement. Brown said the announcement would not affect the telecom share sale, it will be business as usual. The Supplementary Budget, indeed the main budget will wait until after the election. The CIP still plan to hold their conference after the election. He said the central committee would have the task of pulling together the campaign manifesto.

Leader of the Opposition, Wilkie Rasmussen said after today's announcement, the Opposition welcomes this development..."it is a political development that we have been waiting for, for some time now."

"We've been encouraging the Government and the PM to go to the poll and ask mandates from the public to elect a new Government because some of the decisions that this Government has done which really moved away from the mandate that they were given. "I believe as a responsible Government if you do that, your option would be would have to go back to your public and seek that mandate. We're happy on that and ready to contest this election."

Rasmussen said they were a little disappointed with the haste in which the QR has made this announcement. "I wish the QR took a little bit of time to consider the advice of the PM and perhaps seek legal advice as to what would be the Constitutional position."

He said several members of the CIP strongly disagreed with the ways that the PM is running this country and the way the member of Parliaments were treated and the way he headed

the Government. In that sense those members, possibly by their actions and intimations caused the PM to panic and therefore take this course of action."

Rasmussen said there was no arrangement between the Democratic Party and Bishop and Maggie. An approach was made to the Democratic Party yesterday by someone but not the two named, so they called an urgent Demo caucus meeting and consulted with the executive. The decision was that the Democratic Party was not going to get involved with any coalition or planning of any. And if the Government collapsed on their own initiative that was their own problem. The Democratic Party was never going to form a Government with Bishop and Maggie. The Democratic Party preferred to go

to an election. Rasmussen said that what has happened indicates that the PM has lost the support of some of his members.

Rasmussen believes this is a dishonorable way to do things... "There are still essential Bills in Parliament that were in the process of being tabled and now they have decided to dissolve Parliament!"

Rasmussen said the Democratic Party is going to come out to campaign hard to win this election and provide a better and sensitive Government to the needs of the Cook Islands in the future.

Rasmussen said although two CIP members were absent, the Opposition could not force a confidence motion in the House on Tuesday as it had two members away, one being Winton Pickering.



SWITCH ON WITH TE APONGA UIRA

Cyclone Ita thrashes West Pacific...



Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Queensland copped it hard from Cyclone Ita over the past week. Telecommunications, electricity and water supplies were cut off in many areas.

Solomon Island also had a strong earthquake after the cyclone causing further deaths and damage. Our prayers and feelings of compassion go out to them.

Hopefully, in the 2 weeks to the end of the season we won't experience a cyclone ourselves. But stay alert. And keep an emergency kit handy: torches, portable battery radio, water containers, tinned foods, can opener, and first aid supplies.

It's wise to have a safety net.

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CIP petition back fires

- Kaota faces possible fraud complaint



Kaota Tuariki - Left hanging by the CIP?

An interesting situation emerged from last week's High Court Electoral Petition in the Murienua by-election in the Kaota Tuariki verses James Beer hearing that could have serious consequences for the complainant Tuariki.

There were three areas that were being dealt with, they were, eligibility of some voters, a bribery allegation stemming from James Beer's \$50 donation to Grey Power at an advertised political debate between Tuariki and Beer - which Tuariki failed to show up for and, undue Influence allegations levelled at Opposition Leader Wilkie Rasmussen acting as agent for James Beer the Respondent.

During the eligibility portion of the hearing the total number of voters challenged by the CIP Petition was reduced from the original 23 to 5 with confirmation from the Chief Electoral Office that probationers were ineligible to participate. This affected both sides.

It was during this session of eligibility that Justice Sir Hugh Williams, no slouch on petition matters, he is the Chairman of the New Zealand Electoral Petition Board, raised two interesting points about a particular

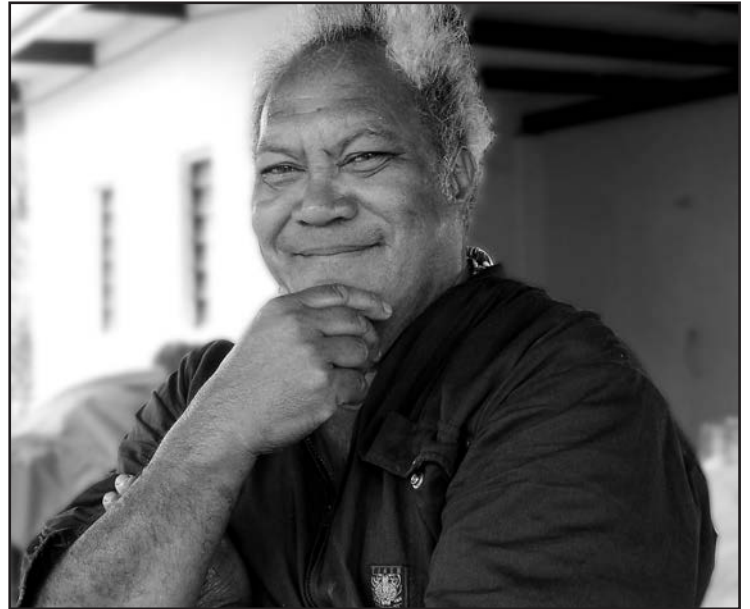
registration. The first registration was originally made and witnessed by the CIP candidate Tuariki in June 2013; another was filed again in 2014 at the voting booth.

What the Justice mentioned in Court proceedings was that the signatures of each registration form for the same elector were different and so were the dates of birth. But there were more irregularities to follow.

Counsel acting for James Beer, Lawyer Tina Browne raised a another important point, that the registration form though signed and witnessed by the CIP Candidate Tuariki was registered in June 2013 but Immigration records show that the elector did not arrive into Rarotonga until the following month, July 2013.

If one was to speculate, the only way that the form could possibly have been witnessed, witnessing requires the signature to be authenticated by the person being present, was for Tuariki to have travelled to the country that this elector was residing in at the time. As Tuariki did not leave the country in June 2013 this strongly suggests that electoral fraud may have been committed.

It was as most readers will recall a controversial by-election in February 2014 appears no



Kiriau Turepu will now have to retract his accusation

different from the September 2013 by-election when allegations were made by Beer against Tuariki citing corruption and Beer being quoted as saying "Very evidently corruption in this by-election changed the result", then a Petition to the result of the election was filed by Beer and the Democratic Party in December 2013.

This took the case to the High Court until Tuariki advised PM Henry Puna two days before the High Court hearing that he intended to resign in what Rau Nga President for the CIP said was a "noble gesture" for Tuariki to give it back to the people, further the CIP added, the only way Beer can win is to take it to Court, because the people will not vote for Beer.

It now appears that not only have the people spoken, so has the Judge and perhaps so will the Police in what appears to be a breach of the Electoral Act. Watch this space, Tuariki could well be facing further criminal complaints and another appearance in Court, something he will not be able to resign from.

Added to Tuariki's woes is the hefty legal debts he is left with plus Beer's legal costs. During the three day Petition Tuariki was

not supported in Court by the presence of a single MP or Party official, which is a clear indication the CIP won't be contributing to the Petition costs. Quite the contrary for James Beer.

The Matavera CIP Member of Parliament Minister Kiriau Turepu will now have to apologetically retract his adamant accusation Beer was an electoral cheat and liable for criminal charges of corruption the next time the House sits. When Turepu's forceful comments, which he based on his disputed knowledge of the Electoral Act were challenged, he became visibly and verbally angry prompting him the next day according to DPM Heather to add to the list of complaints justifying the sacking of the BTIB chairman.

Alone and soon to be forgotten as he disappears into political oblivion, the unemployed Tuariki's political ambitions may never be revived. There is no honour in the CIP camp for electoral losers of safe Party seats, on top of that Tuariki may suffer the further indignity and trauma of a criminal complaint then a possible conviction to set a deterrent example and new benchmark mark for future political aspirants.

- George Pitt

Political Interference and nepotism order of the day

The independence of the Budget Review committee has been compromised and is just a waste of time according to some members who claim considerable effort goes into balancing the priorities of national revenues. Some are ready to walk out over the irregularity of political interference and directional influence by the Prime Minister Henry Puna.

As the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Immigration Puna has instructed the BRC to include the cost of a new position in the Auckland Consulate office. The created position is intended for the Cook Islands Consulate Rose Blake's 19 year old granddaughter at her request. Much to the annoyance of the majority of the BRC is the budget of \$60,000 to cover the new position forcing the retraction of \$39,000 approved for a Ministry of Justice juvenile crime prevention programme.

Much to the surprise of some members was the Finance Secretary



CI Consulate Rosie Blake Richard Neves' passive and supportive response to the PM's intervention and influence of the BRC due process. It is no secret the Public Service Commissioner Russell Thomas has given Neves a favourable performance review but it's the Cabinet's favour and endorsement Neves desperately requires to have his \$300,000 contract extended for another term. -George Pitt



Bishop fronts with reimbursement

Last Friday Aitutaki MP Teina Bishop swung by the Simiona household in Tupapa between his Aitutaki arrival flight and his departure flight to New Zealand. Teariki and Nancy Simiona were surprised at the Minister's visit which was to present them with a reimbursement of Nancy's money extracted from her bank account by Treasury as back tax for her NZ pension.

Active members of the Grey Power the Simiona's and Bishop had a very emotional encounter as Bishop presented \$3,100 in cash to Nancy. Bishop explained he was morally convicted after Teariki's emotional plea to the PM Puna to return the money during the Grey Power march to Parliament a fortnight previously.

In a short speech Bishop told the happy couple they were Aitutaki family and as founding members of the CIP with Albert Henry they deserved

to be honoured and treated respectfully. He also apologised on behalf of the CIP. Bishop stated the money was from his MP salary which was tax payer's money so it was their entitlement.

Bishop also apologised he could not personally reimburse everyone who had their money wrongfully extracted from their bank accounts but hoped his initiative would prompted other MPs to follow suit.

After Bishop had rushed off to catch his departure flight, a teary Teariki said he was touched in his heart by Bishop's gesture and would continue to fight for the others reimbursements. He also spoke of the generous heart of the CIP founding father Albert Henry and was full of joy there was one like him in Teina Bishop, "that's the kind of leadership we need," stated Teariki, "someone who can bring the love back into the Party." - George Pitt

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Our Frontpage model



Our frontpage model for Herald Issue 713 is 19 year old Dayna Tuiravakai. Dayna is currently working at HTTC and is interested in taking up a pastry and baking course. Check out our website www.ciherald.co.ck and facebook page: www.facebook.com/ciherald

Two new agencies desirable

By Charles Pitt

While it is timely to revisit and discuss political reform, it is also timely to consider the proposals for reforming the public service that have been around for some time.

The proposals were to do with consolidating government services down from some 32 agencies to just six super ministries. A later proposal was to reduce the services down to 12 agencies but this is still too many.

Consolidation was to combine like or related functions, eliminate duplication of functions such as accounting and streamline reporting. This does not necessarily mean job losses rather a redistribution of personnel into the new positions that would be created.

It was proposed to establish a Ministry of Economic Development which would house all those functions that were finance or business related like MFEM, BTIB.

It may be opportune to create some new divisions to enhance the machinery of government.

Treasury Unit

MFEM is charged with financial management, economic management and management of revenue collection. In NZ these functions are handled by three separate agencies under three different Ministers. The Inland Revenue Department collects taxes, the Ministry of Finance manages government's finances and the Treasury oversees economic management.

In recent years MFEM has grown its economic management role.

The difficulty MFEM faces at present is that its proposals are not subject to any robust peer review by an independent government agency prior to submission to Cabinet. There is a superficial review of sorts by members of CAC, the Central Advisory Committee made up of HOMs but it is more comment than review. It is only after Cabinet endorsement that some review may occur either by the Audit Office, the Chamber of Commerce, a member of the public or the media.

It is suggested a Treasury Unit be set up to review, scrutinize and comment on all proposals prior to submission to Cabinet. This would ensure submissions will have received a robust review in terms of; affordability, relevance to government policy and plans, the cost/benefit, value to society and achievements of outcomes.

Treasury would also advise government on new economic initiatives, economic direction, international and local trends, loan risks and donor management.

Strategic Policy and Planning

The Central Policy Unit at OPM should be beefed up and take on a clear strategic role. This is important considering the future impact of sea bed mining on society as a whole. Enormous changes are expected when the returns from sea bed mining materialize. It would be wise to prepare for those changes now.



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21 April	22 April	23 April	24 April	25 April
EASTER MONDAY	<u>Opening:</u> BASIC CASH BOOK 9.00am onwards Punanganui Rotunda 14 vendors	BASIC CASH BOOK 9.00am onwards Punanganui Rotunda 17 vendors	BUSINESS PLAN SESSION 1: 9.00am(14) SESSION 2: 1.00PM(15) Punanganui Rotunda	ANZAC DAY
28 April	29 April	30 April	01 May	02 May
BASIC COMPUTING BTIB Training room 1030 – 12noon 7 vendors	BASIC COMPUTING BTIB Training room 4.30pm – 6.00pm 8 vendors	BASIC COMPUTING BTIB Training room 1030 – 12noon 8 vendors	BAT TRAINING BTIB training room 9.00am – 12noon 8 vendors	BAT TRAINING BTIB training room 9.00am – 12noon 8 vendors
05 May	06 May	07 May	08 May	09 May
BAT TRAINING BTIB training room 9.00am – 12noon 9 vendors	INLAND REVENUE-TAXATION 9.00am onwards New Hope Church 33 vendors	BANK OF THE COOK ISLANDS 9.00am onwards New Hope Church 26 vendors	J & J TUMUTOA LTD Accounting services 9.00am onwards New Hope Church 32 vendors	<u>CLOSING:</u> Presentation of merits & future direction for vendors

Neves fiscal trickery exposed

Last week's publicised chest beating achievements by the unpopular CIP Government was accompanied by some sleight of hand fiscal magic conjured up by the inventor of nenevanomics the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) secretary Richard Neves.

His latest attempt to hood wink the public was in relation to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) While most MPs aren't that clear what the GDP is or how it is formulated there are enough discerning members of the public who know that GDP can be conveyed several ways depending on the economic school of thought or text book version one was indoctrinated with.

Happy to go along with any direction Neves wags his tail in, his ever dependent master the Minister of Finance Mark Brown would rather follow then do some due diligence of his own.

One of the checks and balances installed by our creditors after the 1996 economic crash was an imposed limit of our loan to GDP ratio of 35%. In order to mask the over run on our 35% ration Neves has conjured up a calculation formula consistent



Neves caught out, while PM Puna tries to figure out what to do

with his nenevanomics brand.

By including \$59 million of aid funds in our GDP matrix the recent \$24.3 million China loan indicated minimal effect on our GDP to loan ratio which Neves claims now registers at 22%.

When it suits the purposes of Neves he makes comparisons to other neighbouring countries. When this is done by his critics Neves hotly disputes the relevance of comparisons. To display how prudent he is Neves lists the following, Fiji 50%, Samoa 62.8% and NZ

27.5%, what Neves deliberately conceals is these countries are producers and invest their funds into productivity to increase GDP.

In real terms when the \$59 million aid funds are excluded from our GDP matrix our loan ratio is at least 45%, a shocking revelation of the state of our national fiscal position. Rather than invest debt serving deposits into productivity ventures to increase our DGP, Neves and his incompetent mob hoard it in the Bank returning low interest.

Neves and Brown's economic strategy based upon taxing everything and anything hardly constitutes a credible increasing DGP exercise.

Instead of falling under Neves spell of nenevanomics and rolling over his contract, true political leadership needs to step up to the plate and send Neves packing and for \$300,000 employ a smart switched on bean counter who can exorcise the Cook Islands of Neves' fiscal demons with a new productivity road map.
- George Pitt

Digicel Buyout of TCI Shares Analysis

With the soon to be completed buyout of Telecom New Zealand "TNZ" 60% shareholding in Telecom Cook Islands "TCI" for \$23 million, there have been a number of articles and letters to both papers and political figures and others demanding that the CI Govt. who hold the other 40% and have a right of first refusal on the purchase of the shares should either (a) buy the TNZ shares themselves, (b) support a consortium of local investors to purchase the shares, (c) some combination of the above or (d) sell the 40% to local investors.

These ideas come about

through the idea that TCI is and has always been a hugely profitable company so why would the Govt. allow it to be sold to a foreign enterprise when we could keep it in our own hands and take the profits for ourselves.

The Govt. needs to firmly resist any efforts to buy or guarantee backing for others to buy, the TNZ shares or to sell their 40% for a discounted price to locals.

The reasons for this are somewhat complex and need an understanding and awareness of many issues that may not be obvious to a casual observer.

The first issue to recognize

is that the reason that TCI was such a "cash cow", and made such impressive profits for over 20 years, was that it was a Government mandated and approved monopoly. This allowed TCI to charge rates for telecommunications that were (and still are) amongst the top 10 in the world, right up there with Eritrea, North Korea, Djibouti, etc. The very idea that a company that provides only a communication service for a country of approximately +/- 14000 people could constantly offer dividends of up to and over \$ 8 million a year to its two shareholders is evidence of its "rapacious"

and "obscene" level of gouging its enslaved customers. And TCIs real masters TNZ were (and still are) utterly ruthless when it came to any form of competition even being hinted at, and had enshrined "secret" agreements that meant that if any competition was allowed "ever" that resulted in TCI's profit declining that Govt. would have to buy out TNZ's shares at a ludicrously high price. So there was not a hope of TCI ever giving up their monopoly unless another buyer for the TNZ shares came along. Which Digicel fortunately has. The only reason Digicel has offered

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Whistle blown on confidential report for Cabinet eyes only



Russell Thomas



Mac Mokoroa



Liz Iro

The Public Service Commissioner (PSC) Russell Thomas' latest strictly confidential (Cabinet Ministers only) review of Public Service Agencies includes a performance review of each of the thirteen Heads of Ministries. The performance ratings of ministry outputs are colour coded, white for achieved, orange and red for partial achievements and red for not achieved.

For the record, 13 Ministries listed a combined total of 67 outputs of which only 5 were achieved, 13 failed miserably and the rest were partially achieved. Over \$40 million of public money is appropriated for salaries and wages with all 13 Heads of Ministries receiving excessive contracts plus vehicles and many perks. The huge investment of public funds must now be questioned due to the less than average overall performance.

Best reviews are achieved by Liz Iro and the Ministry of Health who have the second biggest staff off 291 closely followed by the consistent Ministry of Education the biggest employer (351 staff) led by Sharyn Paio.

Biggest improver on a previously disastrous review is Agriculture whose Head Dr Matairangi Porea survived being suspended by the intervention of Cabinet. In this report Thomas states, "Dr Matairangi came into a Ministry that was on the verge of collapse due to the lack of clear organisational direction," "Twelve months later the MoA under his leadership is shaping up well..."

Despite political interference by Minister Kiriau Turepu, Thomas commends Dr Porea and describes him as having achieved good ratings including one white output.

Dr Porea has justified Cabinet's faith in

him and desperately needs a funding boost to achieve meaningful outputs.

Concerning the controversial Richard Neves, a sympathetic Thomas finds plenty to commend him on and reports "Government will need to make a decision whether to roll his contract for another term or end it. Richard has indicated he is willing to serve another term if given the opportunity."

Thomas has some words of wisdom for Marine Resources Ben Ponia, who is required to complete a National Marine Policy before the end of his contract, "Ben has very strong opinions but he must learn to be humble."

Of Transport's Ned Howard it is reported, "that he is good but struggles to cope with the work demand and expectations..." and "As the secretary; he has good intentions but lacks understanding and appreciation..."

Office of the Prime Minister's Liz Koteka, Culture's Sonny Williams, and Internal Affairs' Bredina Drollet get pass ratings worthy of extended contracts.

The Ministry of Justice gets a seven red output ratings and Tingika Elikana gets a serve from Thomas, "The MoJ performance under Tingika is very disappointing..." concerning his budget blow out, "This is a lame excuse..." "This is unacceptable at this level."

"Tingika is still on probation and his performance in the last 12 months is undesirable. Further, his breach of the MFEM Act will be referred to PERC for investigation."

Despite Tingika's condemning report and Infrastructure's better ratings than Justice, Mac Mokoroa's review is the worst overall. Thomas found Mac a difficult customer

to deal with and his report provides that impression forcefully, the PSC stated that despite the Ministry showing an overspend of \$107,000, Mac authorised the payment of performance bonuses to 47 staff totalling \$15,000. Also despite repeated requests Mac failed to provide compulsory reports to Thomas.

Prior to Thomas concluding "The leadership that has been demonstrated by Mac during this reporting period is one that is undesirable." The PSC wrote, "Mac's behaviour towards PSC staff and other central agencies has been disrespectful and unprofessional. "Of Mac's personal attacks against him Thomas said Mac was "in breach of the values and code of conduct specified in the Public Service Act."

"Mac refuses to accept any advice or to follow instructions I give." Thomas also gives further accounts of Mac's indifference to other line Ministry staff and that he has a "blatant disregard for authority or Government policies. I am really disappointed with his behaviour."

While other Ministries and Mac's peers found him obnoxious and uncooperative, Thomas said Mac received favourable responses from his staff's evaluation.

It is little wonder the PRC report is strictly confidential, if permitted for public consumption there would be an reactionary uproar from every non government paid worker because the report gives the impression a lot of people are being paid serious money to do little and be unaccountable for being apathetic non achievers.

- George Pitt

Independent Candidates . . .

could easily determine Election Result

Independent Candidates could quite easily determine the outcome for this years General Election.

It is common knowledge that which ever political party takes the most seats on Rarotonga ends up winning the Government. And for this coming General Election I don't see things any different in that respect.

Now that the Murienua by-election result has been confirmed, Parliament is made up of 13 C.I.P. members to that of 10 from the Democratic Party plus Norman George.

Going back over the figures for the 2010 election, had it not been for two Independent candidates putting up a very good showing on Rarotonga, we would now have a Democratic Party Government controlling the Cabinet Room with Norman George (the king-maker) sitting in there somewhere.

This is because the Murienua by-election result would have changed the Government.

The fact that we still have a C.I.P. Government can be directly attributed to Sir Terepai Maoate and Peto Nicholas. Sadly, these two men have since died. I knew both of them reasonably well. Great "political warriors" they were.

But because they polled so well in their respective constituencies, with Sir Terepai splitting the Demo's and taking 150 votes in Ngatangia while Peto split the anti-C.I.P. vote and took 160 votes in Avatiu, their efforts were sufficient to allow the two C.I.P. candidates to come through the middle and take both seats.

Had Sir Terepai and Peto not stood in their constituencies, then it is my view that the Democratic Party would have won both seats and so would now have the numbers in Parliament to be the Government.

Tim Arnold with 181 votes in Tupapa and Phillip Nicholas also with 181 votes in Nikao-Panama did very well last election. While they did not split the two party votes sufficiently to affect the end result, they certainly had an impact in their respective constituencies.

For the Penrhyn and Pukapuka constituencies, their Independent candidates almost caused a major "political boil-over" in both cases.

Independent candidate for Penrhyn Willie John almost knocked-off Wilkie Rassmussen 61 to 71 votes while the C.I.P. candidate was a distant 3rd with 10 votes.

On Pukapuka the count was just as close :

: Tekii Lazaro (C.I.P.) 88 votes.

: Vai Peua (Demo) 84 votes.

: Tai Ravarua (Ind.) 77 votes.

So in both constituencies, their Independent candidates polled really well. There is no reason why Independent candidates cannot go one step better this election and secure one, if not both, of these seats.

While the two political parties' are shaping up to square off against each other during the campaign period later in the year, their biggest political opponent will not actually be each other. But rather, it will be the Independent candidates and what ever political havoc they may cause.

These candidates will be campaigning as individuals in their respective constituencies. So they will be flying below the "political radar" and therefore it will be very difficult to determine how good they are really going.

Norman "Independent" George has already polished up his political boxing gloves and is ready to go toe-to-toe with the leadership of the Democratic Party to try and get his membership card. But I don't think he will get it.

So this is one Independent candidate who will be challenging both parties' on the campaign trail. What an absolute headache he is going to be for both of them.

I think both the Cook Islands Party and the Democratic Party look "politically tired". There is very little political inspiration coming from either of them at the moment. Could it be that both political parties have almost reached their "use-by-date"? Could this next election be the election for the "Independents"?

Over recent elections it has become

obvious that "quality" Independent candidates always poll quite well. As we get closer to election time, then more and more Independents will put their hands up and stand for election.

Some real interesting names have been mentioned in recent times as possible Independent candidates. And so voters in most constituencies on Rarotonga in particular, are going to have a good choice as to who they could vote for.

The number of staunch C.I.P. and Demo supporters has been dropping in recent elections. And it is still dropping as I write.

So the number of voters who have rejected both parties' continues to increase. These voters could go either of two ways. They could vote Independent or not vote at all.

The number of non-voters in Nikao-Panama last election (350) was actually more than what Aunty Mau got to win the seat (255). The rest of the constituencies on Rarotonga all had a large number of non-voters.

So for an Independent candidate to be successful, that person need not take a lot of votes off either of the two political parties. But rather, simply attract previous independent voters (being the non-C.I.P./Demo) as well as a significant number of previous non-voters and who knows what might happen.

I wouldn't be surprised if 5 or 6 Independent Candidates came through the middle and won seats on Rarotonga next election.

What a major "Political Reform" that would be.

Sovereign Pacific Publishing Company

P.O. Box 3060, Muri Beach, Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

Email : sovereign-pacific@yahoo.co.nz Ph : 50776

History books of the Cook Islands as written by Howard Henry

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A Collection of Historical Stories from the Cook Islands

"The Book of Tetaura-Raru"

Henry Family of the Cook Islands : Our Genealogy of 1000 Years

"Story of the C.I.P.A."

Economic and Industrial unrest in the Cook Islands 1945 to 1950

These publications are now available at the
"Bounty Bookshop" Avarua, Rarotonga.

ADB energy efficiency project update

By Charles Pitt

Felix Gooneratne who is overseeing the ADB funded programme on energy efficiency –PEEP– in the Cook Islands, is pleased with progress and last week the Herald with an update.

According to Felix, one surprising development is that the project is coming in under budget so consideration is now being given to other likely projects that could be implemented.

PEEP which involves five Pacific nations is in stage two where implementation is taking place.

In the Cook Islands, the fridge/freezer programme has seen 285 units replacing less efficient models in homes resulting in tangible savings of between \$40 to \$70 on household power bills. In the last month of the programme there was a surge which saw 77 units installed in homes.

Felix advised that an evaluation phase would follow and homes will be requested to take part where there will be measurements taken of before and after meter readings. A month before and a month after said Felix.

Felix said there is interest in the Cook Islands experience from the SPC and other nations like Tokelau. The programme has

shown there are efficiency gains said Felix.

Felix said consideration is being given to applying the fridge/freezer model to air conditioning units. He intends to put this to the ADB.

He said one tourist resort had good results from 75 air conditioning units. 35 units had been fitted in one accommodation block. Significant savings of around 50% had been achieved compared to the previous units.

As to progress with the programme to install lighting at the airport, port and Punanga Nui market, he said the ADB were funding the lighting system and the poles while the Cook Islands government were funding the erection of the poles and lights. He said the poles would arrive at the end of May and setting up would be done June/July.

Three other projects have been finalized. They are; the public sector lighting programme and the Aitutaki and Mangaia street lights programmes. The street lights will arrive in August and are to be set up by CIIC.

Felix said a plan was being considered for the safe disposal of spent bulbs and a sponsor was being sought.

An energy audit training programme has just been completed. There were 25 on



Felix Gooneratne

the course including two from Nauru. Marketing skills was also included.

Felix said he was also dealing with a request to look at the Rarotonga Hospital. The hospital has 9 hot water electric systems. Previously they were solar. LPG is used in the laundry. Felix will look at funding from the current programme or elsewhere.

Efficiency guidelines were being prepared for Hotels/ commercial premises and street lighting. These will be prepared by the ADB and distributed. He said the procedures for monitoring and verification were very stringent and involved case

studies.

Summing up, Felix said the PEEP programmes consisted of 34 projects in 5 Pacific countries. The Cook Islands, which is the smallest country, has 8 projects and 25% of the funding which totals \$2.4 million (from the ADB for equipment).

Felix returns to the Cook Islands in June/July. PEEP is scheduled to end in November 2014 but could be extended.

The local consultant appointed by the ADB for PEEP is Terekino Vaireka who is based at the Renewable Energy Development Division (REDD) at the Office of the Prime Minister.

Atua healing-what is it about?

Remembering things we have forgotten.

Giving thanks to Ranganui.

Papatuanuku and other Gods and Goddesses.

This is not in any way denying the Christian belief system but recognizing a universal energy that can be tapped into. Remembering also that Jesus was a healer.

To become grounded. To stand firm upon the Earth Mother who provides food and wai to recognize the importance of water and the other elements that surround us that have a direct impact on our health and wellbeing.

By being in touch with our surroundings makes us more able to be in touch with our inner wisdoms. Gifted to us by

those who came before us, our tipuna.

If we are not grounded we can make bad decisions, living in the mind and suffering from a busy head can cause blockages which stall progress.

Many of us have suffered trauma through physical or emotional damage. These are carried in our cellular structure and affect us in our everyday life.

Through Atua healing methods these blockages can be removed to allow us to be free of old pains and hurts and move through life with a renewed vigour. Holding old negative thoughts that no longer serve us can manifest in physical pain.

Often what keeps people away from personal peace and harmony is the ever busy mind. Learning to relax through

bodywork and Atua healing promotes a freedom from entrapped old ways and habits that have a negative impact on the whole being.

Return from NZ

Teuvira Upokotea has returned to his clinic Matariki Maoro, Hut 38, Punanga Nui Market.

Teuvira has been in New Zealand completing his final certification study for Atua healing. Now being able to integrate this with his skills as a remedial body therapist offering a more in-depth treatment towards wellness which sits well within the traditional aspects of Cook Islands culture.

He is now making the most of his western medical orientated bodywork diploma and Polynesian aspects of healing. He is the only practitioner on the



Teuvira Upokotea island to hold these qualifications and is looking forward to doing the best he can for those in need.

As he works on an appointment only structure, he can be contacted for an appointment on 79 781.

Time to think about our future

By Charles Pitt

Three weeks ago, on Australia's ABC Network TV News, it was announced that a Deloitte Access Economic Report "Positioning for prosperity? Catching the next wave" had come up with five growth industries poised to take over from mining over the next few decades. They were; agribusiness, gas, tourism, international education and wealth management.

According to the report, these industries could grow to account for 10 per cent of the Australian economy helping to drive the post mining economy. However, the report has drawn caution from many commentators who say much more work needs to be done.

This development is of more than a passing interest to the Cook Islands as we are only at the start of our sea bed mineral mining phase with an indefinite period to run. It shows the importance of looking ahead and establishing strategies to cope with possible future developments.

The maximization of our fishing resource and the commencement of mining sea bed minerals exploitation will hopefully diversify our economy to the point where the dependency on tourism can be lessened.

Unlike the Australians, perhaps we should consider adopting a two pronged approach to the future.

Firstly, we should be considering right now, what new industries we can develop—say over the next 20 years, as a result of enhancing our fishing industry and exploitation of our sea bed minerals. Then we should encourage investment, education and skill development in these areas from now on.

Secondly, we should take a more long term view and consider what new industries we might develop after 25-40 years as a consequence or spin off of the fishing and sea bed industries. Then we should consider what educational strategies will be needed to guide the next few generations of Cook Islanders into these future industries.

Likely prospects in the immediate future

Fishing

Employment, new jobs with increased local participation in the industry, more technical jobs requiring higher training level, increase in tutors, expansion of USP to cater for more specialized training, expansion of Trade Training Centre to cater for increase in other training, establishment of processing plants including processing of fish waste into fertilizer and animal feeds, storage plants, increased harbour activity, further upgrading of port services and facilities. All these must be considered bearing in mind changes likely to fish stocks and fish migratory patterns as a result of climatic effects from global warming.

Sea bed Minerals

Employment opportunities, more specialized and technical jobs, training opportunities, specialized and technical support services

related to inspections, maintenance and repairs, more advisory and monitoring work for environmentalists, marine scientists, lawyers, chemical and metal scientists, consultancy opportunities in specialized areas and to government eg laboratory and analytical services, opportunities to establish support services like data processing and programme development, financial support and investment services.

Logistics support

For both fishing and sea bed minerals where bases are established on the outer islands-air/sea transportation of personnel, provisions and equipment, housing for personnel, enhanced emergency/medical services, establishment of recreational activities for off duty or land base personnel.

Regional opportunities

Development

As Cook Islanders develop specialized skills in the above areas, there is no reason why they would not be in demand to assist development in other Pacific countries. Cook Islanders could become highly sought after consultants in the region. This can be a long term goal also. Cook Islanders should have access to specialized training in the area of consultancy itself-the techniques, bidding processes, presentations. Skilled consultants will be in demand in the future and consultancy itself will become an industry sector on its own.

Investment

As the Cook Islands accumulates greater wealth from its resources, it will be in a position to invest in the region either to assist development or provide Pacific countries with aid funds for projects. This will provide employment opportunities for Cook Islanders.

Education

There is no reason why the Cook Islands USP cannot be equipped and resourced to provide specialized training in the area of sea bed minerals, based on the Cook Islands experience. Less technical training can be extended to local schools.

Conferencing

The Cook Islands should look to establish itself as a major conference centre at the top level. That is Leadership level. It would require the establishment of a conference centre equipped with the latest communication technology.

Likely prospects for the long term (25-40 years ahead)

It is important to consider the long term, say 25-40 years from now due to the time it takes for a person to go through the education system. At the end of high school, a youth will have completed 13 years education. Add three more years for University study (that's 16 years total). Add a further year to complete a Masters Degree (17 years total) or eight years for a Medical Degree (24 years total).

Systems development

The in-depth and highly technical experience

and expertise we will have gained in setting up the sea bed minerals industry sector will stand us in good stead to provide consultancy advice or direct technical assistance to other countries or companies on generic systems development for a range of new industries. We will be able to advise on the essential methodology and frameworks required to cover a wide range of integrated functions such as legal, educational, financial, environmental, monitoring, accountability and political processes and roadmaps.

Centre for regional dispute resolution

We set up a Regional Court to arbitrate, mediate, adjudicate and resolve regional disputes not of a criminal nature but those involving regional agreements related to such matters that bind regional nations in trade, labour, immigration, standards and like issues.

All parties would need to agree which matters may be referred to such a court and what role if any the "Pacific Way" may be invoked.

There has been a proliferation of regional agreements relating to various matters for example, the Pacific Plan.

The Pacific Plan provides for labour portability and if one country is not following the spirit of the Plan, a complaint could be laid to have that country's government ensure the terms agreed in Plan are adhered to and seen to be working. For instance, in the Cook Islands there have been many complaints by migrant workers about their contracts and conditions. These rarely get as far as the Court and usually end up with the migrant worker leaving the country with their dispute unresolved. Issues like this should be resolved at a higher level if the Leader's intentions on labour portability under the Pacific Plan are to work.

With climate change will come a range of other changes which will have the potential to give rise to social tensions, migration pressures, labor changes, trading issues, resource issues and border incursions. There will be increased pressure on countries to resolve their differences amicably and by an agreed process.

A lower Court could deal with specific issues. For instance, in a dispute between Polynesia n countries. In this Court, the "Polynesian way" or Polynesian custom and tradition may be taken into consideration. An example of an issue may be one related to copyright where one country may be claiming sole rights to traditional symbols, rituals or practices.

Consultancy services

The Cook Islands can establish itself as a leading centre for consultancy services. Advanced communications systems mean offices can be based in the Cook Islands with consultants only needing to travel as and when required.

Regional Leaders Secretariat

Establish a Secretariat office in the Cook Islands for the Pacific Forum countries.

Commission to recommend no change to number of MPs, salary cut for Ministers

By Charles Pitt

The Management Committee of the new organization formed last year called "*Our Customs and Free Association Commission Inc*" met on Thursday 10 April at the Tupapa Nui Meeting House at 4.30pm. It will recommend to government that there be no change to the number of MPs and that Minister's salaries be reduced.

The Commission last met three months ago.

In attendance were Tupui Henry, President, George Cowan, Vice President, John Herrmann, Vice President and committee members June Baudinet, Tupe Short and Pastor Ngarima George.

Bi-Annual report

The Bi-Annual Report covers the period July to December 2013. After an opening prayer by Tupe Short and brief opening comments by the President, the members addressed the agenda items. These were incorporated into the Bi-Annual Report presented by the President.

(1) President's Report

Tupui said the Commission is ready to work and start reaping the benefits. A few discussion sessions had been held and now it was time to get results. He said over the next six months there will be more meetings and discussions held. Public meetings may be called to let people know what the Commission was doing and to get people's views. He said membership cards had been printed and these could be sold. Membership would indicate who supported the Commission. He quoted: "Akara ana ki te au koro, kua teatea e kau mou." Which is, "Cast your eyes on the fields they are white and the harvest is ready." He also mentioned the other well known quote, "No-one in the family to be left out and no-one in the tribe to be forgotten."

(2) Financial report

The President presented the Financial Report which showed expenditure on four items totaling \$109.33. As the Commission is yet to generate any revenue, he said he covered these expenses himself.

(3) Part 1-Project Report (TA Henry)

Tupui reported on Project (e) Review of Electorates and Members of Parliament. The recommendation is that the number of MPs be retained at 24. Each outer island is to retain their present number, a total of 14 and Rarotonga 10 (Te au o Tonga 4, Takitumu 3, Puaikura 3).

While the population and number of voters have dropped in the outer islands it was discovered a number of our people especially from Mangaia, Aitutaki, Atiu and Mauke have migrated to NZ and Australia to seek employment as this is lacking in the Cook Islands. Tupui said at one factory he

visited in Invercargill, NZ, 100 Cook Islanders were employed.

It was estimated that the monthly remittances to Mangaia are about \$30,000, Aitutaki \$40,000 and about \$20,000 to \$30,000 to the other islands. The strong belief was these islands should not be penalized for their low population.

Proposals to change to systems foreign to our present NZ/Commonwealth system for MP numbers are opposed.

Tupui said parliamentary salaries should be reviewed. He said Minister's pay was excessive. He questioned current proposals to reduce the number of MPs in the outer islands saying two thirds majority was needed in parliament to change the Constitution.

(4) Report by John Herrmann

John's report on the meeting of the management committee of the Commission held on 23 July 2013 at the Tupapa Nui Meeting House was presented. It lists the projects the Commission would work on which were;

- (a) Land Court matters (J Baudinet)
- (b) Traditional Titles claims (J Baudinet)
- (c) Leases Approval Committee procedure
- (d) Survey of Public Service Ministries Department (J Herrmann)
- (e) Review of Electorates and Members of Parliament (TA Henry)
- (f) Taxation and Health Charges for the elderly (J Caffery)
- (g) Sea Bed Minerals; (G Cowan) and
- (h) Free Association Status.

Those managing projects are in brackets beside the project name.

(5) Present Management Committee

Tupui said two positions on the Management Committee were vacant, they were Secretary and Treasurer. There was also a need to confirm the Honorary Committee Members representing the House of Ariki, Koutu Nui, Religious Advisory Council, Chamber of Commerce and Parliamentarians.

(6) Discussions

The main item discussed was Sea Bed Minerals. Tupe suggested a recommendation be submitted that a member of the Commission's management Committee be appointed to the Sea Bed Minerals Board.

Tupui recalled the appointment of the first Sea Bed Minerals Board by Papa Albert which had been suggested by NZ and which he, Tupui had the job of forming. Tupui said he appointed George Cowan to the Board. Tupui referred to the first plan which was to establish a small processing plant on Suvarrow to process the nodules which were to be extracted by China and marketed by NZ. The original set of plans was lost



Tupui Ariki Henry

but later re-written by Tupui and George. Sir Terepai Maoate, Jim Marurai and Tom Marsters opposed the plan said Tupui.

Tupe said he was on the Board representing the Koutu Nui but suggested George Cowan be recommended for the current Board. He said a letter would be needed from the Commission to the Minister. It was also decided to revive the old plan and make it public. John Herrmann said George should be appointed to the Board due to his experience. John was concerned that our politicians may not be up with international developments and trends. He was also worried about the current Board members lack of qualifications.

Tupui said he suspected China was positioning itself through lead up, funded projects to mine our sea bed minerals. That was their ultimate goal. Tupe said he had been told China would have a deep sea sub ready to retrieve nodules in 8 years time and Korea in 10 years time.

June Baudinet said she was not sure if the Commission was ready to be involved and it needed to focus on getting the group's aims together. Tupui said he felt the Commission was not yet at the stage for communicating to government. He said he had no faith in the present government and felt there was going to be a new government.

George Cowan said he would write a report on the nodules based on a summary done by SOPAC.

(7) Next Meeting and closure

Ngarima suggested and it was agreed the next meeting will be held early June following Queen's Birthday. The meeting closed at 5.30pm with a prayer by Tupe.

For information about the commission go to page 15

**TELECOM COOK ISLANDS LIMITED
– EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

TCNZ Cook Islands Limited ("Telecom New Zealand") owns 60% of the shares in Telecom Cook Islands Limited (the "Shares"). It seeks expressions of interest from Cook Islanders and Cook Islands enterprises who may have an interest in acquiring the Shares and can satisfy the matters below.

Please submit your expression of interest to Craig Walton at craig.walton@tnzi.com and hand deliver a copy to Tim Arnold, Ingram House, Rarotonga, on or before 10 May 2014.

Any expressions of interest should provide evidence that:

- you will purchase, own and control the Shares;
- your ownership and control is not in the nature of a nominee, agency or other device for a foreign enterprise;
- you have the financial resources to settle the purchase price of the shares of not less than \$23 million for the Shares; and
- you have the necessary experience of owning and managing significant telecommunications assets and networks.

This notice is intended to comply with the requirements of Cook Islands law that are aimed at affording all local persons and local enterprises an opportunity to participate in the business of Telecom Cook Islands. Cook Islands and New Zealand law forbid the making of a public offer of the Shares and this advertisement is not an offer within the meaning of all applicable laws.



**MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS
SOCIAL IMPACT FUND (SIF)
PROJECT FUNDING**

The SIF provides combined Cook Islands and New Zealand support to Cook Islands Civil Society Sector to meet the needs of those most vulnerable in the community and is focused on 6 priority areas: Gender equality, Children & Youth, Disabilities, The Elderly, Domestic Violence and Mental Health.

The SIF Board now invite proposals for Project Funding in the following eligible project areas

- Community Education Projects
- Training
- Workshops
- Awareness raising activities
- Income generation
- Organisational Strengthening

Please note Infrastructure projects and International travel are not encouraged, but will be considered on a case by case basis.

For further inquiries please contact the SIF Manager on telephone 29378 or email angeline.tuara@cookislands.gov.ck Ministry of Internal Affairs. The deadline for submission of Project Funding Application is Thursday 24 April 2014. No applications will be accepted after this date.

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MEDIA PLAYER

Why should I get one

At this point, some readers may be asking what's wrong with simply plugging in a laptop or PC to the TV? This is certainly an option, but compared to using a media player, it is often a less convenient and more complicated approach. Cables are usually not part of the typical living room decor, and are often hidden to the greatest extent possible. Another drawback to connecting a PC to the TV is that navigation can become a frustrating matter. In order to change movies or load another episode, one has to use the computer mouse and operating system, browsing through folders and files as if sitting by a work station. In a media player, all features are easily managed using a single remote control, avoiding the hassle of having to switch between the computer and TV, which can easily distract from that cosy "movie time ambience" that viewers like.

There was a time when people dedicated whole sections of the living room to display their collection of CDs and DVDs. Alternatively, particularly in households with children, the living room became a storage room in itself, with plastic discs spread out all over the place. Thanks to the introduction of the media player, the CD/DVD shelf can be taken down to make room for something else. Whole libraries of different media, be it music, videos, or photos, are stored locally on the media player itself or on a PC that connects to it wirelessly. Instead of getting up and walking across the room to change discs, all one must do is push a button on the remote control. And where the CD shelf used to be, you can now install a cool minibar.

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About the Commission

Our Customs and Free Association Commission Inc

Main aims

- To be committed to the assessment of the maintenance of our Native Customs in Land and Cultural matters; and
- To respect and honor our free association status with New Zealand.

Objectives

- To observe and assist the Leases Approval Committee in the approving of Leases Documents,
- To observe and advise the courts in Dealing with land matters according to our "Native Customs,"
- To examine and assess the validity of Government claims to Crown Lands,
- To conduct a survey in the Divisions of the Public Service as to what is a Department and what constitutes a Ministry including remuneration rates for Public servants and members of Parliament including members of Cabinet,
- Review the Electorates and the number of seats in our Parliament,
- To be involved in all matters covering our Land rights and Sea Bed Minerals; and
- To carry out any other matters or do any other things for the Common Benefits of our People and Country.

Key functions of the Management Committee

- To ensure the establishment of good laws for all the people of the Cook Islands,
- To make recommendations on policies for good government; and
- To appoint Boards or Committees to assist with applications for re-hearing of Land cases or re-opening of previous court cases ruled as non-appealable.

Who may join the Commission

- Any Cook Islander,
- A resident of the Cook Islands; or
- Such other person as may be approved by the Management Committee.

Honorary members

Requires nomination by two members of the Commission. Nomination to be accepted at a general meeting of the Commission by a majority vote and payment of the fee. Honorary members have no voting rights.

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TENDER



REQUEST FOR TENDERS C36/14

The Cook Islands Investment Corporation invites tenders for Asset Management Information System supply, installation, implementation and training.

Through this tender, the Cook Islands Investment Corporation on behalf of the Government of the Cook Islands wishes to implement a 'whole of government' asset management information system.

A copy of the RFT document can be downloaded from www.procurement.gov.ck.

Tenderers should ensure they are registered and have downloaded or received all files for this RFT including all issued notices.

For enquiries and registrations contact:

Anne Taoro

Email anne.taoro@cookislands.gov.ck

Tenders close 3.00pm, Friday 2 May 2014.

PUBLIC NOTICE



2015 NEW ZEALAND COMMONWEALTH SCHOLARSHIPS

The Government of the Cook Islands is seeking "Expressions of interest" for Scholarship awards from suitably qualified Cook Islands men and women to study at a New Zealand academic institution commencing in February 2015. Scholarships are funded by the New Zealand Aid Programme and are for PhD or Masters level study only.

The scholarships are available to those working in the public, private and non-government sectors, and to those residing in the Cook Islands. There are 2 awards available for this scheme and these will be offered equitably to 1 female and 1 male candidate. Applicant selection will be based upon meeting the scholarship eligibility criteria, primarily that of:

- Academic merit of the candidate
- The quality of the research proposal
- The proposed course of study meets Cook Islands Governments National HRD priority needs

National HRD priority areas are as follows: Agriculture, Education (Secondary teaching: for Maths & Science subjects), Finance Management, Health, ICT, Marine Resources/Fisheries, Renewable Energy, Trade areas and Waste Management although other areas may be included (excluding Aviation, Civil Engineering and Architectural Studies).

For further information and application forms, contact Anna Roi on ph 29357 ext. 245 or email scholarships@education.gov.ck. Application forms must be received no later than 12 Wednesday, 30 April 2014

Those were the days

By Norma Ngatamariki

Have you ever felt like jumping in a time machine and rewinding the clock? Not too far back, just far enough, when you were nine or ten years old. These days, I'm starting to feel the pressure of being a seventeen-year-old turning eighteen. I've got a ton of scholarships to apply for, my school work (which is giving me hell, by the way), my jobs (ugh), chores at home plus my leadership thingys. At the moment, I have no social life to speak of (sad but true) and it's not even half way through the year! Or maybe it's just me, stressing out over nothing. I dunno.

When I was a kid, I never had any of these problems. I didn't have to worry about being broke (money magically flew into my hand), getting a good grade in school (I was always topping the daily spelling and mental tests.

Booyah!). Nowadays, getting a good grade defines your future and that's some scary stuff. My fondest memory of my childhood was playing the game, Marbles. I loved it because it was something I was good at (even better than the boys). All those game terms: friendlies or keeps, rainbows and spacings, "no anythings". After school, when my friends and I walked back home, we used to "collect off the land". In other words, stealing whatever fruits we could find on someone else's land. The mandarin plot next to the Avarua Bakery was a very popular place for us kids to gather and raid, and there was a sign that clearly said "KEEP OFF!" (I'm too lazy to steal fruits now, so I just buy them in the shops.)

I remember learning how to drive a bike for the first time (I think I was 10 or 11). It was an ultimate fail, as I kept

crashing into the nearest tree or bush (I even got my first "Raro tattoo") but as kids, we don't really care. We just get up, laugh it off and try again. As you get older, it is harder to do. You have to acknowledge your mistake, admit that you're wrong and then get on with life. Or the time when we would head down to the Avarua or Avatiu Wharf to cool down. We'd just jump in the sea without a care in the world. These days, I don't go near the wharf ever since that maggot incident happened and besides, the construction and the boats docked beside the wharf are blocking the way.

So, what happened? Life happened. We grew up and saw the world through a fresh set of eyes. We became adults and in doing so, we got more responsibilities than just raking rubbish. That's life. You can't always stay a kid forever



(unfortunately) Some of us will be going to University, some of us will be getting jobs after school or some will work towards getting their dreams realised.

Tereora takes out Vaka Iti

By Nadia George

Before I start off I'd just like to apologize about the mix up with last week's article on the Ngakau Toa run-a-thon, it was postponed due to the annual Cooperate Vaka races that was held last week Saturday. Watch this space for an update on the NTV fundraisers. Now back to the show.

So last week, Friday, I got the opportunity to skip out on school, without getting into trouble, and go help out, as well as support, my school in the annual Vaka Iti competition for 2014, that was held at Muri Beach. The day started off wet and windy! It was an early start for all volunteers, prepping and organizing the vakas for the hundreds of keen students that crowded the beachside. De-rigging and re-rigging canoes were a real hassle for us, but we were happy to help out in anyway we could.

Races didn't kick off till about 9am and so we all kind of lay around until then. I wasn't too

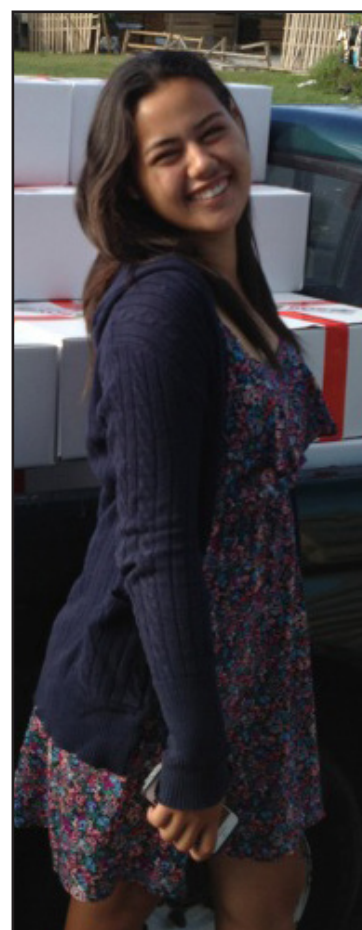
enthusiastic on getting soaked that day, especially with the rough winds blowing from every corner. So I begged my friend Kimi to take me on the starter boat with her, lol, suckers. With about ten volunteers dropped out into the middle of the lagoon and teams in their vakas, we were finally ready to get the day underway. It was a bumpy beginning to an awesome day.

The weather was a real challenge for not only the paddlers but boat handlers as well. They all had to endure rough currents and the freezing cold water. But the boat holders in my opinion were the heroes of the day.

Although the students had only gotten five weeks to prepare themselves for the big event, they all did their schools and their teams, proud. With students from year 9 to year 11 showing up and giving it all they had! They didn't let a little wind and harsh weather stop them from kicking

some serious B** out on that water. We had canoes swerving in and out of lanes, bumping into one another. Kids were jumping in and out of their boats to try and straighten their canoes up on the starting line. All this made for a very interesting and fantastic day. The intense yelling at one another, the muscles pumping as each person dug into the water to push their boat forward and of course the excitement on the winning team's faces after it was all over, made it all seem worth it.

Tereora College was crowned the overall champions of Vaka Iti 2014. The announcement was met with loud cheers and praises of one another. And I couldn't help but feel a strong sense of pride for my peers. Finally, congratulations to all students who had shown up and taken part in this year's 2014 Vaka Iti event. Also, congratulations to the staff of CITC liquor, for taking out this year's 2014 Cooperate Vaka races. Bring on 2015!



How To Experience Gods Blessings

(according to Psalm 128)

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

I have never met anyone who does not want to be blessed in life, and most importantly to be blessed by God! In Psalm 128 are important lessons that we could learn from if we are to be blessed by God.

There are two parts to this Psalm;

(1) is our attitude towards God which is to respect (or fear) Him, and to obey His laws (or walk in His ways), and;

(2) is the blessings of God. In other words if we do what God want us to do then He will bless us.

In the home environment if the children listen and do what their parents ask them to do then they will receive some form of blessings. This is no different from the things of God! In other words the Psalmist is saying "Don't expect God to bless you if you don't respect Him and obey His laws!" "No pain, no gain!" "There's no such thing as free-lunch!" v.1 reads "The Lord will bless you if you respect Him and obey His laws." The question is 'How do you respect God?' The answer is 'We respect God by doing what is right in His sight!'

One important question is 'What are the laws of God?' The answer is, read your Bible and you will find the laws of God! Anyway, here's one of God's laws "You shall have no other gods before Me!" (Exodus 20v.3) Many people treat TV as their God, and are too lazy to go to Church! Some spend too much time doing things that takes them away from God! Things that prevent them from reading their Bible or praying to God, or even singing to God! That is why the Psalmist said "The Lord will

bless you if you respect Him and obey His laws." v.2 reads "Your fields will produce, and you will be happy and all will go well." This verse is speaking to us as individuals.

The work that you're doing prosper because you respect God and obey His laws. The root-crops that you're planting produces manifold because of Him! Your boss is pleased with your work performance because you're doing it honestly, faithfully, in the fear of the Lord, and in accordance to His ways, His laws, His righteousness! v.3-4 speaks about you and the family. It reads "Your wife will be as fruitful as a grapevine, and just as an olive tree is rich with olives, your home will be rich with healthy children. That is how the Lord will bless everyone who respects (fear) Him." This is speaking about the joy, the peace, the respect, the love of God in the home – the father, the mother, the children and everyone else in the home! It doesn't mean that life is plain-sailing, smooth, no! a little argument now and then is expected because of our human nature. But what the Psalmist is saying here is that, most of the time life is good in the home! But this can only happened if we "...respect (fear) God and obey His laws (or follow His ways!)" v.5 reads "I pray that the Lord will bless you from Zion and let Jerusalem prosper as long as you live." This verse speaks about the city Jerusalem. For us today,



Encouragement Column

With Senior Pastor John Tangi

Jerusalem is the community we are living in. Even the island we are living on – this is our Jerusalem.

Friends, I'm sure all of us want to see things happening for the 'good of all' during our lifetime! According to the Psalmist, this will only happen if we "...respect (fear) God and obey His laws (or follow His ways!)" v.6 reads "May you live long enough to see your grandchildren. Let's pray for peace in Israel." This verse is speaking about the future generations and the

peace in the nation of Israel. This verse is also speaking about the future generations in our nation, and the 'peace of God' in the Cook Islands! As individuals, God will bless you! As families, God will bless members of the families and those in the households! God will also bless our community, the future generations and also the nation! Therefore, we need to respect God and obey His laws! And do what is right in His sight!

May you have a God blessed week!

Fantasy Odds on who will WIN League Premier FINAL

Team	Date	Date
	Apri 11th	Apri 18th
Bulldogs	\$7	\$3
Eels	\$4	\$4
Bears	\$10	\$7
Panthers	\$7	\$10
Sea Eagles	\$30	\$21
Warriors	\$40	\$100
Sharks	\$70	\$100

The Bulldogs have overtaken the Eels as favourites to win the grand final. 5 teams still vie for 4 positions with the Bears most favoured to seal 4th but the Sea Eagles are said to be taking 1 game at a time. Panthers have lengthened in odds because they have a BYE this week and Eels still to play.

The Fantasy Odds column is a hypothetical scenario based on the writers opinion. This is NOT real.

RUGBY LEAGUE.. IS IT TRUE?

IS IT TRUE

Testicle grabbing is a new accusation within the sport of rugby league. Focusing on the club that wear black and white the player was stood down for 2 weeks. Does that mean he admits guilt?

IS IT TRUE

The best league players on the island are Fijian imports

IS IT TRUE

MFEM have found a new source of income. Increase levies on overseas island products – under the microscope IMPORTED players.

IS IT TRUE

Now netball has started crowd attendance at league games is expected to half.

IS IT TRUE

Bulldogs Mana Ngaau made his mum Mona, take him out for lunch on Sunday to help celebrate their win over the Panthers. He's now waiting for the extra \$20 in the pay packet from his boss

IS IT TRUE

The shop keeper with the jar full of jelly beans has counted the jar. Final count = 1960. (Same year Arthur Pickering was born – not his age)

IS IT TRUE

Can the Bulldogs beat the Eels twice in 5 days, Win 5 games in a row and Win grand final in May. NO, No and No says a Eels fan.

IS IT TRUE

Copies of the Herald are becoming harder to get. Some say because their price hasn't gone up.

IS IT TRUE

Hey Roman (Hifo - Bulldogs injured playmaker) Meti Noovao says "He's got his boots handy.

OPINION

REFS are BLIND

I have been watching the local League games on Sundays on CITV and I was very sad and disappointed with the match officials that were allocated to do these Premier games.

In the average games 10 mistakes were made by the official in the middle. Some say Not bad, I say appalling.

Inexperience, Unfit and the worse I feel is that they don't know the full extent of the rules.

The players know more of the rules than the Ref allocated to do that game. Whoever is allocating the match officials must be blind. Just makes we wonder whether this is the right track the League association should be heading down.

The stakeholders must be wondering too is it worth their money sponsoring the clubs and the teams. To me, it is sad that the game of League is going downhill and it's not like before when all clubs looked forward to the Saturday league game.

I'm also wondering what the CIRLA is doing to get this sorted out or are they just turning the blind eye and hoping that this season is over just like what happened to the Cook Island team that went to the World Cup in England.

Where are the experience Refs? The ones that has been there for years and I know for a fact, the league fans are asking this question too. I will rest my case here and hope that this is sorted or we will lose the Die Hard league fans to other sport codes.

Regards

Not confused but Concussed

Scores Last Week (Game 11)

FRI 11TH APRIL

Sharks	14	Sea Eagles	22
Eels	17	Bears	10
Bulldogs	33	Panthers	14
BYE –	Warriors		

Draw Wk 12 Thurs April 17th

SHARKS V BEARS

Arutanga Park, 5pm

EELS V BULLDOGS

Avatiu Field, 4.30pm

Sat 19th April

SEA EAGLES V WARRIORS

Nukupure Park, 3.30pm

BYE – Panthers

Simple Simon says.... There is More to Sai ...

Sai Nagi proved he is more than a try scoring machine but also a solid defender.

With #9 on his back but playing at lock, the elongated "Doc Ock" was running off ball players and putting super hard tackles on attackers PLUS doing more than his share of taking the ball up.

It seems Sai's box of tricks is growing and as the finals loom the big players are standing up.

At the Titikaveka club they and only they have been able to get the best out of Sai Nagi.

Tries to Mana Ngaau, who broke the dead lock of 14-14 allowed the Bulldogs to advance with confidence The POD went to Bulldogs centre Tevita Masima, who scored a fantastic try which put the icing on the cake and out of the reach of the Panthers.

Some confusing calls by the ref will come under scrutiny as the refereeing problem has not been cured.

The two Teariki's, Piri and Tou both had better running games this week. Defence still remains their Achilles heel but these two Teariki have got game.

To not mention the hard hitting Ngatamaine Rongo (Panthers) would be an injustice.

His signature 80's mod squad fuzzy wassy mop head made it easier to see him on the field.

What stood out more was his soul destroying, Bigger than big tackles.

Front on, side on and even from behind, Rongo menaced the opposition for 80 minutes. Like his hair Rongo stood tall.....

So says Simon...Simon the Hair Bear

Who Played Well

Bulldogs –Tevita Masima , Sai Nagi, Mana Ngaau, Vatu Seka

Panther – Ngatamaine Rongo, Taina Savage, Reubin Oariki, Herani William (H Factor)

Half time – Panther14 Bulldogs 12

Full time Score - Bulldogs 33 Panthers 14

Txt Winners Wk # 11

Rehabs Jane	-	T-shirt,
Nga Puna	-	Karaoke Hire,
Women In Love	-	Meat Pack

Week 12 Who they picked!

1. **Andy Kapi** – Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
2. **Muri Nite Market** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
3. **Rupe the Sparky** – Sharks, Eels, Sea Eagles
4. **Kikau Broom Maker** – Sharks, Eels, Sea Eagles
5. **Jeff the Ref** - Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
6. **Grocers Review** – Bears, Bulldogs, Warriors
7. **Fred of G+S** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
8. **Rob Heather** – Bears, Eels, Warriors
9. **Henry Hoff** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
10. **Coach Ric** – Sharks, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
11. **3T2U2A2I 1U** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
12. **Roma of Club Raro** – Bears, Eels, Warriors
13. **The General** – Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
14. **The Corporal** - Sharks, Eels, Sea Eagles
15. **The Sargent** - Bears, Eels, Warriors
16. **The Cook** - Sharks, Eels, Warriors
17. **League Fan** – Bears, Bulldogs, Warriors
18. **Miss M** – Sharks, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
19. **Randwick Kingfisher** – Bears, Bulldogs, Warriors
20. **Black & White Panther** – Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
21. **Randwick Kingfisher** – Bears, Bulldogs, Warriors
22. **Boogies Hero's** – Bears, Bulldogs, Warriors
23. **Fungs Takeaways** - Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
24. **Pam Bridger** – Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
25. **Naked Chef** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
26. **Ake Tangapiri** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
27. **10 cent Aussie** - Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
28. **Lydia the Barwoman** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
29. **Mum & Dad Tou** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
30. **Pete** - Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
31. **Maxine DBM** – Bears, Eels, Warriors
32. **Ed Framhien** – Sharks, Eels, Sea Eagles,
33. **NanaMcKinley** – Sharks, Eels, Sea Eagles,
34. **Salsa' Chef Terry** – Bears, Eels, Panthers
35. **Mum & Dad Tou** – Bears, Bulldogs, Sea Eagles
36. **A Fired Ref** - Bears, Eels, Sea Eagles
37. **A Todpole** – Bears, Eels, Warriors
38. **The Mango** – Sharks, Eels, Sea Eagles,
39. **Fijians in Paradise** – Sharks, Eels, Sea Eagles,
40. **Mr "X"** – Bears, Eels, Panthers

PRIZE - FREE t-shirt, Karaoke hire & Meat pack for person who correctly picks 3 winners from this weeks draw.

Conditions apply - If more than 1 winner – draw 1 from a hat.

How to Enter – Txt your picks for next weeks games to Matman - PH 55 921 before Tue 4pm

**GAME
OF THE
WEEK**

REPLAY
5PM SUN ON
CITY



VS



Nukupure Park, Ngatangiaa, 3.30pm

watch on: www.youtube.com/brianthematman

RaroShack



**Printers
Inks
Toners**

Security Cameras & Systems installed

Phone: 20500 Mobile: 55009

Digicel Buyout of TCI Shares Analysis

From page 8

to buy TNZ's shares is because of this everlasting ruthless monopoly – if it were not so cruelly enforced by TNZ, then Digicel would have entered the market as a competitor; and no doubt a highly successful one, which would have owned its shares 100%.

So if the people that are counting on the present profit level being maintained they will have to insist on their new “our own telecom” company having a similar mandated monopoly to prevent the likes of another Digicel type company or even Digicel itself, from setting up independently in competition with them.

Have the eager purchasers thought that through?

Would they then seek to ban any new or “foreign” competitors like Digicel? Who have happily entered into competitive scenarios in most of the countries they operate in – more than 30 around the world – and have in every instance reduced the rates and taken a major share of the markets from the previous incumbent companies like TCI.

To insist that Digicel's business sense would ensure that TCI would carry on being a “cash cow” is to seriously underestimate the almost inevitable reduction in profit margins that will come as Digicel reduces charges. Digicel is also a private company and is not compelled to make its profit margins or costs public, and while they will carry on being profitable in the Cooks their accountants could easily find ways to ensure that the shareholders would have to be jointly responsible for funding cash injections when needed for new equipment or infrastructure for TCI. Failure to do so could result in the situation where shareholders

are informed that their share of the dividend must be used to repay the cash that Digicel used to ensure that return. Hence no pay out for quite a while.

The next thing the potential purchasers do not seem to realize is that the field of telecommunications is changing so rapidly and involves such manifest changes in equipment and techniques that it is not possible for a “small” telecom company to invest in the infrastructure and systems that could well be obsolete in a couple of years, necessitating fresh capital injections which would either have to be paid for by calls on the shareholders or by borrowing even more money which further reduces returns.

Another factor in the profit picture is the necessity for “small” telecoms to have to employ expensive “consultants” to activate and/or install these new technologies, for example the TCI has recently installed its latest and greatest 3G technology but already much of the world has moved on to 4G and the rollout of 5G is coming soon. So while TCI have some good and skilled staff – they are unlikely to have any existing staff with an in depth knowledge of 4 or 5G technology. There is not a lot of benefit in having a brilliant telephone linesman on your team if the game is being played wirelessly.

The purchasers would also have their returns diminished by the fact that within a very short period of time all mobile calls could bypass the TCI infrastructure completely as satellite phone technology already does. This would effectively reduce TCI's income stream to handling decreasing and obsolescent landline calls within Rarotonga.

Apple have recently been

granted a patent on using satellite technology in a future I- phone. And there is already available a “SatSleeve” for both I-phones and Androids that will enable those phones to go direct to satellites, which means no money for TCI.

Already anyone can buy a satellite phone for under \$500USD with a service that can call any phone in the world for a flat rate of fifty US cents per minute – that's already far lower than TCI's rates to NZ of \$1.04 NZ . As more and more capable satellites are launched into variations of orbits this service will only become cheaper and cheaper. And this is a service that will not ever have to pay a license fee or ask for the Govt.'s permission to operate, and it will work for all of the islands in the Cooks as well as the rest of the world.

In addition any money being made from texting will dry up as applications like - WhatsApp – which has recently been bought by Facebook for over USD 19 Billion and which allows users –anywhere in the world with a mobile phone and a data service to send and receive texts for free for the first year and for 99 cents US per year after that it is estimated that it will drain about 35 Billion US away from traditional telecoms this year and even more in the near future, in a similar fashion to what Skype has already done to voice calls and free voice calls are WhatsApp's next big target.

It must be stressed that telecommunication is no longer totally reliant on local telecoms to provide us with a “connection” to the world –it is more and more a data delivery system with what will inevitably be more and more data being sent and received on, and in, and with, a bewildering variety of constantly evolving

equipment using techniques that will be changing on an almost daily basis. Think data streaming TV, radio, concerts, sports events, personal tracking devices, remote video feeds, webcams, etc. Data is being used for more than we could even have imagined just 5 years ago there is no reason to expect the next five to be any less revolutionary.

These innovations and changes will be largely implemented by companies that operate on a global or continental scale (such as Vodaphone, TMobile, AT&T, or Digicel) and to suggest that we would be equally well served by a locally owned and operated minnow in this ocean of technology is at best misguided thinking and at worst would be a financial disaster for all those investors, and as for the idea that Govt. should use the Superannuation fund money to buy the shares – the fund would probably be better off going to the Sky City Casino to invest.

The Government's role in this rapidly evolving world should be limited to that of a regulator and facilitator of any qualified entrants into an open (non-monopolized) market. If local private entities wish to buy the Govt. shares in TCI for the same price as Digicel would pay, then let the Govt. do so, and it would be quite proper that the shares be offered first to Cook Islanders, but such buyers should note the above points and be aware that other local people may be able to offer – possibly in partnership with another “foreign company”- a better/cheaper/faster, service that could make their investment not quite “goldmine” that they anticipate.

Caveat Emptor!

Bill Carruthers

14/4/14

Tricky Dickie was facing a \$1.9m deficit and was panicking with the Supplementary fast approaching. Then, his trou stayed dry when a big fat cheque arrived from that place across the road from OPM. Despite the \$1.2 mil cheque almost covering the shortfall, government is relying on the razor gang to slice off some more fat from the bureaucrats sacred cows. Trouble is, the cows are already sporting lean meat so some bodies may have to go!



The greatest sponger of all time is at it again, despite the best efforts of some political friends the sort after contract went to the competition, so its whinge, whinge and more whinging and threats of judiciary whatever, try going clock wise it may help see the world from another perspective.



The Puna administration's full page advertisements in the daily dribble boasting of their great achievements are so boring even the writer lost the plot because the Te Aponga one had to be listed twice. Notice stealing the Grey Power savings was omitted as well as the sacking of the BTIB chairman, raising taxes on anything and everything, sexual conquests, increased debts, mindless population reduction, more unserviceable debts, blatant conflicts of interest, huge loans as gifts for our children, hiring more tax funded workers to do nothing and so we can go on and fill this page with the real achievements of this disgraceful bunch of lazy sods.



The Demos can kiss their Ruaau seat a fat kiss good bye. The call me bulldozing DPM is offering big bucks to the faithful Demo supporters to work for

him on his many millions of dollars TMV contract, no matter what is said about him, Heta can do no wrong when the big bucks are flashed, he's a true CIP they say because he is sharing the love around, but can he sing the CIP love anthem? Some wanna be CIP candidates are looking to the Man Heta to help underwrite their campaign costs, talk about a CIP messiah.



Talking about Mr Heta, he voted in the Murienua bye election, though he has a house there he hasn't slept two nights in a row there for many, many months according to the neighbours. T&M Heather staff says he used to shack up in his air conditioned unit at the business premises but in the last year he's been living at his Nikao beach house. Wonder where he'll vote next time?



Government's list of achievements did some public good. It brought laughter to many. It was interesting to park oneself in a local café and listen to members of the public laughing at the list. One said most items were aid funded and if excluded, would leave the list somewhat bare. Another said the total aid funds for

projects listed were less than \$200,000. Perhaps it would have been better to list how much the PM spent on travel and how much parents had to raise through raffles for educational items!



Oh boo hoo! Sad sacks at Mato Te Vai snubbed the Local News attending the grand opening and red ribbon cutting and all perhaps because a Lord High Mandarin got his speedos in a twist over some negative publicity! Boo Hoo!



VAT up to 15%? Phooey! Pre-VAT rise, someone was selling sarongs by the roadside for \$15. After VAT went up by 2.5% to 15% the same sarongs are now \$20. That's not a 2.5% increase, it's a 30% increase! Perhaps MFEM's economic wonder kid baby face Webb would care to explain. Webb should now go to the northern group to see how much prices have gone up by. It won't be 2.5%.



A black economy could rise up as a result of retailers lifting the VAT by more than 2% coupled with the failure of any inspection of prices by the Consumer Police. A retailer simply raises his prices by 40% (who's to know?). Retailer sends off 15% to

MFEM and pockets the other 25% in the form of undeclared cash.



Was he praying to the Gods chooks, for guidance? On learning the Lord High Mandarin wanted to allocate more precious stones from the Treasury to the official outpost to the south, the keeper of the books, Tricky Dickie threw his hands skywards in despair with utterances! A prayer for deliverance? Holding his head and muttering to the Gods, was he hoping for a miracle?



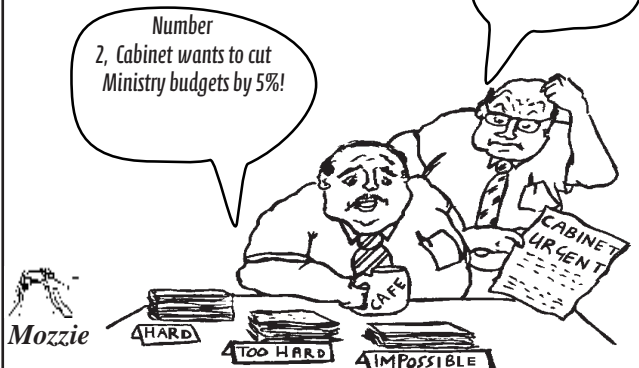
Crown Law burning the midnight oil chooks? Passersby may have noticed it was all lights on at Crown Law's digs on Tuesday night and it was after 9pm! Were the cleaners at work? Or were the Crownies cleaning up someone's mess?

See the Pitbull in action at the big trial in South Africa? That's what's needed at the Audit Office, a Pitbull to snarl and put some Ministers and HOMs through the wringer! But all is quiet on the Audit Office front. The troops are not moving out. They're still in barracks! Sound the bugle Alan! Get your platoon on the march!



There are a couple of things the Tahitians are not telling us about growing and producing vanilla. Why won't they tell us? Why would they jeopardize their vanilla industry to a little upstart? Our cousins to the east have mastered the black pearl and vanilla and hold the high ground. One individual up the back of Ruatonga whose connection to vanilla goes way back to the old days, knows what the Tahitians are not saying but as usual, no-one wants to natter to him because they think they know it all! Well, good luck!

FAT CATS



COCONUT ROUNDTABLE



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST



**COOK ISLANDS TOURISM CORPORATION
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
PURCHASE OF PHOTOGRAPHY**

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation seeks to purchase photography to be used for the general promotion of the Cook Islands. This is an ongoing project to reach out to all photographers, both professional and amateur, in the Cook Islands and beyond.

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation will use this photography to reach target audiences in the print and digital space. This includes the outright purchase of imagery for use including (but not limited to) content for online, multimedia, brochures, books, displays and promotional material.

This will form a part of the Corporations asset management programme, photographic library and archival system housed at Head Office, Rarotonga.

Photographers may submit work on any of the following types of photographic categories:

- Destination, Landscape, Scenery & Nature
- Persons, talent, characters, children
- Action & Interaction
- Life style
- Above & Under the Water
- Tourism Themes

Images portraying the Cook Islands stories of:

- Romance (weddings & honeymoons),
- Families,
- Adventure,
- Sister islands,
- Groups/MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events)

All expressions of interest can be made in writing to applications@cookislands.gov.ck. NO submissions of imagery required at this stage. Cook Islands Tourism Corporation will be in touch to make an appointment with you to discuss the service arrangements and to view the said images. It is a requirement that all work submitted adheres to technical and commercial image control, format and standards set by Cook Islands Tourism Corporation. The work will be accepted on the terms and conditions of Cook Islands Tourism Corporation purchase agreement and sign over of complete Intellectual rights and digital property rights upon purchase of these assets.

For further information please refer to:
www.cookislands.travel/photo-services

Deadline for expression of interest is 4pm, 01 May 2014.

**ADVERTISE WITH THE
COOK ISLANDS HERALD**

PUBLIC NOTICE



Due to continuing growth and high occupancies, The Rarotongan Beach Resort & Spa, Sanctuary Rarotonga on the beach and Aitutaki Lagoon Resort & Spa have a wide range of employment opportunities seeking **enthusiastic, motivated** staff serious about a **long term career**, in all areas of all three Resort's operations, in Rarotonga and Aitutaki, on a **full or part time** basis, including school leavers such as;

- Purchasing Officers
- Accounts Officers/Qualified Senior Accountants
- Activities & Kids Club Officers
- Restaurant & Bar Servers
- Chefs & Kitchen Hands
- Porters
- Security Officers
- Room Attendants
- Laundry Runners
- Gardeners
- Front Office/Spa/Tour Desk Receptionist
- Weddings Planner
- Duty Managers
- Qualified Tradesmen including Plumbers, Mechanics, Electricians, Carpenters, Refrigeration Engineers, Painters, Tilers etc.

You will have excellent communication skills, be able to relate well to guests and staff alike and be able to work shift work.

Previous experience is preferred however full international standard training will be provided to the right candidates.

For more information on the position and the Resort visit our website www.TheRarotongan.com or apply to Human Resources on;

Email Human.Resources@rarotongan.co.ck

Skype address trbr.hr

Phone (682) 25-822 ext 8014 or 25-800

Fax (682) 25-797

TENDER



PORTS AUTHORITY

CIPA-11: STAGE 1: TOILET BLOCK CONSTRUCTION

The Port Authority and the Aitutaki Island Government seeks tender proposals from reputable contractors for the supply of all materials and construction of a Toilet & Amenities Block in Aitutaki. Tender documents can be collected from the Ports Office in Avatiu or Arutanga upon the payment of a refundable \$150.00 deposit.

Tenders will close at 4:00pm on the 28th April 2014 and need to be lodged in the tender box located at the:

Ports Authority Office

Avatiu

RAROTONGA

For any enquiries please contact Des Eggelton, Project Manager, on Tel 55-020 or email des@eggelton.co.ck.

TENDER



**TAU SAFETY PROJECT
DESIGN AND SPECIFICATION TENDER**

Te Aponga Uira is inviting suitably qualified companies or joint venture companies to submit to (a) conduct a review of, and complete a Fire Safety Assessment of TAU Power Station in the Avatiu Valley, including its Fuel Facility Depot, as well as the Tutakimoa Administration-Network Building assets, and (b) design and specify the fire safety systems for those facilities in order to upgrade the existing systems to meet current Australian and New Zealand standards.

The assignment is to lead to the completion of the Fire Safety Designer's Documentation, including plans and specifications to Australian and New Zealand standards for building consent and construction to mitigate and prevent fire damage for all of TAU's strategic assets forming the Avatiu Valley Power Station and the Tutakimoa Administration-Network Buildings, Rarotonga.

The successful Tenderer will be required to oversee the procurement, acceptance testing, installation, commissioning, and review and certification of as built drawings, for the fire safety system that they have designed and that was approved by TAU.

To initiate progress towards the completion of this assignment, TAU has developed Request for Proposals Documents and Term of Reference (TOR) for the associated tasks and now invites interested companies to register their interest in order to submit their proposal for this assignment.

Registration and Tender Document can be requested from the following contact person:

TAU Project Manager
Te Aponga Uira, Rarotonga, Cook Islands
Ph: +682 20054
Fax: +682 21944

Email: alex.napa@electricity.co.ck

The proposed timeframes for the bidding process are set out below in Cook Islands local time:

Deadline for submission of questions:

3pm Thursday 11 April 2014

Deadline for submissions of Proposals:

3pm Thursday 18 April 2014

Notification to preferred Tenderer:

Week of Monday 28 April 2014

Preferred Tenderer negotiations:

From the week 28 April 2014

PUBLIC NOTICE



NOTICE TO TE APONGA UIRA CUSTOMERS

We advise all our valued customers that the March power consumption charge included in your April power bill has been levied at the new April VAT rate.

We apologise for this and we will be crediting your next account with the difference between the amount you were charged and that which you should have been charged.

PUBLIC NOTICE



**2014/2015 NEW ZEALAND PACIFIC SCHOLARSHIP
(NZPS) & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP
(RDS) AWARDS**

The Government of the Cook Islands is seeking "Expressions of interest" for Scholarship awards from suitably qualified Cook Islands men and women to study at a Pacific Regional Institute (excluding Australia) or NZ academic institution.

*NZ Pacific Scholarship – undergraduate study in NZ only

- 5 multi year awards
- 1 single year award – study options are at undergraduate, graduate or at postgraduate level that are designed to take no longer than one year to complete

*NZ Regional Scholarship – are available for both undergraduate and postgraduate study at a Pacific based tertiary institution (eg. USP, FNU)

The NZPS & RDS scholarships are open to Cook Island persons from all sectors of the community, public and private, living here in the Cook Islands. Applicant selection will be based upon meeting the scholarship eligibility criteria, primarily that of academic merit and that the proposed course of the study meets Government's HRD priorities for the Cook Islands.

2014/2015 SHORT TERM TRAINING AWARDS (STTA)

Employers wishing to develop staff skills through New Zealand provided training are invited to apply for assistance from the New Zealand Aid Programme supported Short Term Training Awards. This may include new studies towards courses at tertiary institutes (eg. Universities and Polytechnics) provided that completion is within a period of less than 12 months. Please note, degree studies, postgraduate studies, conferences and workshops will not be considered under this scheme.

STTA will not be awarded where the proposed country is available in-country.

The STTA awards are open to Cook Island persons from all sectors of the community, public and private, living here in the Cook Islands.

Scholarships and the STTA are offered in specific subject areas that are relevant to the development needs and employment opportunities of the Cook Islands. Applications will be prioritized according to the following HRD priorities for 2014/2015: Agriculture, Education (Secondary teaching: for Maths & Science subjects), Finance Management, Health, ICT, Marine Resources/Fisheries, Renewable Energy, Trade areas and Waste Management although other areas may be included (excluding Aviation, Civil Engineering and Architectural Studies)

For further information and application forms, contact Anna Roi on ph 29357 or email scholarships@education.gov.ck Application forms must be received no later than 12pm, Thursday 24 April

