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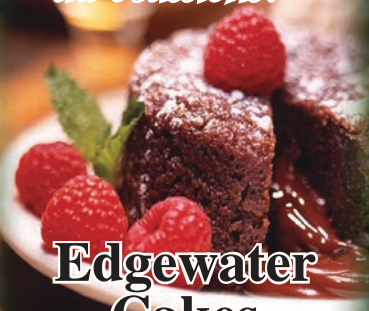
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Ponia refutes Passfield's FAD comments - claims Government measures are conservative, sustainable and responsible

The Rarotonga fisheries protest march has pitted environmental groups against the Cook Islands Government over the measures taken to conserve the tuna stocks. Over 400 people were involved in a march and a gathering to hear speakers opposed to purse seine fishing in the Cook Islands' Exclusive Economic Zone. A petition had also been in circulation around Rarotonga before last Friday's march.

Kelvin Passfield, from the environmental NGO Te Ipukarea Society, says his main concern are the fish aggregation devices (FADs). He says the industry has admitted that 3 percent of the 30-40,000 tonnes, is juvenile tuna killed off, and that's too significant for the Government to ignore.

"The Government just did not even consider banning the use of fish aggregation devices and already a lot of people were against purse seining in general. So we just, the best thing Te Ipukarea Society could do is just to join with other people who want a ban on the FADs, because that achieves our aim as well, reducing the catch on juvenile bigeye.

But the secretary of the Ministry of Marine Resources, Ben Ponia, says that's not true, and the Government is implementing a ban. "We are taking measures. Currently we are implementing a four-month FAD closure, so for four months of the year, FADs are not allowed to be deployed by purse seine fishing vessels. That's just one example of some of the measures that are taking place. We are trying to reduce the amount of catches of the bigeye longline fisheries to also bring



down the overall impact of the mortality of those stocks."

Mr Ponia says the Cook Islands fishery is small and that needs to be taken into consideration. He says there's a danger of demonising fishing.

"Let's bear in mind that in 2013, Cooks Islands accounted for 0.2 percent of the total catches, so we're a very small player in this fishery."

The Deputy Director of the Forum Fisheries Agency, Wez Norris, says the bans can be ineffective as there are ways

around the rules.

"During those months you have very little bigeye being caught but one of the responses of the industry has been to fish more heavily on FADs in the other eight months of the year and so that's reduced the effectiveness of the measure."

Wez Norris says the difficulty also lies in convincing the purse seine fishery not to kill off juvenile bigeye tuna with FADs, as it's the longline fishery that relies on bigeye catches.

"The Commission has

struggled to find a suitable package of arrangements; it's too easy for those with a vested interest in one fishery to blame the other one and you end up with too much argument. But where it is in the purse seine fishery's direct interest is to avoid more draconian measures that come at a cost to them."

Wez Norris says last year there was a limitation on use of FADs outside the ban period, and he hopes those regulations will be seen Pacific wide this year.

- George Pitt

Action Man Forgives!

In an unprecedented move of emotion and absent of any political motivation, Action Man George Maggie stated that the impact of his Late Grandfather's sacrifice during WW1 and recent comments posted on Facebook during the 100 Gallipoli Anniversary, has made him realize how out of touch with reality he is and how important it was for him to apologize to everyone to whom he had offended in the past as a mark of respect in remembrance of that sacrifice.

Maggie admitted he'd done some bad things during his time growing up and believed serving time in prison was nothing compared to what his grandfather and others like him sacrificed and finally paying the ultimate price with their lives. "To see and hear these comments about my grandfather and others acknowledging their contributions inspired me to rethink my own situation and that life is too precious to waste on negative things," said Maggie.

Maggie says he's not one for acknowledging the good deeds of others but hearing the stories about his grandfather and all our Tupuna who went to war to fight for our freedom made him feel proud of what they did and how, after 100 years, his actions are still being celebrated by people who never knew him but still remember what he did.

"I feel in my heart that many people owe their lives to the bravery and commitment of people like my grandfather and others and are now speaking openly about their contributions. I need to take responsibility also and to learn from the actions of men who died so that we may live in peace and harmony. I guess the title "action man" should really go to my grandfather and his mates because they walked the talk without fear or hesitation."

"For me, I really believe I need to follow the example of my grandfather and learn to forgive. There are those who love me, those who hate me and those who take me as I am. That has been my life story and if ever I

had one regret, it would be to make up for all the bad things I've done over the years to my family and friends."

"For this, I want to say sorry firstly to my wife and children for not being there when you needed me most. To all those I have directed negative comments to or publicly criticized in the past, I apologize. To the many I have offended in one way or another including political colleagues and associates, I offer my apologies. Humility is not part of my vocabulary but today, I humble myself alongside the memory of my grandfather and those like him who gave unselfishly so that we can live in a better world."

"I have committed myself to helping our people in any way that I possibly can and I believe I can still do more if given the right support and resources. Like everything, it all starts from the home so after some soul searching with my family, I thought offering apologies was a good start."

"I look at the national vision of our country "to enjoy the highest quality of life..." sadly, that's not the case today as people are still suffering and leaving our shores. I ask the question why, is it because government has failed, have I failed, have we all failed? I don't have the answer but I do know one thing, that we need to put our politics aside and all come together and work as one so that our vision can be accomplished just like what inspired our tupuna when they offered their services so that we may live in a world free of evil, pain and corruption."

I'm proud to stand outside my home every day under the ONE COOK ISLANDS flag and acknowledge people as they go past. My grandfather and our tupuna did this in the old days and there was always respect because you felt it. How hard is it to acknowledge and wave to people and to say "good morning?"

At least for me, offering a public apology is a huge step forward and one I know my grandfather will be proud of as well. I know I can never be like



Tupapa MP George Maggie

him or follow in his footsteps but better than you." One Love, One Heart: that's the spirit of ONE COOK ISLANDS, that's the new spirit of George Maggie.

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Manihiki's million dollar NZ Aid pearl project heading for disaster unless those in Rarotonga intervene

Controversial from its inception and dogged by a stop and start implementation the million dollar NZAID Manihiki Pearl project is set to be a major embarrassment for the CIP government and especially for the Prime Minister Henry Puna when New Zealand's Foreign Minister Murray McCully arrives in Manihiki next month on the 12th to witness a mountain of pearl farm material and equipment purchased for pearl farmers but still sitting in storage after arriving in Manihiki nearly 12 months ago.

When McCully flies in by Hercules primarily to participate in the official commencing of the NZAID solar electricity project the obvious eyesore of the remainder of the NZAID funded pearl farming material estimated value of \$500,000 and the ten 40 foot containers load of pearl material valued at \$1 million donated by the Peoples republic of China will certainly grab his attention.

Today 11 of the 22 surviving farmers in Manihiki are still waiting to receive their allocated material and equipment from the Island Council, three of these farms who currently produce the vast majority of the pearls coming out of the Manihiki lagoon can no longer wait for their orders a

Rarotonga resident and pearl retailer Temu Okotai owns and operates the biggest pearl farm in the Manihiki lagoon. Mataio Johnson runs probably the second biggest farm in Manihiki with



Pearl farming material and equipment in storage

former Minister of Health Apii Piho also operating one of the substantial farms in the pool of 20 surviving farms. These three farms produce close to 60% of the pearls coming out of the Manihiki lagoon today. Okotai has advised our government, the New Zealand High Commission and the Manihiki Island Council that because of the lengthy delay in receiving the equipment and material they ordered (nearly two years behind schedule) the viability and indeed the survival of his farm business is under serious threat. Johnson and Piho are adamant that if they don't receive all of their material

very soon they will also cancel their orders for the same reasons as Okotai's.

Okotai said the Manihiki pearl industry now hangs in the balance and it needed the intervention of Puna before it came the point of no return. "I have reached my limit of patience and perseverance. In fact, I have come to realise the very unwise decision I made to devote so much of my time and effort in getting this project off the ground as well as to base the future of my farm on the material and equipment I ordered thru this project. Because of this mistake on my part, my farm is facing the

real prospect of closing down in three years time as my stock of shells reach an uneconomical level to sustain a commercially viable operation."

The Manihiki Pearl Project was one of the first special NZAID project secured by Henry Puna when he became Prime Minister. According to Temu Okotai, accusation by some that Henry Puna was only lining his pocket since he is a pearl farmer ignore the very important fact that this country urgently needs to diversify its national economy from its sole reliance on tourism to other

Continued next page

sources of income. The pearl industry in its hey days of the late 90's has been the most successful alternative source of income for the country when annual export earnings for the industry reached nearly \$20 million.

In the last decade a combination of problems in the Manihiki lagoon condition and oyster mortality combined with a collapse in world black pearl prices adversely affected the industry to the extent that the 280 farms that existed in the late 90's have dwindled to just 20 farms. Export value for black pearl has dropped to less than a million although black pearl is still the single most valuable commodity/souvenir sold to tourists in the Cook Islands at an estimated annual value of close to \$10m.

The NZAID project was originally set at \$2m most of it targeted to farm production improvement and a smaller portion to assist the Cook Islands Pearl Authority market the increased number of pearls internationally. Because of the slow and inefficient preparation of the project by those tasked in government the New Zealand High Commission of the time, John Carter, threatened to reduce and then cancel the project.

It was the initiative of a few pearl farmers including Temu Okotai, Kora Kora and Rangi Johnson who approached the NZ High Commissioner to give them a chance to put together the necessary preparation to get this project on track. It was then agreed that the project will just focus on increasing the volume and quality of pearls out of the Manihiki Lagoon. The three farmers were given one month to prove that they can get this project on track.

The main work required was to prepare a business plan for each farm with new targets to bring the Manihiki Lagoon production to 300,000 pearls annually and with each business plan is a list of material and equipment required to achieve the business plan. To accomplish these five pearl farmers were able to prepare their own business plan and material order and for the rest, Temu Okotai worked with each farmer to put these together and within one month.

A Committee made up of a pearl farmer on the Manihiki Island Council, the senior Marine officer



Temu Okotai

"I have reached my limit of patience and perseverance. In fact, I have come to realise the very unwise decision I made to devote so much of my time and effort in getting this project off the ground as well as to base the future of my farm on the material and equipment I ordered thru this project. Because of this mistake on my part, my farm is facing the real prospect of closing down in three years time as my stock of shells reach an uneconomical level to sustain a commercially viable operation."

in Manihiki and the chairman of the Manihiki Pearl Farmers Association (MPFA) checked the business plans and vetted the material order to make sure they are appropriate to support the business plans. Once these material orders were consolidated and approved by the NZ High Commission these were passed on to MFEM for sourcing and purchase.

The original schedule set for delivery of this material was by July 2012. However complications in specs for various items took time to sort out and these arrived in Manihiki in June 2014. The

general election intervened and then distribution of material started. So far 11 of the 20 farms have not received their material.

Questions of impropriety by the Mayor Mrs Ngamata Napara and the Island Council are being raised by some farmers. The Council, they say were appointed to ensure the equipment and materials were distributed as per the project material list approved by Carter. Claims Napara has alleged to have given pre determined allocations to her who did not have those material in her family farm's approved list should be independently investigated.

A frustrated Okotai said, "In my case, because I relied on this project for necessary improvement on my farm both in haruharu for new stock volumes as well as repairs and maintenance for my farm operations the delay of two years has threatened the survival of my whole farm operations. The sad irony is that this project is supposed to help ensure the survival of the remaining 20 farms in Manihiki. I cannot speak for other farmers but for me, this project has placed my farm, as a business, in a very precarious situation.

In a letter to the Ministry of Marine Resources rep in Manihiki Teuru Passfield, Okotai explained, "In the order of equipment I have with the NZAID project are diving equipment including regulators, masks, flippers and diving tanks. If you and the Island Council are insisting for work to be done on our farm lines now before equipment and material are released I have the utmost difficulty in understanding how you can insist on this when the very equipment I need to do this work on my farm lines are still in storage with the Council."

According to a Ministry of Marine Resource source the Mayor or the Island Council has no right to reallocate the materials which were ordered by the group of farmers according to their individual needs. "Somehow the Mayor and the Island Council have created some of their own criteria before they release the allocations. In the individual list made up by the individual farmers they had to be very precise concerning their requirements and to give away a portion of it only jeopardises their business plans." Some farmers couldn't be bothered to participate in the project proposal because at the time they were very sceptical it would result in anything. The business plans took some serious effort and some were just too lazy, it's the typical hand out mentality some have, it was through Okotai's effort that got them in to project and certainly not thru any effort of the Island Council."

"Most of the work the Island Council want done requires the farmers to have their allocated materials and equipment first, it's just ludicrous, and the whole project has become very political and bureaucratic to the extreme."

Continued next page



REQUEST FOR TENDER

1. **HAEMATOLOGY ANALYSER (5part differential)**
2. **HAEMATOLOGY ANALYSER (3part differential)**
3. **ULTRASOUND EQUIPMENT**

Tenders are requested for the supply of specific medical equipment for the Rarotonga Hospital. This tender is in three sections:

1. Haematology Analyser (5part differential)
2. Haematology Analyser (3part differential)
3. Ultrasound Equipment

The tenderer is permitted to tender on any one or more parts of the tender, but the tender must be for the whole requirement of that section.

Tenders shall be submitted either:

Hard copy - Complete hard copies, packaged and labeled "CONFIDENTIAL" and have the following information clearly exhibited on the outside:

Procurement of Medical Equipment 2014/2015 No.2
Cook Islands Ministry of Health
P O Box 109,
Avarua,
COOK ISLANDS

OR

Softcopy: By emailing the tender bid as a pdf file to tenders@cookislands.gov.ck with the subject line "Procurement of Medical Equipment 2014/2015 No.2". The receipt time on the inbox will be used as the receipt time for the purposes of ensuring a tender is within the time limits.

The Tender Box is located at the Funding and Planning Office of the Cook Islands Ministry of Health in Tupapa (or submitted electronically to the email address detailed above)

Tender/Offer Closing Time

Request for tenders will close on the 22nd May 2015 at 4.00pm.

Tender document and specification can be uplifted from the Funding & Planning office of the Ministry of Health in Tupapa and is also available on the Ministry of Health website www.health.gov.ck or contact Ms Vaine Ngatokorua on ph 29664, fax 23109 or email: v.ngatokorua@health.gov.ck

Meitaki maata

Okotai said last year, he managed to purchase a compressor machine (at a cost of over \$10,000) from NZ to fill scuba bottles. This service is no longer available to farmers in Tukao as the person who was doing this commercially has stopped this service. "I intend to assist some Tukao farmers who work with me, in filling their dive bottles. However, this machine is useless to me without the equipment I am still waiting from NZAID stock."

The Herald understands the frustrations of a core of farmers have been communicated with Carter who is likely to brief McCully.

The source said the ten forty foot containers of the farming materials donated by the PRC had been delivered by Taio Shipping and like the NZAID lot was stock piled on the land. It is also understood the materials and equipment from NZAID is no longer under guarantee by the NZ supplier as it has been sitting out in the sun in Manihiki since June 2014.

"Imagine what's going to happen with the lot from China, after the performance of the Mayor and the Island Council over the NZ funded equipment, there's another million dollars worth to be disposed of. The survival of the pearl industry is dependent on the equipment being in the water and being used, this would have never happened if John Carter was still here, the last High Commissioner wasn't interested so it will be interesting to see what the new one does."

"It is of extreme disappointment to me that the main objective of the NZAID project, which was to increase the volume and quality of pearls out of the Manihiki lagoon in order to improve the prospect of marketing Cook Islands pearls internationally thereby, making the existing farms sustainable businesses, has been lost in a quagmire of local bureaucracy, petty politics and jealousy plus a total lack of understanding that we lost over 200 farms in Manihiki because many failed to understand that pearl farming is first and foremost, a business!"

"It seems to me that the perfectly sensible idea of new lagoon management guidelines to help keep our lagoon healthy and produce quality pearls which all participating farms agreed to work towards compliance has become

the overriding factor that now allows the Island Council to dictate to farmers how they should run their businesses and pearl farms. Punishing farmers by withholding material which farmers needed to improve their farms is nonsense, and nothing more than a power play by little politicians.

The council has many other sensible ways of encouraging compliance of farmers with the Lagoon Management plan but they appear determined to deny some of the existing farmers the orders and have openly boasted about it. Even one or two the failed farmers are trying to get material from this project to restart pearl farming, one of the craziest ideas to emerge out of this project.

Okotai said he had lost confidence in those administering this project. "As a last resort, he wrote to those responsible telling them if he did not get the material and equipment by the end of this month he will forfeit that order and ask for his deposit paid to the Council in October last year returned. "My farm is a business and a business either grows and prospers or it reduces and dies. I am facing the real prospect of the later and no thanks to the administration of this project since John Carter left Rarotonga."

He also stated that unless drastic decisions are made to get all the material in to the hands of farmers quickly he sees this project failing spectacularly in its major objective of higher volume and quality of pearls out of the Manihiki lagoon.

"I am now reviewing my farm operation and plan for the next three years firstly, to see if there is a way of insuring the survival of my farm and if not, to wound the operation down with minimal costs. I will also have to decide quickly if I should bother sending my workers on Rarotonga to Manihiki or return them to China, including additional technicians scheduled to depart not only to work for me but also carry out seeding of oysters for other farms there."

One has to wonder if those in Rarotonga like Aid Management, Marine Resources and the NZ High Commission don't seem to care whether this project fails otherwise they would have intervened to ensure a business revitalisation project does achieve that objective. Is it simply a case of out of sight out of mind?

- George Pitt

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NEW STOCK ARRIVING SOON

In New Zealand oil spillages happen more frequently than not despite high standards and stringent requirements for point of engagement. From time to time the Cook Islands Herald will bring you examples of such occurrences. Big or small, oil spillages negatively impact and endanger the environment. George Pitt

Mobil apologises for oil leak

11:53 AM Tuesday Apr 28, 2015

UPDATE: Mobil have identified that a fuel oil leak has come from a pipeline during a ship refuelling operation. The pipeline was quickly shut down and will remain closed until repairs can be carried out and technical experts are now on site to conduct further investigations, said a statement released by Network Communications this evening. Mobil Oil New Zealand Lead Country Manager Andrew McNaught said in the released statement that Mobil regrets this event has occurred.

"We apologise for the incident and for any concern and inconvenience caused to the community. We would like to assure them we are working as quickly as possible to safely manage the situation, to clean up the leaked fuel oil and minimise the impact on the environment.

"Mobil appreciates the efforts of the Bay of Plenty Regional Council in responding promptly and effectively to the incident. We will reimburse the Council for any direct costs incurred in the spill response and clean-up.

"We are aware that several boats have been impacted by the fuel oil. Mobil is liaising with the local marina operator about boat cleaning procedures. We recommend that clean-up is handled by an expert," said Mr McNaught.

Mobil has established a process to deal with claims and will consider claims for damage directly resulting from the leaked oil.



Community queries can be directed to Mobil's community hotline during business hours on 0800 895 011."

EARLIER: International fuel giant Mobil has confirmed it owned the pipe which leaked oil into Tauranga Harbour. Mobil was refuelling a ship in Tauranga Harbour yesterday when an oil spill was noticed in the water. Mobil New Zealand public affairs manager Samantha Potts told the Bay of Plenty Times Mobil was a refuelling a ship on the water yesterday when a sheen was observed.

"We immediately shut down our fuelling operations at the wharf. We have identified the sheen was originating from a fuel pipe line, which was shut down straight away and is still currently shut down."

Ms Potts confirmed Mobil

owned the pipe that leaked.

Ms Potts said yesterday's rough weather conditions had helped disperse the fuel.

"The priority is containing any remaining fuel oil on the water and cleaning up any impacts on the local environment."

Mobil is working with the Bay of Plenty Regional Council to assess the situation and respond

as needed, Ms Potts said. At this stage, Mobil had no idea of the volume of fuel that leaked into the harbour.

"We don't know what the cause [of the leak] was. There was a leak from the pipe line as far as we can tell. There will be a full investigation to understand why this happened." Sonya Bateson

Bay of Plenty Times

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

A dork's view on a current issue which has boringly come to the fore once again, for which I believe there is a simple answer. The subject, Sunday flights to Aitutaki. The short and simple answer is- no SDAs are required to work on Saturday and the rest- no one can be forced to work on Sunday, simple. For once let's spare a thought for the ordinary people; this thoughtless rule change will affect the people who rely on more income to help keep families going. At the end of the day most of us don't want to work on Sunday but then again we can't always get what we want always.

The Dork

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U.S. Debt to China

How Much Debt Does China Own?

The U.S. debt to China is \$1.224 trillion, as of February 2015. That's less than in November 2013, when China owned \$1.317 trillion in Treasury bills, notes and bonds. It's been gradually lowering its debt holdings since then. It's allowing its currency, the yuan, to rise in response to global accusations of manipulation.

China wants the yuan to replace the U.S. dollar as the world's new global currency. It's also purchased fewer Treasuries as the dollar has gotten stronger since July 2014.

China owns roughly one-fifth of the \$6.1 trillion held by foreign countries. The rest of the \$18 trillion debt is owned by either the American people, or by the U.S. government itself.

China has held more than \$1 trillion in U.S. debt for the last three years. That's when the Treasury Department changed how it measures the debt. Before July 2010, Treasury reports show China held \$843 billion in debt. This makes it difficult to do long-term comparisons. (Source: Major Holdings of U.S. Treasury Securities)

How Did China Become One of America's Biggest Bankers?

China is more than happy to own a large portion of the U.S. debt. Owning U.S. Treasury notes helps China's economy grow by keeping its currency weaker than the dollar. This keeps products exported from China cheaper than U.S. products, creating jobs for its 1.4 billion people.

The United States allowed China to become one of its biggest bankers because the American people enjoyed low consumer prices. Selling debt to China allows the U.S. economy



China keeps the value of its currency, the yuan, lower than the dollar to increase its exports. Photo: Getty Images

to grow by funding federal government programs. It also keeps U.S. interest rates low. However, China's ownership of U.S. debt is shifting the economic balance of power in its favor.

Why Does China Own So Much U.S. Debt?

China makes sure its currency, the yuan, is always lower than the U.S. dollar. Why? Part of its economic strategy is to keep its export prices competitive. It does this by holding the yuan at a fixed rate compared to a basket of currencies, the majority of which is the dollar. When the dollar falls in value, the Chinese government uses extra currency to buy Treasuries, which increases demand for the dollar, increasing its value. In addition, China promises to redeem dollars for yuan at the fixed rate. Obviously, it must keep a good supply of dollars, as Treasury notes, in reserve.

Holding U.S. Debt Gives China Political Clout

China's position as America's largest banker gives it some political leverage. Every now and then, China threatens to

sell part of its debt holdings. It knows that, if it did so, U.S. interest rates would rise, which would slow U.S. economic growth. China often calls for a new global currency to replace the dollar, which is used in most international transactions. China does this whenever the U.S. allows the value of the dollar to drop, which makes the debt China holds less valuable.

What Would Happen If China Called In Its Debt Holdings?

China would not call in its debt all at once. If it did so, the demand for the dollar would plummet like a rock. This dollar collapse would disrupt international markets worse than the 2008 financial crisis. China's economy would suffer along with everyone else's.

It's more likely that China would slowly begin selling off its Treasury holdings. Even when it just warns that it plans to do so, dollar demand starts to drop. This hurts China's competitiveness, as it raises its export prices, so U.S. consumers start buying U.S.-made products instead. China must further

expand its exports to other Asian countries, and increase domestic demand, before it can call in its U.S. debt holdings.

China's Debt-Holder Strategy Is Working

Because of its ability to ship low-priced goods, China's economy grew 10% annually for the three decades before the recession, but is now at a 7% growth rate. China produced \$13.39 trillion in goods and services, making it the third largest economy in the world, after the U.S. and the EU. In 2010, China became the world's largest exporter. (Source: CIA World Factbook)

China needs this growth! Its GDP per capita was only \$9,800 per person, compared to \$49,800 per person for the U.S. This low standard of living allows China to attract overseas manufacturers to outsource jobs by paying its workers less. Therefore, despite its threats, China will continue its position as the world's largest holder of U.S. debt. Article updated April 16, 2015. - Kimberly Amadeo, S
Economy Expert

Climate change forum on coastal fisheries

By Noeline Browne

The forum on the effect of climate change on coastal fisheries had a good turnout of 40 people to the University of South Pacific. Chairman John Hays and co-chair, Mata Hetland introduced the panel of speakers to speak on their chosen topic.

The first presentation was by Tou Travel Ariki, the Kaumaiti of the House of Ariki, who opened the proceedings with a flourish with his herald to announce his coming and having the Clerk of the Are Ariki translate his words for the audience. His words of encouragement for the need to conserve the bounty of nature were well received by everyone at the forum.

Keynote speaker was vaka voyager, Alex Olah who presented his own eyewitness account of the huge amount of manmade rubbish that is floating around in the Pacific. Alex is a crew member on Vaka Marumaru Atua and had photographs taken on the voyages as evidence of what he was describing, even on isolated and uninhabited islands.

Marine biologist, Teina Rongo PhD presented his findings on effect on climate change on the reefs and marine resources. He also presented a video on interviews with the Pa Metua during his consultations for the Climate Change division. All of them said they had noticed a dramatic fall in fish numbers especially the ature runs and other juvenile fish.

Julian Aupini from Mitiaro explained the traditions of



Tou Ariki, the Kaumaiti of the House of Ariki



Seen at the forum

Arapo and the maroro-tu season on his home island. Mitiaro by all accounts is the only island where schools of maroro are still seen in abundance. Their secret to success are the use of Arapo - phases of the moon - and the use of traditional paiere (canoe) and where their Orometuas still pray for a good catch.

Itaata Rangatira presented a fresh approach to Raui that was used when visiting senior students in the Pa Enua during the Raui consultations in 2014 funded by IUCN-Global Blue. The study was carried

by the House of Ariki and the Koutu Nui. When speaking to youth, the message was on the conservation role of Raui in the 21st century not only for their home islands but also for the entire Cook Islands. And how through the Marine Park, we are part of a global trend for conservation of nature - in other words, Raui just as relevant today as it was in the days of old. Noeline Itaata Rangatira said new Raui signs for Rarotonga have been commissioned and will put up next week. The signs are sponsored by Oceans 5.

Joe Brider from NES was there to discuss the Ridge to Reef project that NES and MMR are working on which is financed by the Global Environment Fund. Jacqui Evans from the Marine Park Trust was on hand to present the principles on which the marine park policies and legislation will be based.

All the presenters were so enthusiastic that we went slightly over time, but as co-chair, Mata Hetland noted, hey this is the Cook Islands. The second session of the forum is tonight, Wednesday 29 April 2015 at the USP.

Minimum Wage Review report

The Minimum Wage Review Panel recommended that the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Hon. Albert Nicholas, increase the minimum wage rate of pay to \$6.25 per hour, an increase on the current minimum wage rate of \$6 per hour. The report and recommendations have been discussed by Cabinet.

Next week the Minister will make an announcement on the minimum wage rate which is expected to take effect on 1 July 2015.

Working in accordance with the Employment Relations Act 2012, and guided by terms of reference, criteria, and public feedback, the Minimum Wage Panel submitted the 2015 Minimum Wage Rate Review Report to the Minister in March.

Review findings showed that an incremental and universal increase would be of most benefit to employers and employees.

The cost of the 4.2% increase to \$6.25 per hour to government is estimated to be \$100,000 per annum.

This year's Minimum Wage Panel was appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, and comprised Patricia Tuara Demmke (Ministry of Internal Affairs), James Webb (Ministry of Finance and Economic Management), Steve Anderson (Chamber of Commerce), Anthony Turua (Cook Islands Workers Association) and Nga Mataio (community representative).

Copies of the Minimum Wage Review report panel can be obtained on request. For further information, please contact the Labour & Employment Relations Division, Ministry of Internal Affairs, ph 29370.

Dangerous Goods Audit

Last week, the Ministry of Internal Affairs received support from WorkSafe New Zealand to review compliance of facilities on Rarotonga and Aitutaki on their legal responsibilities of storing dangerous goods safely.

WorkSafe New Zealand Hazardous Substance Inspector, George Hewitt, undertook site inspections of 24 facilities on Rarotonga and Aitutaki as a follow up to the last independent audit undertaken in 2010.

"This is the third time in recent years that we have received assistance from the New Zealand Government to ensure that our licensing processes meet the relevant international standards as defined by our legislation," stated Senior Labour Inspector, Rei Enoka. "With 39 years of experience in the Petroleum Industry, we are grateful to have Mr. Hewitt with us to conduct this work."

Mr Hewitt is currently with the WorkSafe New Zealand as a Principal Advisor and is a current member of the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand.

The outcome of this current audit will be finalised over the next few months and is expected to identify compliance issues that need to be addressed by each facility. It will also recommend process improvements for the Ministry. Counterpart training was also provided to Senior Labour Inspector, Rei Enoka, and Aitutaki Inspector, Tapita Solomona Tikiteina.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs acknowledges the support of the WorkSafe New Zealand and the Cook Islands Technical Assistance Fund in assisting with the costs of the audit.

Sanitation Upgrade Programme begins consultations in Aitutaki

On Wednesday 29th April, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure Teariki Heather and ICI Secretary Mac Mokoroa along with representative from WATSAN will travel to Aitutaki to meet with Island Leaders and Aronga Mana to begin the initial consultations for the Sanitation Upgrade Programme (SUP). This will be the first step towards improving wastewater and septic systems in the Pa Enua and is part of Phase Two of the New Zealand Aid Programme, European Union and Cook Islands Government funded programme.

The Cook Islands' Sanitation Upgrade Programme (SUP) is a four-year, programme of work, to deliver improved infrastructure, services, systems, regulation, monitoring and awareness in the areas of sanitation and waste management, with particular focus on Rarotonga and Aitutaki. The overall purpose

of the SUP is to preserve the quality of water resources in Rarotonga and Aitutaki through improved sanitation, thereby managing the risks posed to tourism, public health and the environment

The main tasks in delivering Phase Two of the SUP involves upgrading onsite sanitation systems at homes around Rarotonga and Aitutaki. In the first instance these upgrades will be focused on homes in locations outside areas that have been identified as having potential for inclusion in future community-wide or centralised wastewater reticulation, treatment and disposal systems.

"We are now able to commence work in Aitutaki and will be targeting specific areas on the Island for upgrades. This project will enable better sanitation outcomes and build capacity for wastewater professionals and tradesman on the island." says Mokoroa.

Raro to host 2015 Forum Economic workshop

Minister Brown announced that Rarotonga would be hosting a combined meeting of the Pacific Forum Economic Ministers (FEMM) and Pacific Forum Trade Ministers Meeting (FTMM) as well as the Private Sector Dialogue workshop (PSDW) to be held from 27 to 31 October 2015.

MFEM and MFAI will be working closely with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat on the logistics of the meeting.

Minister Brown was looking

forward to the meeting. "I expect to work closely with my colleagues from the Pacific on economic governance issues across the Pacific during that week. The last joint meeting between the Finance Ministers and another Ministerial meeting was in Honiara where a number of measures to combat NCD's were announced. Obviously, there will to be some natural synergies between the private sector across the region and the economic and trade Ministers."

How history can return with a nasty bite

Introduction by Charles Pitt

History seems to be repeating itself.

Back on Wednesday 28 November 2001, the political commentary article below, written by Sir Geoffrey Henry, appeared in the Herald.

Recently, the Herald was asked to reprint this article because of apparent similarities between what occurred back then and what is unfolding now.

In his article, Sir Geoffrey accused then PM Sir Terepai Maoate of using the “stability” argument to keep his job. Sound familiar?

Sir Geoffrey wrote, quote;

“To him stability means keeping his job!

This misconception has given rise to a government that has no conscience about throwing money around to curry favours and bribe votes. It has also given rise to a

government that flouts the Constitution and long established conventions and cancels Parliament after it had been summoned by the Queen’s Representative only because government was frightened of a vote of no confidence. That’s why Parliament did not meet on Tuesday, 27 November, 2001!” Unquote.

Isn’t the similarity with current events rather disturbing?

Corrupt, arrogant and desperate

All three of these characteristics are very evident in the government of today. Each feeds one while feeding upon the other in a cannibalistic exacerbation of each characteristic resulting in a government growing more desperate everyday, losing its sense of good governance as its judgement continues to be clouded by greed, self-preservation through bribery and contempt for parliamentary democracy.

Never before in the history of this small nation has there been such a shameful and piggish rush to the national trough by government MPs. Never before has a Prime Minister so recklessly and so irresponsibly spent so much of the tax payer’s money on his own MPs and for their own personal benefit. Never before have government MPs had so much money “appropriated” for themselves and their failed colleagues for the promotion of their political career. Never before have the rules been bent, overlooked or simply ignored for the benefit of a select few. There never has been such corruption.

If you happen to think that all the bribery and the corruption is at an end and that the “People First” motto they in government have blabbed about so much might just begin to become a reality, well, I regret to say, you are dreaming.

Just recently, the hospital in Omoka, a project that has been in the pipeline for quite

sometime, was officially opened. A full planeload of politicians and officials led by the Prime Minister attended the opening. Surely, sufficient would have been the Ministers of Health and Outer Island Affairs and their CEOs and on a regular flight.

Instead a special charter flew in the morning and returned the same afternoon. You the taxpayer would be pleased to know that for this one-day extravagance it cost you \$16,000 for the charter and thousands more for allowances, gifts, donations, bribes etc. You and I would not be quite so upset if the charter was for reasons of emergency. It is when you know that the trip was to improve the tattered image of the MP for Penrhyn that you feel your fist bunch up.

Interestingly, the Minister of Health was not allowed onto the plane. He, of course, is Hon. Peri Vaevae Pare. He is also the Attorney General who lodged the application in the High Court for a determination of whether or not Tepure Tapaitau’s seat had become vacant by virtue of his becoming a Crown Servant. Further, although heavily pressured, he refused to withdraw his application. It seems it does not pay to be honest!

What really is at stake is the survival of the government. In short, the survival of Dr. Terepai Maoate as the Prime Minister.

He has often said that he

would work with anybody in order to maintain stability. This, of course, does not fool any of us. What he really means is that he would work with anybody in order that HE MAY KEEP HIS JOB! To him stability means keeping his job!

This misconception has given rise to a government that has no conscience about throwing money around to curry favours and bribe votes. It has also given rise to a government that flouts the Constitution and long established conventions and cancels Parliament after it had been summoned by the Queen’s Representative only because government was frightened of a vote of no confidence. That’s why Parliament did not meet on Tuesday, 27 November, 2001!

The threat is still on. Frightened of losing his job, the Prime Minister has and will resort to any trick to capture votes. The \$16,000 plus trip to Penrhyn is part of the plan. IN ESSENCE, DO ANYTHING TO KEEP TEPURE TAPAITAU’S VOTE.

Let us have a look at what government might do to achieve this. Firstly, Tepure Tapaitau’s seat is under threat. Believe me, they will do ANYTHING to save this seat but they must first bag his vote beyond certainty.

You may, therefore, expect his currently \$120,000 Office Vote to increase handsomely and to be paid out by Eddie Drollet, their recent spat now forgotten. To be sure he will get back the vehicle Drollet

took off him, with a car if not a 4xwheel drive double-cab. We know that Tepure is planning to set up a pearl farm in Manihiki. He will get every assistance from government including Tepure’s favourite vehicle – a 4xwheel-drive double-cab.

Government will continue to pay him the \$30,000 he has been getting since September 1 this year, on top of his parliamentary salary and entitlements.

He will not be made a Parliamentary Under-secretary since this earns only \$15,000. We should not be surprised, however, if he is allocated Ministerial style responsibilities that allows for better pay and more travels overseas under some form of trumped up consultancy.

All of these extra perks will need to be legitimised by way of a contract which will require to be drawn up – if it isn’t already done – and which will in addition lock in Tepure’s vote. With Tepure’s vote locked in, the next and final insult will be to convene Parliament and legitimise retroactively illegal payments made previously to Tepure BEFORE the High Court sits to consider Tepure’s case.

This is very much a case of looking after our jobs by taking care of the boys first and to hell with the people.

This is also very much a case of a government that is desperate, has the vision of a snail, the morals of a rat and the survival instincts of a goat.

[Wednesday, November 28, 2001: 918 words]

Comprehensive development the answer

By Charles Pitt

The public exchanges between Worker's representative Anthony Turua and Finance Secretary Richard Neves on the question whether workers should receive a pay increase to keep pace with the cost of living, highlights a number of failures on the part of government and the private sector.

Neves, whose job is to ensure prudent expenditure of government revenue, is correct in saying there is no extra money in the budget for government to hand out pay for increases. Pay increases must come from within existing Ministry budgets. This means Ministries must make savings in some areas if they want to increase payments in other areas, such as personnel.

It is a fact that government revenue has increased over time with more money flowing into government coffers from tourism, fees, licenses, and of course taxes such as VAT (currently around \$49m a year), Income Tax (around \$20m a year), Company tax (around \$10m a year). Sadly, export earnings have made no significant gains although there are encouraging signs in Tuna fishing with more Skipjack Tuna being caught albeit through purse seining.

However, this increase has benefited mainly the Health, Education and Tourism sectors.

One thing everyone agrees on is that the number of Public Servants is too high and should be trimmed down. This would free up more money for possible pay increases. However, such a move is risky politically.

There is no argument costs have increased. The question is what can government do to achieve a reasonable balance between personal revenue, expenditure and social well being and security?

Government is yet to undertake a survey to determine the average household disposable income. This will provide some indication for government of the situation.

What is needed right now is for government to stimulate the economy by assisting the private sector or showing some leadership or direction towards new revenue flows. MFEM has been warning governments of the need to seek new revenue streams or face measures to restrict or reduce operational expenditure.

Overseas aid has increasingly been applied to operations to the point that one third of government's budget is made up of overseas aid money. With no private sector development of any significance, we have become dependent on this aid money.

It is clear this dependence on overseas aid must be reduced. The private sector needs to be assisted more to increase exports, reduce reliance on imports, create more jobs and adopt a fairer distribution of wealth. By the same token, the private sector has to put its hand up.

Government has attempted a fairer distribution of the taxation burden through its review of the tax system but this has not gone far enough to address the key issue which is the growing disparity between earnings and the cost of living. While tourism numbers have increased, and tourism spending has been estimated to increase, little of this increased revenue reaches those at the lower levels. People are still leaving to seek work at higher pay in NZ and Australia. The effect this has had on the outer islands has been marked.

Government is fast reaching a point where the remaining workforce will object strongly to being forced to carry the burden of extra taxation or new taxes

imposed to meet government's running costs.

In a country that has some vast resources, it makes sense to eliminate as much of the tax burden on the dwindling population as possible and transfer it those who seek to use the resources.

Income tax should be abolished altogether and most certainly in the outer islands as the CIP promised in its election manifesto. Fees paid by foreigners to access and extract our resources should be greatly increased to reflect the high value we place on those resources.

The abolition of income tax would immediately give many lowly paid public servants a long overdue pay increase. Those at the bottom of the rung in Teaching, Nursing and the Police, deserve much better. These are people we hold in some esteem but we do not reward them accordingly.

As we lose more of our people, the private sector is forced to replace them with foreign workers. These workers are happy to work for low wages as our minimum wage is far higher than in their countries. However, these people remit money overseas and as such do not inject it into the local economy. Also, having such a large number of foreigners on low pay levels, means a reduced tax take for government. A number of foreigners are also alleged to be involved in work not authorized by their work permits thus creating a "black" economy where no taxes are paid. Our people consider themselves deserving of some closer parity with NZ arrangements because that is the country we identify with and are most closely aligned with.

Cook Islanders have very little in common with other Pacific nations and it is foolish for

MFEM to continue to compare us with the likes of Fiji, Samoa, the Solomons, and so on. NZ is the place we identify closely with and we are NZ citizens. If any comparisons are to be done, they are to be done with NZ. Cook Islanders set their personal benchmarks against NZ.

After 50 years of self government we have arrived at a point where our economy lacks significant growth, costs are rising, dependency on overseas aid has increased, bank interest rates are set at ridiculously high levels for a safe country, fuel costs too much, the population has decreased, exports are virtually non-existent, tourists have increased but are seemingly spending less than hoped, Cabinet appear afraid to make bold, radical, innovative decisions.

Some may argue that the priority is political reform after which benefits will follow. However, political reform is a reform of a system and what is really needed is reform of the type candidates. We need candidates that are capable of more than just village level politics, candidates who can make a positive contribution and hold their own regionally and internationally. Then real reform will come.

What would be timely is a comprehensive economic development on a scale similar to the infrastructure and renewable energy projects. A significant step forward is required to put our economy onto a sound, sustainable footing, boost exports, create well paid jobs, reduce reliance on imports and overseas aid and restore some national pride and well-being. Small steps and cottage industry level funding is fine for village level achievers but for a nation to advance, something big needs to happen.

Sports media workshop hailed a success



Sports journalists attending the weeklong ONOC/PINA Regional Media workshop in Suva, Fiji has been hailed a success by participants from ten island countries—Cook Islands, Guam, Fiji, Niue, Mauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Participants made up of journalists, broadcasters, cameramen say they now have a better understanding of the roles of sporting organisations such as the National Olympic Committees (NOCs), Oceania National Olympic Committee (ONOC), International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Federations (IFs).

Fiji Broadcasting Corporation Sports Editor Indra Singh says the workshop has brought more understanding in the important roles of these organisations and the Olympic Movement.

Speakers included ONOC President and IOC member from Fiji Dr Robin Mitchell, Olympic Solidarity officials from Lausanne, Switzerland, Nicole Girard Savoy and Nils Holmgaard, ONOC Executive Director and vice president of International Swimming—Dennis Miller, Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee officials and Pacific Islands News Association Acting Manager Mahereta Koroi.

Journalists agreed to work closely and form a sporting arm under the PINA banner and work closely with NOCs in their respective countries.

The workshop is blended into the ONOC Associated meetings and General Assembly.

The media reps have had meetings with their NOC compatriots.

The ONOC General Assembly culminates with the attendance of the IOC President Thomas Bach of Germany.

CITC donates recycling station to Nukutere

Nukutere College staff and students are the new recipients of the CITC recycling station worth over \$3500.00

CITC's George George congratulated the school this morning at the official handover ceremony, after the school's name was chosen at a similar ceremony held earlier this year at the Arorangi School Centennial Celebrations.

George says Nukutere College is the 6th school on Rarotonga to have received such station, and a further 5 schools will be awarded theirs before the end of the year and plans are being made to erect 2 smaller recycling stations for Blackrock and Titikaveka Pre-

schools.

Nukutere College Principal George Rasmussen today thanked CITC and George George and says, the recycling bins will raise the schools profile towards being environmentally friendly.

The next school to receive a recycling station is St Joseph School, whose name was drawn out following this morning's ceremony.

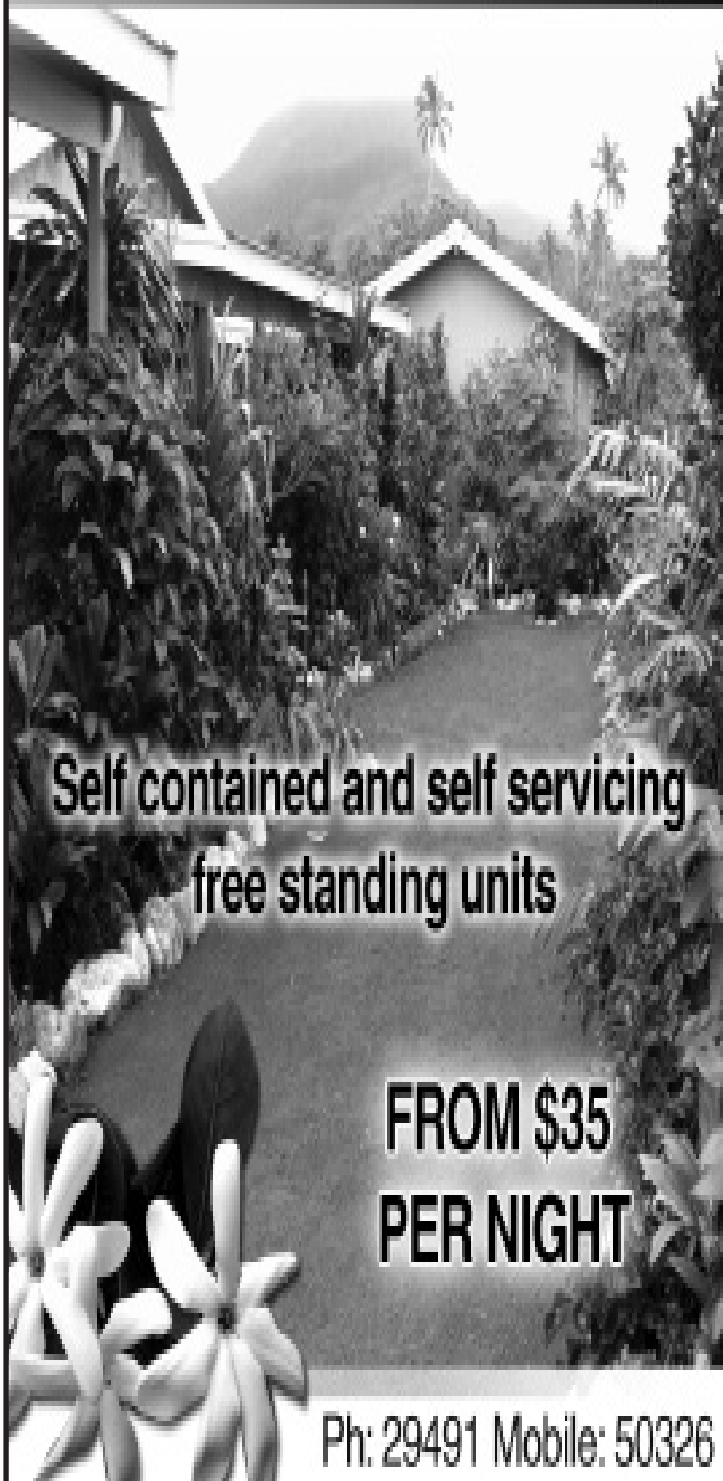
George George says the recycling stations were purchased by money raised from the purchasing of plastic bags.

CITC has been working closely with the National Environment Service by practicing and promoting good waste practice.



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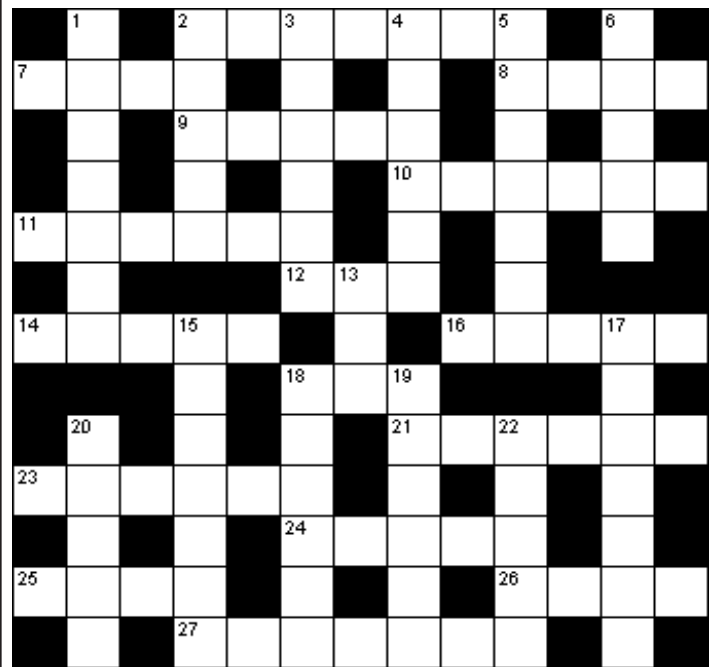


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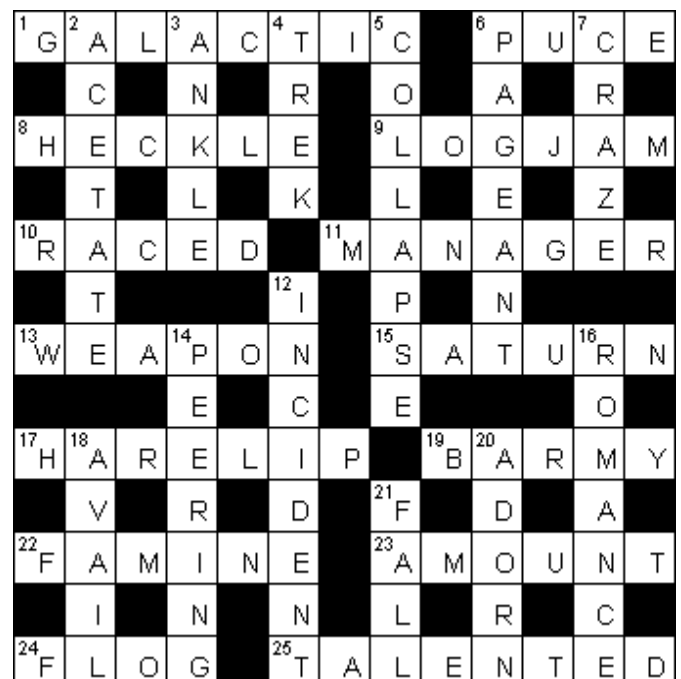
Across

2. Majestic
7. Resembling wax
8. Dairy product
9. Short letters
10. Complete
11. Handhold
12. Furrow
14. Bird sound
16. City in the central Netherlands
18. Little drink
21. Take on a fresh supply of fuel
23. Quasi-autonomous government organization
24. Argument
25. Basic unit of heredity
26. Sight organs

27. Move down

Down

1. Seventh day
2. Church council
3. Male servant
4. Invertebrate creature
5. Showing emotion
6. Coquette
13. Israeli submachine gun
15. Made round
17. Thin
18. Grunts
19. Son of the sovereign
20. Hybrids
22. Penalised



Employees not part of the Act in the Cook Islands

by Tetuhi Kelly

Part 1

All is not well in paradise for Cook Islands employees since the passing of the Employment Relations Act 2012 (ERA2012), in fact the Act is struggling because the people charged with oversight of the Act are inadequately discharging their duties because they are poorly trained, under-resourced, easily manipulated and lack initiative. On the other side, employers are tending to ignore their legal responsibilities under the Act and employees are unaware of their rights. In a nutshell, one is not doing their bit under the Act and the other is acting under the bit. Pretty strong stuff don't you think, well let me explain why I have taken this stance.

I have over 40 years of human resources, legal training, OSH, bicultural disputes training, university lecturing, IT, engineering, community development, employment relations and advocacy, retail, sales, marketing and business consulting. I have operated my own successful consulting businesses and have held some very senior management positions in industries as diverse as transport, retail and local government. I have worked successfully in these areas in NZ, Cook Islands, Australia, USA, Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Germany and the UK so I have a fairly broad international and local understanding about legislation and its application from both a policy and an operational focus and I have a fair amount of experience when it comes to dealing with issues in the workplace.

I have post graduate academic qualifications from several NZ University's and Australia up to doctoral level and I lectured at the Auckland University School of Engineering for 5 years. I achieved all this starting my working life as a 17 year old labourer working a jack hammer and as a wharfie seagull, so I do know what it's like operating at the government and corporate board level as well as getting my hands down and dirty and I walk and talk comfortably in two worlds: Maori and Papa'a.

The ERA2012 was ushered in with great fanfare with the belief that employers and employees

would have a legal mechanism that would govern their employment relationship and it was hoped that they would each be able to act in a manner that was fair and equitable inside that employment relationship. We are now 3 years down the track and it has become quite noticeable that the Act has not had the impact that was envisaged. In effect all it has done is to cement the status quo for employers and further disadvantage employees at a time when employers are struggling to retain their staff. It has also shown how ineffectual a number of the government departments are at handling employment relations issues in the private and public sector at a time when the public's perception is already scathing and derogatory of the goings on. There are a number of factors that have contributed to this state of affairs:

1. Ministry of Internal Affairs
2. Public Services Commission
3. Employers
4. Employees
5. Lawyers
6. Judges
7. Human Resources

The Cook Islands Ministry of Internal Affairs is the government agency that is legally mandated to manage how the ERA2012 is applied in the workplace in an employment relationship between an employer and an employee. Employer means a person who employs an employee or employees. Employee means a person engaged to work under an agreement or contract of service and— (a) includes— (i) a person paid by the number of units the person produces; and (ii) a person intending to work; but (b) does not include an independent contractor engaged under a contract for services.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs through its Directorate of Labour Relations manages an inspectorate which looks after the ERA2012. Staff at the Ministry are in general local Cook Islanders and their training covers a number of fields and disciplines such as but not limited to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, its functions and relationships to other services.

They are also required to have a good working knowledge of legislation as well as learn how to perform as a warranted inspector which also covers health and safety. In saying that, the inspectorate is underfunded, under resourced and the training given is rudimentary at best and from this they are required to regularly interface professionally with employers. The inspectors have reasonable working relationships with small to medium businesses but struggle when it comes to the much larger employers.

The Public Service Commission is mandated under the Public Service Act 2009 with providing the public sector with basic human resources advice, performance management, salary advice and the hiring of HODs, Ministry Secretary's and other senior government department officials. They do not have jurisdiction over at least one government department and to this they provide an advisory service instead. In terms of Section 4 of the Act, Values and Code of Conduct relating to the:

Values of the Public Service – Subject to the Constitution and the rule of law, the Commissioner, every head of department, and every employee must uphold the following values in their work – (a) honesty – acting honestly, being truthful, and abiding by the laws of the Cook Islands.

In the last 20 years, very few public servants are ever brought to task in the public arena for a breach of the code of conduct despite evidence that they or their actions have brought the public service and their employer into disrepute and disrespect because of their actions. We only have to look at the previous Director of Immigration who refused to give Police a breath alcohol test in 2009 when the vehicle he was driving was stopped. The issue dragged on for a number of years with court case after court case being deferred or postponed for spurious reasons. He was eventually prosecuted in 2011 but in all that time the PSC appeared to do very little to assuage the perception that they were dragging their feet and didn't know what they were

supposed to do in applying the public service code of conduct. I don't believe they even thought about the implications and in most countries he would have had to fall on his sword, but not here in the Cook Islands. The most recent case of the Ministry for Marine Resources Secretary being sited under the PSC code of conduct for bringing the public service into disrepute is a case in point. The CI News of Tuesday 21 April quotes the PSC Commissioner as stating that disciplinary action had been taken against the Secretary who will be required to stand down from his overseas travel till June. Really? At a minimum in any normal public service jurisdiction he would have been given a final written warning, performance incentives suspended for twelve months and after the twelve months was up, the written warning suspended but not removed from his personal records. That's how serious that incident should have been addressed. Consider it was in a foreign jurisdiction, allegedly against someone from another foreign jurisdiction and all he has to show for it is a slap on the hand. I can imagine what that foreign jurisdiction will be saying behind closed doors, about the incident. It will only support their historical prejudices against us as regards foreign policy. In another incident, what has happened to the Prime Minister and the person he ran over? Isn't the Prime Minister a public servant?

Employers in the private and in the public sector in the Cook Islands are generally very hard working people and they believe that they are fair and equitable to their employees. Despite this from my personal experience and background I can tell you that there is a need for all employers to have a mind shift in how they manage their employees. A number of the bigger employers have hired human resources people and that is a very positive way to manage their organisations in a professional manner. These HR people are in the main dedicated to their roles and most of them are not trained HR professionals

continued next page

when they take on the role, they learn on the job, they also learn poor professional HR habits not through their fault but due to the insufficiency in their training, knowledge and experience. An additional challenge for those in HR is that many of the businesses in the Cook Islands are owner operated and the owners of these businesses are generally good employers. The owners usually have the final say in any employment relations issue affecting their businesses and have a tendency to micromanage their staff, understandable if you look at it from their perspective. They also have a tendency to have three sets of rules one for management staff, one for employees on the shop floor and one for their family members. These rules can and do run counter to the ERA 2012, because the Act implies that an employer must be fair and equitable within the employment relationship with the employee. If you have 3 sets of rules, how can this be fair and equitable: I propose that it cannot?

Public service employers on the other hand rely on the PSC for HR advice and unfortunately from my experience you might as well talk to your MP who last year was just a worker in the taro patch because that's probably the same advice you are going to get. There are no bad employees just bad employers, because if there were bad employees or potentially bad employees, they should have been filtered out with a proper pre-employment process and would not have been considered for employment. Because of a lack of critical employee mass, too many people in the Cook Islands are employed without proper background checks, references being thoroughly checked, no proper criminal checks, no proper health checks and if there is something not quite right with the person's previous employment, the Cook Islands thing is to forgive and give the person another chance. Does it come back to bite them in the bum, yes it does, do Cook Islanders learn from this, no they do not. So they only have themselves to blame for the employment relations issue they have with their employee. At the first sign of trouble the first response is to blame someone else and not take responsibility

for one's poor judgement or actions, that's the Cook Islands way. The economic fallout from a botched recruitment process is something that Cook Islands employers struggle to put into context. The answer is oh well I'll get someone else to do the job. Well guys there usually are no one else so you are stuck between a rock and a hard place and this drives your poor recruitment practices so we go round and round in a never ending circle. People are continuing to leave so as an employer if you don't get your employment relationship going strongly you are in the pooh and can only blame yourself. Let's have a look at what the time cost to you is for an employment relationship gone wrong.

1. Employee not suitable for employment and leaves or is exited
 2. Current employees have to take up the reduced capacity and reschedule of priorities
 3. Advertisement for new employee
 4. 2- 4 weeks downtime no employee
 5. Another 2 – 4 weeks before new employee starts
 6. That is now 4 – 8 weeks extra capacity loaded onto current employees
 7. Depending on whether the employees role was physically or mentally demanding, places extra stress on current employees
 8. Absenteeism of current employees rises
 9. More reduced capacity and stress on other employees and supervisory staff
 10. Performance drops off for all staff
 11. New employee starts and must be inducted into role
 12. Reduced capacity of one staff member who is training the new employee
 13. New employee may require 2-4 weeks to start or become familiar with basics of role
 14. From the time the other employee left to the new one getting up to speed and becoming productive can take anywhere from 12 weeks to 16 weeks with the first 8 weeks lost because of the recruitment process.
- This forecast is at best a quick off the top of my head assessment, to illustrate

where some of the losses in your business are actually in your hands to remedy. It also presupposes that you can replace with a new employee and the reality is that most employers do not follow a robust recruitment process in the Cook Islands and hire without due recruitment processes being followed.

So once you have recruited what are you required to do. As a minimum you take them through an induction process of signing a contract of employment (if any), getting IRD numbers, Bank account details, contact details and advising of the employer's rules of the business. Here you get the employer to sign off that they have read and understood all that is required of them, usually an HR rules and procedures manual. Your next step as an employer is to put them alongside one of your more experienced staff until they are up and running. Next you should be identifying gaps in the employee's abilities so that you can put into place a properly formulated training programme, you will also have identified key positions that needs someone else being able to take on this responsibility should the current person leave, is absent or sick and you should also have identified areas of career development for staff so that they are available to be promoted. The reality is most Cook Islands employers of size do neither and they stumble ahead and if they are owners of these businesses, they put unreal expectations on employees. Employees in general do not have the same work ethic as they had when they were start ups and they can't understand why their employees don't use 'common sense' values. This is a typical NZ throw away comment when they can't articulate a reasoned response, well 'sorry bout it' but common sense is not common, like beauty it is in the eye of the beholder.

If you want to incentivise an employee to stay or perform at the top of their game then they should be introduced to a proper performance management system so that it shows what the employer expects of them and how they are to be rewarded for exemplary and outstanding work performance and reduces the likelihood of favouritism if

everyone is on the same page. Staff should also be aware of the disciplinary process for poor or consistent non-performance, which most if not all Cook Islands businesses have very little or no idea what constitutes a proper disciplinary process. In most cases the employee is drawn and quartered before they have had a proper investigation of the circumstances, the meeting with the employee is generally a 'fait accompli', the decision has already been made and is just a formality with the dismissal process a joke. This is the Cook Islands employer's way of coping with their poor recruitment and management decision making processes based on emotion rather than cold, hard and verifiable facts after a proper process of investigation and arriving at an outcome that is unbiased. It just goes to show that most business owners are not in stable business relationships with their employees or their customers because you have to have one to provide for the other.

What happens for non-performers? Here is where most employers in the Cook Islands lose their way, they don't hold proper formalised meetings with non-performing employees, usually it's just a word in their employees ear to improve and that's the sum total. When this is promptly ignored or the performance does not improve, the employer's next move is to go over the top i.e. you're sacked. An employer must give reasons for termination (1) Before issuing a notice to terminate the employment of an employee for reasons relating to the capacity or conduct of the employee, the employer must— (a) tell the employee, in writing, of the reasons for the termination; and (b) give the employee a reasonable opportunity to respond and make submissions to the employer about why the employee's employment should not be terminated. The reality is that most employers do not follow a proper robust and contestable disciplinary process and a reasonable opportunity for an employee to respond is barely 5 minutes. Everyman and owner think that they are HR or employment law specialists and disregard due and proper process, because they can't be bothered.

Korero Maori

By Tiana Haxton

On Wednesday, the 22nd of April, Tereora College's Princess Anne Hall hosted the 2015 Korero Maori competition. The 2015 Maori speech competition for years 9 – 13. Mitiaro school entered two students, Brandon Kaukura and myself.

A few months earlier, Mitiaro School had their very own Korero Maori competition to decide who would compete in the competition in Rarotonga. Brandon and I drew first place and so both of us were to compete.

All year 10 students were recently in Rarotonga for a few weeks this April for work experience- and Careers EXPO and we were there for the speech competition last Wednesday.

At 9.00, those with speeches, were given a traditional welcome with a Turou.

Year 9 and 10 students made their way to the back of the hall where they waited and further prepared themselves in a small room to the side of the stage. The year nine students gave excellent speeches followed by the year ten. Brandon was the third in the year ten group to give his speech about CONSERVATION. I was last in the group to say mine and I began a bit nervously surprised at how big the hall looked from on stage. I calmed down quickly and continued my speech on the topic TOKU KAVEINGA NO TE TUATAU KI MUA/MY GOALS FOR THE FUTURE.

Year 11 students gave excellent presentations which was followed by a lunch break of apples, sandwiches and mini pizzas.

Year 12-13 took the stage

and spoke clearly while the walked around as the judges marked their speeches.

While the judge's scores were totalled, Tereora College gave a stunning Cook Islands Dance with amazing drum dance choreography.

Finally, the judges scores were totalled and the dancers completed their dance before clearing the stage. The winners were then called up. Teremataora Van Dongen was pleased to walk away with the 1st place trophy for year 9. We Mitiaroans were also pleased with her win as she is a Mitiaroan who left Mitiaro for school.

I was pleased to gain 3rd place in the year 10 category and won a certificate with a Cook Islands Maori dictionary.

Everyone who received a prize was very pleased and we all went back home with a smile on our faces.

Those who did not win anything were also happy they had completed their speeches in front of many people and had fun as they did it.

To those who didn't win anything, there is a well known saying which is, We Are All Winners!

This is absolutely true, all who competed are winners whether the judges named you one or not. We are still all winners.

Congratulations to all who received trophies, to all who competed.

We Mitiaro students left the Princess Anne hall and went out to lunch at Sea Salt.

Once we were all done we left for the hostel where we were staying.

On Monday, we returned to Mitiaro.

It was good to catch up with the family after 3 weeks away.

The little things

By Lucianne Vainerere

Many people don't pay attention to the small details but rather focus on the bigger picture. For us girls it kind of stings when no one really notices that you got your eyebrow done or had your hair cut unless its your friends or other girls who think about detail. But typical teenage girls crave testosterone attention.

I'm sure it goes both ways in terms of small details. Boys don't realize it but they get flattered when complimented by someone of the opposite gender, especially if no one noticed the small change they took the effort in changing.

The point is, it doesn't matter how self-absorbed or non-observant you may be, if you don't want to feel entirely alone, take time to pay attention to the little things. In my experience they make bonds stronger. Although having girl friends who do notice isn't a bad thing at all. It just shows that they care for you enough to notice change even if it's changes you can't see in yourself like a glow or a change of demeanor. A lot of us teenagers can be really oblivious to things only because our mind and body goes through the second most mind-boggling process of our lives (the first being infancy) so we process things slower.

Also paying attention to the small things gives you insight and a bit of an awakening as well in regards to everything you absentmindedly missed or didn't notice at first glance.

Obviously the more little things you notice the greater or bigger your realization toward everything, contrasting or not, you become more aware and acquainted to the people, objects and environment around you. The people who do pay attention to the small things are usually more considerate and calm and very philosophical. Looking at the people around you, you start seeing the small things that make them who they are. From their different types of laughs to the way they announce certain words or body language around people. It helps you as individual to also try and discover yourself. You wonder if you have different laughs and start to notice your own change in behaviour around people or even realizing you like things you never knew you did. You also start to appreciate things more and ponder or daydream often (it's kind of a side effect).

After a while you start looking and feeling happier. When things get difficult you manage to handle it nicely only because you taught yourself to pay attention to the small things, which helped you know yourself better like a process of self-discovery. So if in time you don't seem to understand the importance of the little details when someone blows off at you it's only because you didn't take the time to notice or even pay attention to what's been happening. The world and people are forever evolving. It's inevitable.

I hope you have a wonderful week and weekend and take care of your family, friends and yourself.

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How To Avoid Conflicts

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

The purpose of this Article of Encouragement is to develop and maintain good relationship with one another. One of the main causes of unhappiness in our lives is having bad relationship with others. A key factor in restoring happiness and success is "Unity", to be united or being together. In other words in order to have a successful family, the family members must work together – unity. In order to have a successful church the members must work together – unity. To have a successful rugby team the players must work together – unity. Even to have a successful business the employees must work together – unity. The problem is people don't always get along. That is why many are unhappy. The main scripture reading for this article is Philippians 2v.1-11. In this reading the Apostle Paul talks about how to have unity in order to achieve happiness in our lives.

1. **AVOID COMPETING AGAINST EACH OTHER** (akaruke ite tu akarere). Too often we compete with people on our own team. This should not be the case. We should be supporting each other. Even in families, there tend to be competitions amongst family members, especially with extended family members, and sometimes within immediate families. In part (a) of v.3 Paul is saying (Jerusalem Bible version) "There must be no competition among you." Paul is encouraging us to avoid competing against each other.

2. **AVOID PRIDE** (kopae ke atu ite tu parau). Too often the spirit of pride takes control of us. Our attitude seems to be very 'self-centered'. We tend to elevate ourselves above everyone else, as though we are the greatest. Also in part (a) of v.3 it reads (Good News Bible version) "Don't do anything from

a cheap desire to boast." Also in Proverbs 16v.18 (New King James version) it reads "Pride goes before destruction." And in Proverbs 13v.10 it reads "Pride only breeds quarrels." Paul is encouraging us to avoid the spirit of pride in our lives.

3. **AVOID CRITICISM** (auraka e aka'apaapa). In v.3(c) it reads "In humility consider others better than yourselves." Paul is saying "show people respect". Don't put people down by saying bad and disrespectful things about them. Avoid criticism because when you are critical about others you are thinking that you are better than them. Paul is saying 'don't do that.' Encourage others and say positive things about them. Don't run them down.

4. **BE CONSIDERATE** (think of others also, don't just think of yourself - e akamanako i tetai ke atu). v.4 reads "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Pay attention to the needs of other people also. Too often we don't do this, and that's why we have problems in our marriages, with our children, with people whom we work with, and so on, because we don't pay attention to their needs. Paul is encouraging us to think about other people also.

5. **DEVELOP GOOD POSITIVE ATTITUDE LIKE JESUS CHRIST** (akamaroiroi kia riro mai toou ei tu mei to Iesu Mesia rai). In v.5 Paul is saying that "Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ." Jesus is the Master at relationships. He is our model and great example. If you want to know how to get along with people, even those who are difficult to get along with, just look at Jesus Christ. Get the same attitude that He has. The question is "What was His attitude?" v.7 reads "But made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness." Paul is

Encouragement Column
With Senior Pastor John Tangi



saying that Jesus has a "serving attitude". Although it is our human nature to be selfish, or to think only of ourselves, we can reduce and get rid of these only if Jesus Christ is in our lives. That is why Paul said in Philippians 4v.13 "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Paul said in v.5 of Philippians 2 "Let this attitude be in you that was in Christ."

Unity is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 4v.3 reads "Do your best to preserve the unity which the Spirit gives, by the peace that binds you together." The Holy Spirit put unity in our lives and also in our families. In order for us to get along with other people,

we must grow more and more like Jesus Christ. John the Baptist said in John 3v.30 "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Every day when we consciously choose to put somebody else before us, or to serve another, or even to build people up instead of saying bad things about them, and even to sacrifice for the benefit of others, we become more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. This would certainly develop good and positive relationships with others in our families, our workplace, in the community, and even in the church.

May God bless you in the days ahead. Te Atua te aroa.

Vaka Iti Vibes

By Teherenui Koteke

Last week Thursday was the annual Vaka Iti competition. This year the competition was held in Nikao instead of Muri. Despite the change of venue it still proved to be, as always, a day of competitive fun. For the past few weeks I have had to drop my sister off to training every Friday and I must say it was well worth it to see her compete. I myself volunteered at the competition and like always the event never failed to be full of fun.

The day began around 9am and ended approximately five hours later. For those who paddled those five hours were packed with competitive vibes and hardcore enthusiasm. One race I found particularly good was a year twelve boys heat where the Araura and Tereora teams took first and second place ending the race just a few milliseconds apart. You could really see the Tereora boys push to get that first placing and make the finals. Congratulations to those boys for gaining the fastest time of the day ending the race at just 47 seconds.

The school spirit was really showing, it could not be measured, however it could be heard. It was truly great to see all those people wadding in the water cheering on their fellow peers. As a volunteer I heard many team strategy talks while holding boats in the loading bay. Although

not all these strategy plans worked out it was still great to see teams band together and do all they could to win. Whether they crossed the line first, second or last laughter and cheers could be heard from the shore. The encouragement shared amongst the teams even when they did not finish with their desired placing was admirable. I commend all the competitors who came off the water with smiles and laughs instead of frowns.

Vaka Iti continues to be an event of great joy. I have no doubt in my mind that the racers left at 3pm worn out from fun and with some great memories. I would like to congratulate all those who raced in the event. Whether you came last or first I congratulate you on your efforts. It was great to see competitors paddling their hardest trying to take that first placing. I especially want to congratulate the teams from Araura Enuu, you guys did awesome and really deserved that first place trophy.

Lastly I would like to send a shout out to the very people who made the event possible, the volunteers. You guys as always did a fantastic job, it was great to see all the support and hear the words of encouragement you gave to the teams before they headed to the start line. Vaka Iti 2015 over and done with. Bring on 2016!

Chooks Extra

A lot of wishful talk at the beginning of this week the Demos had numbers that could overturn Elvis' and his government at the end of the week. When will any of the politicians ever learn that having the numbers doesn't mean a thing if there is a lack of strategic thinking that can execute the plan? Its one thing to over throw your own leader it's another skill set required for the Opposition to over throw the government. The element of surprise is also strategic but now the rats out of the bag don't expect to get an official appointment with the very pre occupied busy, busy QR for at least a month. Any way the CIP can rest easy, as long as the \$1134 a week sponger hello Drolley and Opposition career and failure specialist is the Demos brains trust they'll never be a serious threat.



In Tonga, Cabinet has ordered that all government vehicles be parked at State offices over the weekend. No longer can Government officials take home their transport for the weekend. And as a further cost-cutting measure, Cabinet ministers have been told to travel economy class from now on. No more business class tickets. Big Red wonders how many other island nations will follow suit.



Extremely fat cat neneva Neves objections to a pay increase for local workers must be the hard for them to swallow. Sitting on the deck of his Nikao beach front mansion perched on his \$330,000 salary while he enslaves locals to a poverty mentality its little wonder Cook Islanders are still leaving in droves. If they didn't there would just be another group of disfranchised people engaging in social unrest. To say the economy can't cope is his fault; neneva Neves has stuffed up our once prosperous peaceful country with his disgraceful demeaning Nenevanomics. It's about time he was told to pack his bags and sod off.



The DPM may be acting PM while Crown Prince Puna is out of office on official visits in the northern territories, but does he know the extent of his authority? Seems that committee of busy bodies, CAC, tried to stall some Cabinet submission recently which the DPM was determined to ram home. What followed was a flurry of off the cuff research into the DPM's power to over-ride CAC. If Crown Prince Puna did not leave explicit instructions to the contrary, the DPM can do what he wants provided his mates at the table agree.



Crown Prince Puna and his tere party are off north again soon, at great air fares costs, to Manihiki and Penrhyn so Crown Prince Puna can flick the "on" switch to start up the solar power generator! It's a big event, possibly bigger than "Ben Hur" and bigger than any 50th event here on the Rock! Off course, no other person's finger is capable of flicking the on switch. In fact the PM's dexterous finger has flicked that many switches it's a wonder he does not have RSI (Repetitive Strain Injury) of the finger! Another term for it is "OOS"- Occupational Over use Syndrome!



Big Red has picked up some disturbing news on his bird radar! It seems 10 young chooks have flue de coop in Atiu, some to Raro and some further afield to Kiwiland in search of work! But why is there no work in Atiu? Was not the grand, multi-million dollar infrastructure plan to lead to economic development and the provision of much needed jobs? Seems that theory has gone down the toilet! And it's not much better on Mangaia where a team of younger ones have gone off fruit picking in Kiwiland! What about fruit picking at home? Oh of course, no one is growing fruit so there's none to pick!



One thing's for sure chooks, if only there were jobs for "talkers." The reason being, Cookies are great when it comes to "talking." Cookies can talk for ten years about a topic, with nothing happening. Look at all the great ideas for projects discussed and talked about over the years. None if it has come to fruition. That's because we've become a nation of "talkers" rather than "doers."

New Hope Church

Parekura Conference Centre

Inspirational messages to uplift and empower you

Sunday at 10.30am

The fascination the daily dribble has with every word that pops out of Mrs Hosking's pencil is beyond belief, everyday and last week two letters to the editor about the same old same old now boring subject of fishing. The daily should become an animal protection publication because that's the main thrust of their stories. No more kick ass since Miz Wilsen was shunted back to the rugby writing. Well there's a group of locals who are about to start their own perswain fad fishing and all the catch money stays at home, notice the protest exercise walk was predominantly expats who if they don't like the way things are done here should go live some other place. Or may be Hosking and co should take their banner waving exercise walking to Aitutaki because they are all for catching our fish whatever way one can. One thing's for sure, this CIP government isn't going to take the slightest notice, walking and shouting is good exercise and will reduce the Health bills.



It looks and sounds like the Vaitau victory for the CIPs Mona was just about numbers, the promise many times over Mona only had to win the seat to get back into Cabinet and a simple majority against Smiffy's Sunday flights would see them get banished is wavering as Elvis doesn't have the balls to dump his Deputy the Bulldozer land grabbing Hypocrite Heta to make way for the loyal Mona. Watch Elvis wriggle his way out of the Sunday flight debacle. The fact most of the voters don't care a toss about the Sunday flights is no indication they should continue. It's the voters that count not the apathetic non voters. Talking about flights is it true a couple of weeks

ago Elvis chartered a plane and flew to Manihiki and back all on the same day and no one knew he had?



Just another big headed small Aitutakian fish out of his depth in the big Raro pond, convicted tax fraudster Mickie Enery is strutting himself around the local market last Saturday like a peacock spouting off about the new Board appointments including his removal of Smiffy as the Tourism chair to be replaced by the up and coming Islander Ellis (The right person for once) and his crowing about his gender rightness with something juicy for Mrs Bates. No doubt the gullible faithful CIP raffle ticket and plates of food buyers who have toiled and toiled for the Party and are still crumb less will have something to grumble about when they see the other new Mickie chosen Board appointments.



The protest march last Friday had some interesting banners and slogans but none better than the "More Tuna less Puna" one. Looks like the government worker Commissioner Wusell is going to have to have a little chat to some of his workers who were prominent in the fun walk and talk to support government policies or else risk a travel ban.



the wind.



Want an exceptional feast of fish? Head for Avana's hot spot and grab a seat at Moko's Sea food water front container diner. The view is stunning, the service is fast and the food furious with full plate local sized helpings and everything is well within the budget. The spot is not recommended for government workers because once you're there it's so enjoyable you forget there's work to do back at the office. It's certainly the place for the two hour lunch.



Too many approximations are being bandied about chooks! Can the anti-purse seining lot produce any scientific documents? First reports on the foot march down mainstreet last Friday say about 100 people marched (mostly kids) but when Radio NZ reported the march on Sunday radio, the figure somehow leapt to 400. Now on Tuesday, it's reported there were 500, possibly more on the march! This is indeed beginning to be a very fishy tale. First, the anti-fishing brigade say stocks of Big Eye and Yellow Fin are declining then it's reported the number in their march last Friday has risen and keeps rising! Scientific evidence please!



The new Telco imported a marketing guru who sent out the wrong vibes and after a few complaints and before he could take a swim at Muri beach he disappeared into thin air, as the BTIB slogan says, go local.



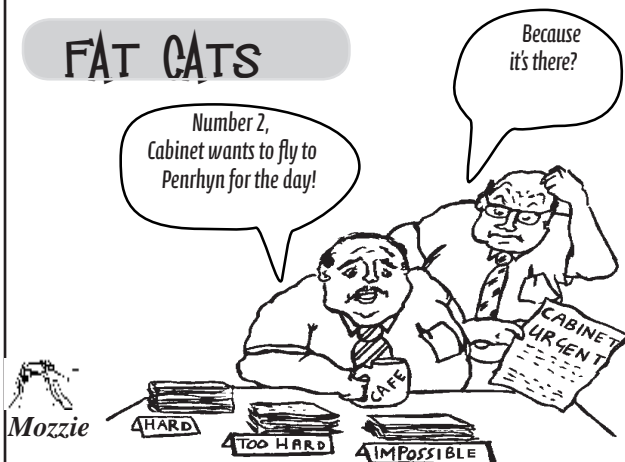
Recent advertising in the print media for locals wanting a change of scenery and earn big dollars as orchard workers in NZ continues to create vacancies for immigrant workers, then again with an eight percent unemployment rate for 15 to 35 year olds in the Cook Islands the overseas opportunity might be a good thing or would it deplete the outer Islands of able males where the unemployment rate makes up most of the statistic.



You heard it first right here, lone ranger Ben Porney is going to get some back up and some tontos to lessen his load. Government is going to set up a Panel to deflect the anti fish pillaging brigade's wrath and help him pursue more fish mining millions for treasury's empty coffers. Love him or hate him Porney's got the solid 100% backing of the round table of six and scream as much as they like anti fish mining protesters are blowing in

Monday's Captain's log for the vessel SS Daily, records Aitutaki MP Moana loane is not a Minister. This is because he is under the cloud of an investigation. Will someone please explain how is it, Moana has been allocated an office and has re-employed his two former staff? Just where is this office? Where did he source the funding from? When approached, one Minister's voice piece denied all knowledge.

FAT CATS



COCONUT ROUNDTABLE



VACANCY


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PUBLIC NOTICE



COOK ISLANDS
Ministry of Education
Maraurau o te Pae Api'i

**2015/2016 SHORT TERM TRAINING AWARDS
(STTA)**

Employers wishing to develop staff in New Zealand 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 (e.g 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 training is available in-country.

The STTA awards are open to Cook Islanders 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 2015/2016: Agriculture, Education (Secondary teaching in Mathematics, English & Science subjects), Health, Environmental Science, Waste Management, Fisheries/Marine, Renewable Energy, Tourism, Business/Entrepreneurship, Public Sector Management, Finance Management and ICT.

For further information and application forms, contact Anna Roi on ph 29357 ext. 245 or email aroi@education.gov.ck or MOE website: www.education.gov.ck. Application forms must be received no later than 12pm Friday 8th May 2015.

TENDERS


MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
**TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY OF AUTOMATIC WEATHER
STATIONS AND TRAINING**

The Ministry of Transport through its partnership with the SRIC-CC Programme is inviting suitably qualified groups/companies to submit a tender for the supply of eleven (11) automatic weather stations and to provide training to personnel's in the installation, operational and maintenance of the automatic weather stations.

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

Project Manager – Mr. Arona Ngari Cook Islands Meteorological Services Ph: +682 20603

Fax: +682 21603

Email: arona.ngari@cookislands.gov.ck

Closing date for the Tender submission is 3pm on Friday 15th May 2015, (Cook Islands time).

For general enquiries please contact Mr. Arona Ngari on +682 20603 or email.


**PURCHASE AND SUPPLY OF ATIU TIP TRUCK
CONTRACT NO. C15-04**

Infrastructure Cook Islands (ICI) on behalf of Atiu Island Government seeks tender proposals from Contractors for the Purchase and Supply of Atiu Tip Truck, Cook Islands.

Tenderers should ensure they are registered and have downloaded or received all files for the RFT including all prospective notices. Files can be obtained either online via www.procurement.gov.ck or from ICI office.

Tenders close at 3pm on Friday, 15th May 2015, and must be submitted in hard copy format in an envelope marked "CONFIDENTIAL" and have the following information clearly exhibited on the outside:

TO:	The Principal Infrastructure Cook Islands Arorangi Rarotonga COOK ISLANDS
FROM:	(Name of Tenderer) (Tenderers address 1) (Tenderers address 2) (Tenderers address 3)
TENDER FOR:	C15-04 PURCHASE AND SUPPLY OF ATIU TIP TRUCK
TENDER CLOSES:	3.00PM, FRIDAY 15 MAY 2015

All Enquiries to be directed to:	Solomona Solomona Contact Officer Email: solomona.solomona@
----------------------------------	---

ici.gov.ck

Phone: +682 20321

Guilty

By Taja Vaetoru

If we were here to judge ones worth on aesthetics alone
We'd be nothing more than a pair of eyeballs on a rock.
We'd be a line on paper.
We'd hold the power of sight in our clutches.
But be far from the precious touch of vision.
We would lack depth.

Beauty is skin deep.
And unfortunately, so is your judgement.

Description:
19 year old graphic designer.
Taurus. Born and raised in Manihiki.
Life motto is YOLO.



PUBLIC NOTICE



COOK ISLANDS
Ministry of Education
Maraurau o te Pae Api'i

2015/2016 NEW ZEALAND PACIFIC SCHOLARSHIP (NZPS), REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHOLARSHIP (RDS)& COMMONWEALTH AWARDS

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

1. 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
2. NZ Regional Scholarship – are available for both undergraduate and postgraduate study at a Pacific based tertiary institution (eg. USP, FNU)
3. Commonwealth Scholarship – funded by 'Universities New Zealand' in collaboration with the New Zealand Aid Programme for resident Cook Islanders who wish to pursue their studies further at the PhD or Masters Level.

These scholarships are open to Cook Islanders from all sectors of the community, public and private, living 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 study meets Government's HR development priorities.

PUBLIC NOTICE

A meeting will be held for the Landowners of T12 Ngati Nito and Taupiri in Matavera on the 30th April at 5pm at the lotua Residence in Matavera.

-Mama Rongo

TENDERS



REQUEST FOR TENDER

IMMUNO ASSAY ANALYSER AND LAPAROSCOPE EQUIPMENT

Tenders are requested for the supply of an Immuno Assay Analyser and Laparoscope Equipment for the Rarotonga Hospital.

Tender document and specification can be uplifted from the Funding & Planning office of the Ministry of Health in Tupapa and is also available on the Ministry of Health website www.health.gov.ck or contact Ms Vaine Ngatokorua on ph 29664, fax 23109 or email: v.ngatokorua@health.gov.ck

Tenders shall be submitted either:

Hard copy - Complete hard copies, packaged and labeled "CONFIDENTIAL" and have the following information clearly exhibited on the outside:

Procurement of Medical Equipment 2014/2015
Cook Islands Ministry of Health
P O Box 109,
Avarua,
COOK ISLANDS

OR

Softcopy: By emailing the tender bid as a pdf file to tenders@cookislands.gov.ck with the subject line "Procurement of Medical Equipment 2014/2015". The receipt time on the inbox will be used as the receipt time for the purposes of ensuring a tender is within the time limits.

The Tender Box is located at the Funding and Planning Office of the Cook Islands Ministry of Health in Tupapa (or submitted electronically to the email address detailed above)

Tender/Offer Closing Time

Request for tenders will close on the 30th April 2015 at 4.00pm.

For enquiries call Vaine Ngatokorua, Finance Manager on (682) 29 664 or email v.ngatokorua@health.gov.ck
Meitaki maata

VACANCIES

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FOOTBALL UPDATE

30 Days to go to FIFA U20 World Cup Fiji aim to maximise Kiwi links

Fiji has long enjoyed a connection with New Zealand football, and that link is set to be indelibly strengthened next month when the Melanesians make their historic bow at the FIFA U-20 World Cup. Fiji's appearance at New Zealand 2015 will mark the first time a side from the country has featured at a FIFA tournament.

While Tahiti have been stealing some of the region's limelight in recent years, Fiji boast a lengthy and proud football tradition which, in FIFA World Cup™ terms, pre-dates all other Pacific islands nations. Indeed their 1981 debut was appropriately enough against New Zealand - an iconic All Whites' side en route to creating their own slice of history by qualifying for Spain 1982.

Now in the modern era, Fiji's football pin-up Roy Krishna has helped put his nation on the map with a goalscoring performance at the 2013 FIFA Club World Cup for Auckland City and,

more recently, in the colours of Wellington Phoenix – New Zealand's only professional club. In the space of a single season Krishna has gone from being a bit-player to an integral member of the Phoenix forward line with the club currently honing in on their best-ever A-League performance.

Few Pacific-born players have reached professional ranks, adding further credence to Krishna's achievements. Only retired star Esala Masi, who won Australia's former National Soccer League, stands out as an equal. And Krishna is hoping that his star-dust rubs off on his young compatriots when they take the field at New Zealand 2015 in a colourful group containing Germany, Honduras and Uzbekistan.

"We [Fiji] have some good young up and coming players and, if they do well, hopefully it can open the door for more players to get a professional contract." – Fiji and Wellington Phoenix striker Roy Krishna



"It is a special moment for not only Fiji, but also for Oceania," Krishna told FIFA.com about New Zealand 2015. "I hope the team do well and make Fiji and Oceania proud. Hopefully fans come out and support the team, and the young players show their ability.

We have some good young up-and-coming players and, if they do well, hopefully it can open the door for more players to get a professional contract. I think there is big potential for players across Oceania, and I hope more can play in the A-League."

38 Days to go to FIFA Women's World Cup

Interesting Facts:

Speedcell was the name of the adidas official match ball for the FIFA Women's World Cup Germany 2011™. Speedcell represented speed, power and team spirit and the design of the Speedcell incorporated significant symbolic elements, including an 11-line graphic representing the 11 players in a team.

Runners-up USA managed to get the Speedcell in the back of the goal the most at Germany 2011 scoring 13 times, just ahead of Japan's 12.

Nigeria's Ifeanyi Chiejine became the youngest player to feature at a FIFA Women's World Cup™ when she took the field against Korea DPR during USA 1999 at the tender age of 16 years and 34 days, while Meg from Brazil is still the oldest player in Women's World Cup history at 39 years and 169 days old.

Chiejine made her debut for Nigeria in her side's opening game, a 2-1 win against Korea DPR, at USA 1999, and Meg played her final game at the Women's World Cup on 9 June 1995 as Brazil's stalwart goalkeeper in their last group game in Sweden.

