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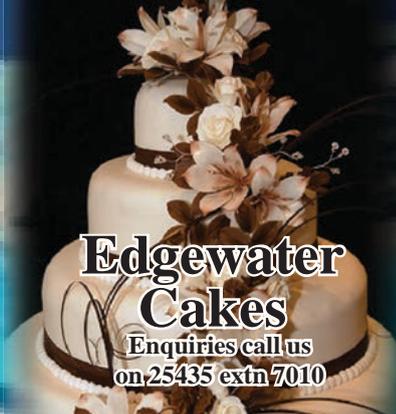
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# PM Puna's deceit and secret agenda exposed - Accomplice Neves headed for the sin bin

*Manihiki fly in voters get special treatment at Rarotonga taxpayer's expense*

The pieces of the jigsaw are beginning to frame a picture of secrecy, deceit, corruption and political abuse by the Prime Minister Henry Puna. Definitely unpopular on Rarotonga, Puna is driving a hidden agenda that includes methodically building his political stocks in Manihiki at the cost to the tax payers of Rarotonga to the tune so far of four million dollars.

The 78 vote Prime Minister's Manihiki constituency's contributes nothing to the nation's income ledger but unprecedentedly is the beneficiary of a total budgetary expense that is 19 times that of Rarotonga. Put it this way, per person, if for Rarotonga, \$1,000 is spent per capita, there is \$19,000 a person spent on Manihiki.

Now watch the Financial Secretary Richard Neves scurry into his cone of silence because he knows this figure is less than the factual but to dispute this statement with accuracy he will only confirm the Prime Minister's Manihiki and its people are the recipients of Donor funds and Rarotonga tax payer's benefits hugely disproportional to their population.

What Henry Puna spends from the Cook Islands Budget to buy votes and keep his seat is the equivalent of his side kick Mark Brown spending \$14 million in Takuvaine to hang on to his seat. The solar power installation in Manihiki on a household basis cost \$87,000 each.

Shocked? Brace yourself for more; we're only scratching the surface of the CIP corruption ice berg. The economically incompetent Neves is in deep trouble, now standing in political faeces up to his neck, facts are coming to light that will force



Henry Puna

the spineless Public Service Commissioner Russell Thomas to suspend then sack the arrogant Australian. Neneva Neves can count himself very fortunate if he can leave the Cook Islands without

to Rarotonga for the Maeva Nui 50 celebrations.

The government will refuse to disclose the exact arrival and departure numbers as well as the break down for each

four walls.

While Drollet collects \$1,200 of taxpayer's money a week doing absolutely nothing constructive to advance the position of the Opposition and the \$87,000 a year pretender Heather stares blankly into a mental wasteland, the Cook Islands Party are engaged in campaign readiness activities. More preoccupied with collecting their tax funded salaries each week than doing what the tax payers are paying them to do, their time is spent doing personal and frivolous Democratic Party tasks.

The politically impotent tag team Heather and Drollet can't cast stones at the government because they are not without sin, both are just as accountable as the corrupted Puna and Brown. The tax payers are not funding the Opposition Office for the paid staff to do Demo Party work which is a big difference from doing the work of opposing Government. Fundraising isn't Opposition work, which is Demo Party work and it's about time the Public Expenditure Review Committee

*Puna is manipulating the electoral roll in his Manihiki electorate and the indicators of how this is being engineered...*

serving a term of imprisonment. This time Neves has bowled his last underarm ball.

Despite his fervent denials Puna is preparing himself for an early election most likely in late November this year. The first indication he had a secret agenda was when some weeks ago the Herald publicised about thirty more passengers would be going to Manihiki than had come

northern group island because it again exposes the preparation strategy of the Cook Islands Party in readiness for a snap Election.

In the mean time the capacity deluded Leader of the Opposition William Smiley Heather is huddled up in his office cotton wooled by his CEO the control freak Eddie Drollet oblivious to the political manoeuvring smouldering away outside their

*Continued next page*

(PERC) stopped turning a blind eye and stepped in and put a stop to Drollet's misuse and abuse of public funds.

The wimpish PERC have got to be proactive as per their Act and be interventional when the abuse of Public Expenditure is so obvious and in the Public's interests, the chicken liver excuse of waiting for a complaint is not acceptable, simply put, refuse to be a highly paid political puppet and earn the respect and trust of the public by doing your job without fear or favour. The PERC Act is very clear on the responsibility of PERC appointees so demonstrate some integrity, do the job or move on.

Like the Audit Office, PERC projects no deterrent features or fear motivation signals which has resulted in the cavalier and lax attitude politicians and officials have towards public expenditure.

Enough words wasted on institutional watch dog cowards and the tax funded self serving pretenders bunked in the Opposition Office.

Detecting Puna's intentions has heightened with clarity he is dishonest, hypocritical with a nasty streak of self importance which he has no regard for how he embellishes it at the financial and emotional expense of others.

Puna is manipulating the electoral roll in his Manihiki electorate and the indicators of how this is being engineered at the expense of public funds is low life and despicable.

Puna has an entourage of about 30 devotees recruited by Auckland Consul Rosy Blake; they have accompanied the returning group who came to participate in the MN50 celebrations. These people need to be residential in Manihiki for three months to vote for the PM.

Most if not all of them arrived Friday 17 July as passengers on Air New Zealand flight NZ748, at least 15 of them enjoyed the luxury of travelling business class and the question is at whose expense? Is it true the Auckland Consul Office facilitated the travel arrangements and provided

some funding? The Manihiki passengers on that flight were identifiable by their uniform.

No expense has been spared to ensure accommodation and placate Puna's political entourage while they have been staying on Rarotonga. Their decision to travel on to Manihiki to become eligible to vote for Puna is not a spur of the moment decision, it was premeditated.

Puna has unlawfully paid ten Manihikians shopping money from an unconfirmed source of public funds against the Court's ruling in pretence the money was for compensation for the solar power project's use of private land. This was done within two hours of the high Court ruling on Friday 14 August 2015.

After a complaint was lodged to the Police by a Manihiki landowner, the Prime Minister's Office response was these payments are a loan which conveniently absolved the Police from pursuing the matter. Yet since when has the government become a lending institution for private individuals? What process is in place for such financial transactions to take place and who qualifies to apply? How is it the PM is allowed to spend public monies as it were his own?

The reality is the PM's supporters wanted shopping money and he complied. Also a question that needs answered by the Cook Islands Investment Corporation is why wasn't a portion of the 10 acres of Crown Land in Manihiki used to host the solar installation.

How much land does the Crown own in Manihiki, what is the location of the private land used in comparison to the land owned by the Crown? How much compensation has been allocated for the disputing landowners?

We put it to Henry Puna, he installed the solar project on private land to buy votes in the next elections. What has that unnecessarily cost the Rarotonga taxpayer?

Why are the Rarotonga taxpayers being burdened with the cost of non returning

travellers to the outer islands? For every person given free travel to Manihiki to bolster the electoral roll in Puna's favour that is an act of bribery. A staggering \$1.3 million had been budgeted for outer island transporting to and from Rarotonga.

Puna's overseas entourage are not entitled to free fares to Manihiki, so how much are each passenger plus their cargo being charged for their one way trip? Taio shipping charges \$750 one way to the Northern group for cabin passengers and \$600 for deck passengers.

Three months convalescing in Manihiki? Who is going to cover the cost of their waiting time? Will any of them be staying in one of the PM's private residences? Who is going to pay their return fares overseas once they have served Puna's purposes? Will the Rarotonga tax payer again fork out more illegitimate payments

justified by Neves as being above board? Neves can wriggle all he likes with his slippery tongue and his sleight of hand fiscal tricks but no rabbits will be coming forth this time.

We put it to Henry Puna to stop expecting the Rarotonga tax payer to secretly fund his re election campaign. Have regard for the law you expect others to observe, stop being a hypocrite. Stop your habitual retreating into the twilight zone of silence when ever questions of public interest are put to you.

You claimed your CIP government had no secrets, nothing will be secret, a full disclosure government. Mr Prime Minister, you are not above the Law, as a lawyer by profession you know that, enough is enough, walk the talk or go back to the polls to get a mandate to continue your modus operandi. - George Pitt



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# \$27,842.00 for airfares only - money well spent?

When Minister of Finance Mark Brown decided to take his spouse Daphne on the one paid trip a year that Ministers are permitted under the Civil List, very few people expected that Brown would take her to Baku the largest city in Azerbaijan by the Caspian Sea hosting at that time the 48th Asian Development Bank Board of Directors meeting.

Rather than demonstrate some genuine sensitivity to the public's concern of excessive travel stressing the Civil List budget and claw back some political credits by being prudent, Brown has happily embraced the Prime Minister Henry Puna's infectious jet setting addiction.

What no one expected was for Minister Mark Brown getting tax payers to cough up a whopping \$27,842.00 bill just in airfares alone. What is equally astonishing about the air fare bill is that nowhere on the internet is there an airfare for business class that comes close to the amount that tax payers have paid for his May 2015 international Baku jaunt. Unless he flew First Class.

Of all the expenditure in the Civil List Mark Brown Minister of Finance has shown zero prudence for other people's money. His scant disregard for public concern has become repulsive and repugnant. Described by his Takuvaine rugby mates as the 'boy born with a silver spoon in his mouth' Brown really knows how to spend money, particularly someone else's money which is probably why he's got that silver spoon tag. He's been spoon fed and he's still being spoon fed.

When it comes to sporting events Minister of Finance Mark Brown has been to them all, Rugby League World Cup in Wales England Ireland and France, Minister Mark Brown was there in 2013 - not as a player though but a hopeful spectator. Or the Olympic Games in London a year earlier in 2012, or what

about the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow or more recently the South Pacific Games in PNG 2015.

It's been an annual event for Minister Mark Brown to hit the international sporting fixture calendar, he's certainly done his fair share of running and dodging and that's just avoiding questions over decisions he's been involved with in Executive Council. But if it's not sport, he's at every other meeting involving finance or education or any other nondescript non event. He's attended most of them. Not a bad outcome for the former and 'humble' as he likes to describe himself fish and chips takeaway owner.

But that's not all. He recently flew to Jamaica for the umpteenth time and then to New York for a UN meeting. Getting him to stay home and answer questions over the mishandling of Grey Power members money or answering questions about Pacific Schooners has been difficult.

One thing is obvious, ducking and weaving in his rugby playing days is really paying off in his political career.

So the big question that's being asked is why were the two airfares for Mrs. and Minister Brown \$27,842.00 when only the Prime Minister is permitted to travel first class? One answer could be that he was acting like the Prime Minister and getting into the stride of things. Like the current Prime Minister Henry Puna who is particularly adept at sniffing out an plane trip whether it's a charter flight to Manihiki or an international affair somewhere out over the wide blue yonder.

At least we think we know how it's all being paid. Is the latest threat to raid the bank accounts of Grey Power mama's and papa are being used to pay for Mark Brown's next international sabbatical? Most likely.

- George Pitt



Finance Minister Mark Brown now addicted to travelling?

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# Invercargill surgeon George Ngaei honoured



Governor General Sir Jerry Mateparae, left, and Invercargill doctor George Ngaei during the investiture ceremony in Auckland on Tuesday.

For Invercargill doctor George Ngaei, it's nearly impossible to recall a defining moment he is most proud of in a career that has spanned decades.

Ngaei was recognised for his services to health and the Pacific community during an investiture ceremony in Auckland on Tuesday, named an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

When asked of his proudest moment, Ngaei said it was too hard to call.

"The whole package has been a journey.

"It's never been a job, it's a way of life. That's why this [the honour] has come as such a surprise."

Ngaei grew up in the Cook Islands, but moved to New Zealand to attend school from age 12.

He returns to the islands frequently, for holidays and to enjoy the fishing.

In 1976 he was appointed to Kew Hospital to establish an Endoscopy and Colonoscopy service.

He was also appointed as a Clinical Lecturer in Surgery by the Otago Medical School and as a supervisor of Surgical Studies by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons.

He was an elected member of the College of Surgeons from 1986 until 1994 and was instrumental in engaging with

and supporting Pacific Island surgeons.

He is still the College of Surgeons representative on the Southland Medical Foundation.

He is a founding member of the New Zealand Association of General Surgeons and in 2002, as the Pacific Island representative on the Southland District Health Board Community and Public Health Advisory Committee, established a Pacific Island Specialist Nursing Service in collaboration with the Pacific Island Advisory and Cultural Trust.

He has been chairman of that trust since 2007.

He is also on the board of the South Island Pacific Providers Collective, the Committee of the Auckland-based Cook Islands Health Network Association and was previously a member and manager of the Park Hospital Trust, where he led negotiations resulting in the purchase of the trust by Southern Cross Health Care.

Ngaei said he wants to ensure the Pacific Island Advisory and Cultural Trust remains strong and long lasting before he considers where life might take him next, but it was unlikely he would remain in Southland.

He would probably move to Auckland or back to the Cook Islands, but promised he would be back for the duckshooting and fishing.

*The Southland Times*

## Letter to the Editor Anonymous writers

Dear Editor  
One of the tenets of a fair justice system, a fair society too actually, is that one gets to see who their accuser is. Unfortunately the system, fostered by print media here is more akin to the bad old days of the southern states of America; where people in pointy white hats with eye holes cut out, get to attack you with their faces covered and identities hidden.

So why should we take any notice of them? What value is anything they say? "Fresh off the boat" provides a recent example of another 'gutless' attack from the shadows, but this time he/she got the wrong person, as often these anonymous writers do. Starting a letter with all the facts to hand is seldom a pre requisite for these folk.

I and some of my clients have been on the receiving end of personal attacks, and it's never pleasant. But by and large the writers have put their names to those attacks (thank you George Pitt – there's four words I never thought I'd write in a sentence!).

I believe the practise that encourages letters written by persons who don't have the courage to identify themselves, but get to make outrageous statements which are seldom verified before publishing, really needs to be looked at. Perhaps a long conversation is well overdue. One day a defamatory letter will go through, and the person injured will come after the publishers of the papers for damages; not the gutless wonders the papers are currently protecting.

If the person has facts to prove their allegations, put their name to it and print it, if they don't, then don't.

I will be taking this issue up with my fellow members at our next meeting of the Cook Islands Media Association, I think in time it will make for an interesting public debate too.

*Jaewynn McKay  
Woven Pacific Communications  
Vice President – Cook Islands Media Association  
21 August 2015*

## NBSAP Inception workshop gets underway

The National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan workshop or NBSAP gets underway this week at the Pukapuka Hostel.

The project is coordinated by the National Environment Service and carried out by the NBSAP division.

The project is part of the second generation of Biodiversity Enabling Activities (BD EA) under the Global Environment Facility (GEF), in which the Cook Islands has been a Party of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) since 1993.

The workshop will run from the 25th to the 27th August and will be opened by the Minister for Environment, Hon. Kiriau Turepu.

The 2-day workshop is part of one of three corresponding GEF components which is to conduct a stocktaking exercise on biodiversity planning in which national biodiversity targets are developed in response to the global Aichi Targets. The Aichi Targets is made up of 20 strategic biodiversity goals which is to be met by 2020.

The workshop will involve participants from various NES stakeholders including NGO's and the Aronga Mana who all play an important role under the NBSAP Project.

Day one will consist of the roles and functions of the UNDP support team and NES, followed by the community and stakeholders project.

Day two consists of the planning of the Cook Islands NBSAP and project activities followed by the project organisation and responsibilities.



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## Pacific Schooners contract

A judicial review of the contract between Government and Pacific Schooners Ltd was the subject of discussion on Te Kave Kōrero on Wednesday 17th August 2015.

The Hon James Beer, Member of Parliament for Murienua, was the guest speaker interviewed on the programme regarding the judicial review.

Beer said the Democratic Party is committed to going to the High Court to review the contract entered into by Government and local shipping company Pacific Schooners Ltd with regards to the vessel Tiare Tāporo.

“Well a judicial review has to be done on specific areas of the statutory obligations of the Government in this case, and the parties that are involved in it, and those obligations would include the issuing of transport licences, safety certificates, that kind of thing”, said Beer.

“We’re well aware that the contract is between the Crown and Pacific Schooners and all that may incorporate public monies. The only ability for us to be able to get some questions asked and answered, really lies through the administration of the account of the contract as to whether or not the administration and the issuing of those statutory obligations, compliance certificates have been issued in accordance with the contract obligations”.

Beer said the Democratic Party will be looking at the legality of the contract.

“We certainly are exploring it. I can say publicly now that we have, as a result of the massive public interest in this situation, and I must also take the opportunity to publicly acknowledge your part in being able to bring some questions regarding this contract to the public attention”.

Beer added that they have taken the liberty of going through the clauses of the contract.

“When you go through the contract, it

does raise so many questions particularly what the contract says, what the important parameter says and what the Prime Minister says, because there seems to be a disconnect based on the Prime Minister saying that you know we’ll be able to get our money back, that was his quote inside the Cook Islands News, we’ll be able to get our money back through the carriage of cargo”, said Beer.

According to Beer the Prime Minister has got the issues confused.

“He [the Prime Minister] seems to be saying that we’ll get our money back through the carriage of cargo but the contract doesn’t specify cargo and doesn’t specify a regular service but he’s assuming this and that is definitely not the contract, so I’m not even sure that the Prime Minister himself, may be he’s too busy, hasn’t even seen the contract”, said Beer.

“There are two different cost factors and the contract was set up to carry 130 passengers and it’s specific to passengers, not cargo and it’s specific to a specific time period. The Prime Minister however is using both this limited time and specific contract to repatriate people, participants, from Te Maeva Nui to the outer islands, and it’s specific to the northern group, not any other place, that’s what the contract says”.

When asked whether the Democratic Party was serious about the judicial review or whether it was doing it to score political points, Beer responded:

“Well, I think at the end of the day we have got to take some action”.

The Democratic Party’s application for judicial review should be filed with the High Court by October according to Beer.

In addition Beer stated that the Democratic Party has also filed a letter of complaint to the Office of Audit and PERCA to undertake a review of Government’s

action concerning the contract with Pacific Schooners Ltd.

“In the letter of complaint we talk about a number of issues that have come to light particularly whether or not the important parameters which the obligation of each one of the potential tenderers like Taio Shipping, and Cook Islands General Transport, and of course Pacific Schooners, whether or not those important parameters are, that seem to have changed drastically, in fact they have changed drastically, the bidding process to the obligations of the contract and there’s a lot of questions around that area”, Beer said.

However, with regards to the Democratic Party’s proposed course of action, Te Kave Kōrero believes that the Party is just making noise, that it is not serious about the judicial review, that it has financial issues and is unable to afford to instruct its lawyers to file the action in the High Court.

“Unless Beer finances the High Court action himself, being a very successful businessman and a competent MP in the Democratic Party, and should have been the leader I might add, it remains to be seen whether the Democratic Party is serious about the judicial review”, said Tony Hakaoro, Te Kave Kōrero presenter.

Hakaoro said he would like to see the Democratic Party carry out its intention as Government must be held to account for the \$200,000.00 of taxpayer’s money paid out to Pacific Schooners Ltd.

According to Hakaoro the Tiare Tāporo is still in Panama and there is speculation that the engineer has walked out of the job and has returned to Canada leaving the vessel stranded in Panama without an engineer to bring it to the Cook Islands.

Te Kave Kōrero believes that the Tiare Tāporo will not make it to Rarotonga until the end of September or early October.

## Grey Power relentless in pursuit

The New Zealand pension was the subject of discussion on Te Kave Kōrero on Friday 21st August 2015.

Te Kave Kōrero interviewed Grey Power President, Dennis Tūnui, regarding the pension.

Tūnui said in Māori that during the week of the Maeva Nui MFEM staff has been visiting Grey Power members with regards to their income tax obligations.

“Ka inangaro au i te akakite atu ea`a tei tupu. I te `epetoma o te Maire Maeva Nui, i te tuātau tāmataora tikāi, kua ring`aere mai te au mema`aere i Tītīkāveka, Grey Power members, ē, tē`ātoro`ia mai nei rātou e te taxation staff no ta rātou tero`oki kāre rātou i tūtāki”.

According to Tūnui a staff member who visited his home stated that if by the 26th of August their outstanding taxes are unpaid Government will raid Grey Power members' bank accounts or seize their assets.

“Tēia tāna i`akakite mai ki āku, me tae ki te rā 26 o tēia marama, me kāre rāi mātou e tūtaki i tēia tero, ka tomo te Kavamani ki roto i ta mātou bank accounts, ka rave`oki i te moni. Me kāre e moni i reira, ka`oki mai rātou ki te ngutu`are tātakita`i ka rave i te`apinga, assets, kia tau ki te moni i kaiou`ia e mātou”.

Tūnui said his fellow pensioners accept being taxed but Government mislead them as it did not disclose that there was a back tax in the calculations of their income tax. “Kia mārāma koe,`āriki mātou kia tero`ia. Pikika`a kāre rātou i`akakite mai i te katoa`anga o tēia tero, nā mātou i kimi i kitea`ia mai ai e nira tēta`i i roto i tēia tero koia`oki ko te back tax, kāre rātou i`akakite ana”.

Tūnui added that the tax obligation imposed upon pensioners was made suddenly and unexpectedly and without prior notice, hence their opposition or objection to it.

“Tēia i rēira tēta`i i manamanatā ai mātou,

ko te tuku`ia mai`anga tēia tero ki runga i a mātou, pō`itirere`ua. Kāre mātou i`akateateamamao`iā na no te mea,`e tika`anga to mātou i te pāto`i. Ko tā mātou i rēira te rēira i rave, public scrutiny, ki runga i tēta`i ture ta te Kavamani ka tuku mai, kāre mātou i`ōronga`ia māi na tēia tika`anga kia tuatua, no rēira mātou i pāto`i ei”.

Tony Hakaoro, Te Kave Kōrero presenter, put it to Tūnui that they [Grey Power members] are unreasonable as Government has the power to change the law and tax them accordingly but Tūnui did not accept that.

“We are standing on the principles that pensioners should never be taxed”, said Tūnui.

As a proposition to addressing or resolving the issue Hakaoro suggested that they [Grey Power] approach the Minister of Finance and the Prime Minister and ask them to repeal the legislation but if they don't agree, then they [Grey Power] must accept that Government has the power to leave the law as it is.

“I tōku manako,`ārāvei kōtou i te Minita o te moni ē te Prime Minister, pati kia tau`ia te ture, ē, kia tīpū`ia te tero`anga i a kōtou, kia tākore tākiri`ia, kia`aka`oki`aka`ou mei te tuātau i a Pāpā Arapati, Pāpā Tom, Pāpā Marura`i, ē tērā au Prime Minister tā`au e tā`ikū ra. Ko te mea`ua tēia e neke ei tātou ki mua. Mē kāre rā rāua e`āriki i te tau`i te ture, Pāpā Dennis, I have to be fair ki te Kavamani, you must accept ē,`e mana rāi to te Kavamani i te`akaruke`ua i te ture mei ta rātou rāi i anoano”.

In support of pensioners however Hakaoro criticised Government for intimidating them.

“Aka`apa au i te Kavamani no tēia au tuatua tāmataku i a kōtou, eā, tāmataku i a kōtou”.

Hakaoro also criticised Government for threatening to enter pensioners' properties to seize their assets. He said that Government has no statutory power

to seize assets unless it obtains that power from the Court.

Tēnā te`irava o te ture tāku e`akakitē ra i nakoanei, te meitaki`uā ra, e mana to te Kavamani. Ko te mana rā ē, ka tomo rātou ki roto i to kōtou au ngutu`are,`apai i ta kōtou au`apinga, ka`aka`apa au, ka`akakino, ka`akatāravakē au i te Kavamani no te mea, i raro ake i te ture, tāku i research i tēia rā, kāre o rātou mana kia tomo ki roto i to kōtou au ngutu`are, kia`apai roa rātou i a kōtou ki te Akavā`anga”.

“Government is not above the law. It is the same as every Tom, Dick and Harry in the land. If it wants to seize pensioners' assets it must take a civil litigation action in the High Court against each pensioner, obtain judgment against the pensioner, and then apply for the appropriate statutory enforcement action to enforce the judgement and should that be a`warrant to seize property`, so be it”, said Hakaoro.

“Government should never get away with daylight robbery committed against our old folks”.

Hakaoro added that natural justice demands that sufficient notice be given to the pensioners before Government takes drastic actions against them.

Te Kave Kōrero believes that there are approximately 400 Cook Islanders or New Zealanders currently living in the Cook Islands and collecting the New Zealand pension. However Te Kave Kōrero stands to be corrected on that number.

“If that's the number, then it is a small number in my opinion, and in that case, the law should be amended to exempt them from paying income tax on their pension. Afterall they [Grey Power members] are in their twilight years and deserve not to be troubled by, or concerned with, tax on their pensions” said Hakaoro.

Te Kave Kōrero intends to interview the Minister of Finance, the Hon Mark Brown, or Financial Secretary, Richard Neves, or the Head of Inland Revenue, Andrew Haigh, on the subject matter in the next few days.

# Norman George on The Fourth Estate

*By Norman George*

## The Fourth Estate:

A late amendment to our Constitution was added in 1997. It is known as Constitution amendment No. 20. It is the preamble to the Constitution that should have been built in to the original copy. It reads:

### PREAMBLE

IN THE HOLY NAME OF GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, THE EVERLOVING AND THE EVERLASTING:

We, the people of the Cook Islands, recognising the heritage of Christian principles, Cook Islands custom and the rule of law, remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day, being that day off the week which, according to a person's belief and conscience, is the Sabbath of the Lord.

I am surprised how little reference is made to the Constitution preamble by our biblical scholars.

The Christian Churches have a major role to play in our stability and spiritual nourishment. There are different degrees of adherences, compliances, beliefs and methods of worship.

Whatever roles the churches play, our people have total reliance on religion to keep the peace and the faith. Because of its enduring presence since the arrival of the missionaries, people communicate with the Almighty through prayers.

It is the consistency and stability provided by the worship of God that adds to the ability to maintain social discipline, tolerance and exuberance of freedom by the followers and adherents of various churches and religions. The main result of this is to allow the maintenance of peace and good order, we do not suffer from civil disorder

or mass public disobedience.

It is quite heart warming when you hear preachers address politicians bluntly with a clear message to change and improve. There are others who placate and tolerate corruptions. I gave up attending my own church in Atiubecause of this. Thankfully that particular preacher has been transferred.

Churches and religions do matter in the Cook islands. They are bigger than political parties. They have the numbers to make impact. Politian's will listen to the churches. No leader wants to lead without the support of the churches behind him.

The churches and religion can offer our people spiritual and physical protection. I submit that together with the three Estates of the Are Ariki, Koutu Nui and Aronga Mana, the Churches are our Fourth Estate of protection. I treat all Four Estates as we see it as offering us better solid protection than relying on politics and the political system within.

Don't get me wrong, the democratic political system that we have is the foundation of all our rights, including the right to worship. While we treasure the system, within it lies these intricacies, mysteries and challenges of different variations of freedoms.

Our churches under the flag of the RAC (Religions Advisory Council) have a duty to protect our Christian system of religion. While I personally welcome all forms of religious worship, I draw the line with fanatical radical worship. Any religion that tolerates the killing of another human being is not a religion but an evil cult of terror.

We also have in our midst some active atheists. There

is a regular letter writer to the editor of the Cook Islands News who disguises his atheism. He makes the occasional cruel shots at our churches. I have tried to expose the little devil on a few occasions without success. What people like him should do is allow us our freedom of worship while he stares at his wide open blank space of empty ungodliness.

## OUR ETHNIC EXPATRIATE FAMILY

Nothing is more enriching than to witness cultural shows and artistic presentations by those who have moved in to live and work with us. Diversity of cultures and ethnicity creates a robust active community with plenty to offer.

Our peaceful homogeneous society is a lantern for the world community to shine on. We are seeing better sportsmanship; more inter marriages, better skills and new people amongst us to provide a variety of depth and new challenges.

We have a duty to act responsibility towards our expatriate brethren and to our own indigenous people. The future generation of yet to be born Cook Islanders will never forgive us if they arrive into a world where they are a minority in their own country.

That is the fundamental reason why I am arguing that a safety valve be provided to avoid the threat of potential extinction of the majority of the indigenous Cook Islands Maori people. We need to plan and set the guidelines now, not when it is too late.

At the risk of being accused of being an alarmist, I would like to set the ball rolling. I will continue to argue that a limit of 25% of expatriates be absorbed into our population and no more. A Constitutional Amendment is needed to give

it legal status.

These are the kind of issues that the Four Estates of the Are Ariki, Koutunui, Aronga Mana and the RAC should tackle and be heard. One thing is for sure, there will always be work for them to do. To fail to act now is a serious threat to future Arikis and Mataipos and Cook Islanders yet to be born.

When does our people react to any public issues? I have tried to be provocative, teasing, scare mongering, still all I receive is frozen fish stares. Cold, uninterested, blank, comatose like..... I put out law reform issues, no reaction. Road traffic law issues, still the body bag count continues, the crazy driving on the road continues. Not a whisper or murmur of support or dissent. The politicians are nowhere to be seen or heard. Common tatou, are we all without conscience?

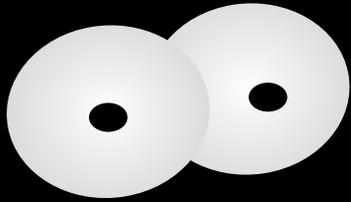
To me, dissent is sometimes a good sign of liveliness. Silence, a sign of lifelessness.

I sum up this column by saying that I have idolised two particular countries for their resourcefulness, survivability and success.

On the economic front, the City State of Singapore, one of the most powerful economic success stories of the past 50 years.

The other country has enjoyed success for many thousands of years. That country is Israel, the Apple of God's eye! History shows they survived the Pharaohs' dynasty of Egypt, the Persian Empire, the Babylonian Empire, the Roman Empire and the Nazis. What a formidable model for us to follow – in both examples size is irrelevant, it is the power, faith, commitment, courage and belief in almighty God that counts in the end.

*Ka Kite.*



# VAKA PRIDE COMPETITION

## WIN FUNDING

TOWARDS A COMMUNITY PROJECT  
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*CONDITIONS APPLY*



- Clean beaches
- Clean streams and free of animals
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- Best reuse of rubbish and recycle centres



- Least reported dog nuisance complaints & wandering dogs
- Least reported crime



- Best voted flower and/or vegetable gardens
- Best voted bus shelters
- Best kept public toilets
- Best kept public areas eg. sports field, burial grounds

Judging will be conducted by the Vaka Pride Committee.

The Vaka Pride committee is made up of representatives from The Cook Islands Police, The Ministry of Internal Affairs, The Ministry of Health, Cook Islands National Environment Service and The Cook Islands Tourism Corporation

## HOW TO ENTER

1. Get your community leaders together to select your community project.
2. Contact Cook Islands Tourism to register your Vakas interest.
3. Interested group applicants must complete an application form.

ENTRIES CLOSE 31 AUGUST 2015

For more information and competition details  
contact Noeline Mateariki on 29435 or visit  
[www.kiaorana.cookislands.travel](http://www.kiaorana.cookislands.travel)



# TE KAVE KORERO

Host: Tony Hakaoro, MON 24th August 2015

## Catching up with Daniel & Alexia

Fijian and Samoan singer and entertainer, Daniel Ray Costello, and his daughter, Alexia, were the guest speakers on Te Kave Kōrero on Monday 24th August 2015.

The popular Pacific Island artist and his daughter are in the Cook Islands on a charity and holiday trip.

“Arorangi Bears brought us to Rarotonga to fund raise and also in collaboration with Miss Cook Islands Pageant Association”, said Costello.

Costello visited the Cook Islands for the first time when he toured with his band 23 years ago.

“I was here in 1992, quite a long time ago”.

Here in Rarotonga now for the second time Costello said he has not been able to come back to Rarotonga with his band as he has been busy entertaining and touring mainly in the Pacific in the past 23 years.

“I’ve done Canada, Singapore, I’ve done Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, Papua New Guinea, I haven’t done the US yet”.

Costello who was born and raised in Fiji is Irish on his dad’s side and Rotuman, Samoan and Scottish on his mother’s side. However he no longer resides in Fiji.

“We moved to Samoa almost two years ago”, said Costello.

“Just wanted a change you know and Samoa has always been an appealing place to live throughout the years, I’ve been there a few times and because I have family there, Samoan family as well, so I thought you know, it’ll be nice to have a change and live in Samoa. We love it, we love it there, it’s a beautiful place”.

Costello said in Samoa he entertains on his own as a one man act.

“I perform in Samoa, yes, I perform regular gigs in Samoa, every week”, said Costello.

A successful singer and entertainer Costello said he has not been in the studio for a while.

“My last album was in 2011 called ‘Travel Winds’, and I haven’t recorded since then”, said Costello.



Costello singing ‘Take me to the Islands’ at the Aroa Nui for the Arorangi Bears fundraiser

“I’ve actually recorded 36 albums. Yes it’s been successful”.

“Out of 36 albums I’ve probably had 10 hits, so you can see the balance there, you know like 10 hits to about 26 flops but you just keep doing what you do, you just keep doing what you do”, Costello said.

Costello said he performed and recorded the music himself on one of his most successful albums.

“Everything you heard on that album, the Samba album, like ‘Dark Moon’ and all those songs, were all done by me, all the music, all the voices”, said Costello.

Costello said he has done almost an album a year and has been singing and entertaining for 37 years.

Speaking about his family Costello said he has four daughters and three of them sing well.

“I’m very proud of them and they’re sort of doing their own type of music. I try not to get too involved too much with them so they carve their own identity and their own style, I’m a fan of theirs”.

Alexia, the daughter who accompanied her dad to Rarotonga, is very talented and gifted too like her dad.

Costello said his daughter has her own

plans.

“There’s an album coming up soon for her. She may use me or she may use another producer, I’m not sure, it’s all up to her”.

Asked whether following her dad’s footsteps is a hard act Alexia was moderate in responding.

“I’m not gonna compete to that. I just do my own things cause it’s not ever about competition you know, no two people are the same, so you just be inspired and give what you got yea”, Alexia said.

“I think because my Dad’s experience, have been able to help me a lot just pursuing this and thinking a lot whether or not I want this a career, or just a face, he helped me realise quite a while ago that this is something I want to do, yea, so he’s been very encouraging, he’s got so much wisdom concerning performances and entertainment”.

Daniel Costello and his daughter, Alexia, returns to Samoa this coming Friday, August 28th, 2015.

Te Kave Kōrero expresses to them best wishes and a big ‘meitaki ma`ata’ for coming to Rarotonga.

Kia orāna e kia manuia, and `aere rā, Daniel and Alexia.

# Q&A

## #1



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**And to show we've really been listening we're adding 5GBS to your August broadband plan.**

**Any customer that is concerned about their internet usage, can and should speak with our Customer Services team by:**

**calling us on 123,  
coming into visit,  
by emailing us at [ck.info@blueskypacificgroup.com](mailto:ck.info@blueskypacificgroup.com) and  
via [facebook.com/BlueskyCookislands](https://www.facebook.com/BlueskyCookislands)**



# Bid for media access to file on Police vs Teina Bishop bribery case declined by Chief Justice

An application by William Framhein for access to the Court file on the Police vs Teina Bishop bribery case under the Official Information Act has been declined by the Chief Justice who set out his reasons in a minute dated 25 August 2015.

The Chief Justice approached the

application as if it were a request by the media generally for access to a Court file.

The Chief Justice in his minute said while the right of the media to access court proceedings should be taken seriously, that right has to be balanced against the importance of ensuring the court process proceeds fairly

both to the prosecution and to the defence.

RC Harrison QC acting for Bishop, opposed access referring to the risks of allowing premature media access to witnesses statements and other exhibits.

Set out below is the minute issued by the Chief Justice. *By Charles Pitt*

## NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR LEAVE TO PROSECUTE

DATED 9 JULY 2015

**TAKE NOTICE** that on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of July 2015 at 10:00am, or as soon thereafter as counsel may be heard, Counsel for the Applicant will move the High Court of the Cook Islands for an order under s113(3) of the Crimes Act 1969 (**Act**) granting the Applicant leave to prosecute the Respondent for offences against s113 of the Act which are set out in the two draft Informations attached to this application.

### UPON THE GROUNDS:

- A On 23 July 2013, a complaint of bribery and corruption was made against the Respondent to the Cook Islands Police Service (**CI Police**) by Reuben Tylor, a barrister and solicitor of the High Court of the Cook Islands since May 1975. The Respondent was the Minister of Marine Resources at the time.
- B On 30 July 2013, the CI Police commenced an investigation into the Respondent's conduct. Detective Inspector Areumu Ingaua, Commander of the Criminal Investigation Branch of the CI Police, was appointed as the officer in charge of the investigation.
- D In August and October 2013, the CI Police obtained and executed several search warrants to obtain relevant information.
- E In December 2013, the CI Police sought the assistance of the New Zealand Police with the investigation. The New Zealand Police referred the matter on to the Serious Fraud Office of New Zealand (**NZ SFO**). The NZ SFO agreed to assist with the investigation by providing investigative and technical support.
- F In February 2014, members of the NZ SFO and the New Zealand Police force assisted the CI Police with the execution of a number of further search warrants in Rarotonga and Aitutaki, including on addresses associated with the Respondent. The warrants resulted in the seizure of a number of electronic devices and hard copy documents. Interviews were conducted with a number of relevant persons during this phase of the investigation.

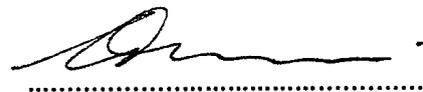
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- G The CI Police were subsequently assisted by the NZ SFO with the forensic retrieval and analysis of documents contained on electronic devices seized during the execution of search warrants in February 2014.
- H In August 2014, with the assistance of the CI Police, staff from the NZ SFO conducted further interviews in Rarotonga to advance the investigation. Two further search warrants were also executed to obtain relevant documentation. Through his solicitor, the Respondent was offered the opportunity to attend a voluntary interview to respond to the allegations. Through his solicitor, the Respondent declined to be interviewed, but provided a written response dated 8 August 2014 to some of the allegations through a letter from his solicitor.
- I In February 2015, the Applicant carefully considered all of the evidence obtained during the investigation. The Applicant had also received and considered legal advice from the Crown Law Office (Cook Islands) and legal staff at the NZ SFO. Having considered the evidence, the Applicant decided, in good faith and without any improper influence from any person, to seek the leave of this Court to prosecute the Respondent for the offences against s113 of the Act which are set out in the two draft Informations attached to this application.
- K It is in the interests of justice that the order sought by the Applicant is granted.

**AND UPON THE FURTHER GROUNDS** set out in the affidavit evidence of Areumu Ingaua, Joanne Lee Pettifer, and Shane Allan Mannix filed in support of this application, and a memorandum of counsel for the Applicant which will be filed and served in advance of the hearing of this application.

**THIS** application is made pursuant to s113(3) of the Act.

**DATED** at **AUCKLAND** this 1<sup>th</sup> day of July 2015



N R Williams /M K Thomas  
Counsel for the Applicant

To: The Registrar of the High Court of the Cook Islands  
And to: Counsel for the Respondent

# Interim Injunction granted in relation to Muri beachfront property

By Noeline Browne

*Noeline Browne is in the final stages of completing her law degree.*

After a two day hearing in the Land Court presided over by Justice Savage, the court granted an interim injunction to prevent any development to go ahead on a Muri beachfront property until such time as matters are dealt with in the Land Court as to whether the lease on the land is valid or ought to be cancelled.

The parties to the land dispute are all members of an extended family in Muri, with the applicant Eruera Nia on behalf of ngati Uirangi having applied for a rehearing on whether a family lease held by Ani Piri is valid or invalid. In addition, the family applied for an interim injunction to prevent any development until such time as the Land Court determines the rights of the parties involved. Lawyers involved were Charles Little for Eruera Nia and the Uirangi clan with Tina Browne acting for the respondent, Ani Piri.

Judging from the court proceedings, there were originally going to be a number of witnesses called, but owing to the length of the hearing, in the end, two witnesses were called in support of the applications and only the respondent was called to oppose the matters.

The background facts appear to be that the disputed land known as Te Reva has been considered the 'family beach reserve' for a long time. That was confirmed by the current Uirangi Mataiapo, Dorothy Nicholas, who was the first witness called to the stand who was cross examined at length by Tina Browne acting for Ani Piri. Uirangi was adamant that the land was a family reserve and that she opposed the lease and also the proposal for development that the Pacific Resort has negotiated with the respondent (Ani Piri).

The second witness was Eruera Nia, the applicant, who testified that the family reserve was important with the area having since become dotted with resorts 'left and right' and if it is lost then the family will

have no other beachfront land in Muri. Eruera told the court that when he and his father returned to live in Rarotonga in Christmas 1980, that whole family – his father, his uncles, cousins and himself - had camped down at the beachside and his father had pointed out the reserve area. At the time, the Mataiapo was Kave Nia, father to Ani Piri, who built a house on the beach reserve without the permission of the rest of the family. On at least one occasion in 1989, Kave Nia asked the family for the occupation to the reserve, which was rejected by the family, but he was allowed the use of the use he had built but the 'surrounding area' was to remain a family reserve. The legal rep for the family, noted that this was despite Mr Nia senior chairing the meeting in his capacity as Mataiapo of the clan.

Ani Piri had a different version, saying that her father 'must have had an occupation right' otherwise he would not have built the house. She said her father wanted to build a house on his own family land, because despite being the Mataiapo he was actually living on his wife's family land. The house was later occupied by one or other of his family, but eventually, the house was rented out to the Pacific Resort as staff quarters and appears to still be the case. However, when asked to produce evidence of the occupation right by way of minutes of the meeting or by it being shown on the register of title, she could not.

According to the testimony of Dorothy and Eruera, the family were upset about Ani's lease on a number of levels. Firstly they were not happy with the way that Ani got the lease, having brought the matter up in passing at a family meeting held in 2007 for a completely different matter. After hearing nothing further of the 'lease', five years later in 2012, an assembled landowners meeting was called to confirm the lease. Eruera objected but

the family were in confusion and the lease was granted. Then in 2014, an EIA public notice appeared relating to a 8-double story units to be built right across the width of what they thought was the family reserve. The family then asked Eruera to act on their behalf and to send an objection letter to the National Environment Service, not to grant the EIA, and also for him to seek legal advice to stop the development and also to try to cancel the lease held by Ani on the family reserve.

When being examined by her legal rep, Tina Browne, Ani seemed quite sure of her ground and gave a very different version of the facts. She said her father 'must have had an occupation right' otherwise he would not have built the house. She said her father wanted to build a house on his own family land, because despite being the Mataiapo he was actually living on his wife's family land. The house was later occupied by one or other of his family, but eventually, the house was rented out to the Pacific Resort as staff quarters and appears to still be the case. Ani said she had asked the family for the lease in 2007 and it was granted and she could not see why they were now opposing the lease.

However, after cross examination of Ani by opposing counsel, Charles Little, the court was told that the proposed 8-unit double-story development would be right across the entire beach reserve and block out the light to the other owners and leave no reserve for the rest of the family at all. Not only that but Ani would be the only family member to benefit from the \$82,000 pa rental arrangement that she had negotiated with the Pacific Resort.

Did Ani think this was fair, when in fact the reserve belongs [or should belong] to the family? Also could Ani produce any evidence of the occupation right that she claimed her late

father had [by way of minutes of the meeting or by it being shown on the register of title or other evidence] she could not. On further probing, Ani said she felt justified with her lease in 2007 when she had originally intended to build something out of her own funds. When asked how long she had been in negotiations with the resort, Ani said from about 2012. Why did she keep the fact secret and not tell the family? Ani said her legal advisor, Tim Arnold told her she did not have tell them any details. Did she think the lease and her negotiations to be the sole beneficiary was fair to the rest of the family considering that the reserve belonged to all the family? Under pressure, Ani admitted that she did think it was unfair.

Soon afterwards, Justice Savage gave his ruling that the court would grant an interim injunction and that there does appear to be a case to answer. The developer or his servants are not to enter the land nor to begin any work on the land of any description.

## Variation to Occupation Right granted

The application by Mr Airi Kainuku to vary his existing occupation right in Avaavaroa to include his son was granted. However, the terms and conditions of the occupation right were yet to be determined. Travis Moore asked his Honour to make a ruling that all the Land Court Justices of the Peace were to observe the new court practice note relating to occupation rights for residential purposes. However, Justice Savage, declined to make any such direction, saying that he would not interfere with the independence of the JPs but that appeals against JP decisions would be heard by the judge/s (Justice Savage or Justice Isaac). Nevertheless, Justice Savage did note that the JPs were well aware that the question of occupation rights were a 'live issue'.

*Encouragement Column*  
With Senior Pastor John Tangi

# How to heal your hidden hurts or wounds

Part 1

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

In life there are so many people with hidden hurts or wounds in their lives. Not the external ones but the internal hurts or wounds. These are the hurtful memories which people keep in secret. Maybe it's the rejection by the parents, or the abandonment by the mother or by the father, or maybe the unfaithfulness of the partner in the past, or perhaps the memory of feeling like you didn't matter to your parents, or you have been ignored, or maybe someone did something really bad to you, and so on.

These are the hidden hurts or wounds that you don't see on the outside of people's lives. These hurts or wounds are from the environment we live in, from our families, and these are the wounds or hurts that have the greatest impact on our lives, even from schools caused by other children, perhaps by friends who betrayed us, or even from the workplaces, and so on.

In the Bible, in 1 Peter 4v.1-11, the Apostle Peter is speaking about these hidden hurts or wounds in our lives. Peter is giving us some lessons on "How To Heal Those Hidden Hurts or Wounds" in our lives.

**Lesson 1 : Forgive The Offender.** In verse 1 it reads "Since Christ suffered while He was in His body, strengthen yourselves with the same way of thinking that Christ had." Know that Jesus understands what it means to be hurt. Jesus had 7 physical or external wounds or hurts – the nail marks on His hands and feet, the stripes on His back, the spear pierced His side, and the crown of thorns

on His head. Jesus also had internal hurts or wounds that we don't see and these are the ones that hurts the most – the wounds of betrayal by Judas one of His disciples, the rejection by His own people and even by Peter one of His disciples, and the hatred by His own people calling out 'Crucify Him, Crucify Him!' Jesus knows what it is like to be mistreated or to be rejected. Peter is saying, when you go through a hurt, you need to have the same attitude that Jesus had.

On the cross in Luke 23v.34 Jesus said "Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing." This is what Peter is saying for us "to have a forgiving heart attitude" like our Lord Jesus Christ. You may say "Why should I forgive those who hurt me?" The answer is, you forgive them because God has already forgiven you of your sins and wrong doings. Secondly, because you are going to need forgiveness in the future. Thirdly, because you are never going to stop hurting until you learn to forgive. Hebrews 12v.15 reads "Be careful that none of you fails to respond to the grace which God gives, for if he does there can very easily spring up in him a bitter spirit which is not only bad in itself but can also poison the lives of many others."

It is very important for us to forgive the offender if we are going to have our hurts healed. Jesus forgave, and we too should forgive those who hurt us. I will continue with Part 2 of this theme next week.

May God bless you and guide you in your life. Te Atua te aroa.

# An absolute blast

By Hayley McNabb.

So the past week has been an absolute blast. Even though I didn't do anything completely different to the others I have just been feeling great. To be honest I think it's just because I know that this term is going to be a short and quick one with only 5 weeks left and then next term there's only 4 weeks for us seniors before we go on study break to prepare ourselves for the end of year exams. That then means so we can finally go on our Christmas holidays and have long break from all the school work and have nothing to worry about.

On Saturday I went to work as usual down at the market starting from 6 in the morning until around 2 in the afternoon. Though it's always a little exhausting I still had had a good busy day and on the plus side we made plenty of sales. While I was working though, I met the rugby team that had come over from England. I had a conversation with some of them about their stay here and how their rugby was going. They played the Tereora College boys and said they lost one and won one which they all said they were pretty happy with. They also said that they loved every bit of it while they were here in Rarotonga and all hope to return back here sometime soon.

After work a few friends and I went to stay at another friend of ours. We thought we would make a little bonfire since we had nothing else to do. So we went and gathered some kikau, sticks and wood to make it. It was really cool just chilling out with my friends with no one around to disturb us. We could just sit there and talk about everything, laugh as loud as we could, jam to our music, take photos of our night to keep the memories long lasting and also munch on the plenty of snacks we had. Once our bonfire was finished and we started to get a bit cold we went inside and put our movies on. Though we would've liked to just sleep in the next day, we knew we all had to wake up early for church.

When I got back home from church I was blessed with the food my Nana had cooked us as always. She had cooked a barbeque, made some salads, raw fish, taro and plenty more. After we all ate and cleaned up I went back to my friends house and hung out with them for the rest of the day. We were going to go for a swim but then ended up just staying back and relaxing watching movies because we were still kind of tired from staying up all night the night before. The next couple days has just been going to school and nothing new has been happening there, still just revision for the end of year.

**New Hope Church**  
Parekura Conference Centre  
*Inspirational messages to uplift and empower you*  
**Sunday at 10.30am**

# Cook Islands the place to work, stay and live, why would you? – Part 2b of 2

by Te Tuhi Kelly

**Y**ou all know that NZ Maori are descendants of Cook Islanders; the problem is your Immigration law denies us our relationship and links back to the Cook Islands. I descend from Tangiia and I descend from the same whakapapa lines as Pa Ariki, Tinomana and Karika and I am related to most Cook Islanders through those links, however I am not accorded that status in law. I am denied that status because you my Cook Island cousins allowed your politicians in 1972 to pass legislation denying me my rightful heritage. This short sightedness has come back to bite you in the nono. By restricting who is or who is not a Cook Islander has meant isolation and marginalisation from we who also whakapapa as Cook Islanders. The joke is that people like myself know more about Cook Islands whakapapa and who we descend from than the locals born here. Only by expanding the critical mass of people with the right skills and the motivation in the right places to pull this nation up by its boot straps will you get some semblance of financial and economic sustainability. We cannot rely on donor aid handouts, we need a hand up and we can only do this if we have the people to do it. By looking at your immigration law and including an Amendment to recognise people such as myself, will you be able to step back from the face of penury.

How would this new influx of descendants of Cook Islanders look like? I suspect that you would get a lot of NZ Maori holiday makers visiting the ancestral home of their tupuna. This is an opportunity for Cook Islanders to resurrect their family marae atea and make those connections with their NZ Maori cousins. This could mean tourist packages for NZ Maori to the outer islands from whence their ancestral vaka came from and the setting up of cultural museums, shrines and best of all the rekindling of their traditional lore. NZ Maori would also resettle back here either to work, retire or holiday.

The government could offer investment opportunities for NZ Maori in setting up businesses, technology

investment and start-ups. NZ Maori resident in the Cook Islands would also be an alternative view to ensure that the best people to represent us in parliament were chosen, based on their merits and not on their popularity in the community. The question then becomes if the Act was amended how would you acknowledge and prove that you were a descendant of a NZ Maori and hence a descendant of a Cook Islander. You can only do this by verifiable whakapapa and your whakapapa will have to be endorsed and signed off by an authority from your tribe, the paramount leader and then endorsed and signed off by the Ui Ariki, before being endorsed and signed off by the Cook Islands Minister for Immigration. You would also have to beef up your border to ensure that the Cook Islands was not being used as a dumping ground for NZ Maori of dubious character, reputation or unsociable acts. Look, you could even have a 5-year qualifying period for NZ Maori or descendants of NZ Maori and they must have x-dollars as a minimum to invest here. It's not rocket science, we could learn off the NZ experience with foreign investment over the last 15-years in Auckland. If you think NZ Maori want your land don't worry you've already stuffed that up for yourselves and your coming generations by using the Land Court to settle your disputes. We'll be keeping well out of that mess thank you very much.

My third approach is that we look at a Free Trade Agreement between all the Pacific Island nations so that we have visa-free access, commonise our laws, currency, time zones and we align our border control processes. If you look on a global map, villages, towns and cities are joined by roads on land. In the Pacific, the ocean is essentially our land and we connect to all the islands by vaka. The only difference between us and the mainland is the medium we use to connect to each other. With this FTA we become the business nexus for the Pacific and can look at the Singapore model of government by business.

The fourth option is to ensure that

our politicians are performance managed. They are put on a contract that ensures they perform for the country rather than just for their constituency. If they cannot create a financial return for the Cook Islands when they are on Government international travel, then they don't go. No more sponsored trips without some form of tangible and verifiable benefit for the Cook Islands. Look at Singapore; it has no commodities to speak of. But it turned over \$NZD465b dollars in 2010, because it is a hub or nexus for business in Asia and it continually pushes for diversity and free market policies. It encourages investment in all manner of industries and ensures that infrastructure is put in place to support investment. The Singapore Prime Minister is paid \$NZD2.5m and for every dollar he gets paid his government generates export earnings of \$NZD186k and to achieve this he manages a government empire that is business and Immigrant friendly to Singaporeans and non-local investors. Contrast that with the business and immigration restrictions we face here and contrast that with our Prime Minister who if we assume gets paid a little over \$NZD100k including per diems and other benefits, export earnings would need to be in the order of \$NZD18.6b. That is enough money in our Pacific nation terms to get our country off the donor and Aid hand out scenario and become an AID or donor ourselves with a huge surplus. I'm not advocating that this is what should happen, but I do advocate that we should as a nation expect our PM and the Government to be putting into practice what they are preaching. The Prime Minister does not preside over a government empire that has any courage to make political or business reform or making the Cook Islands business or immigrant friendly.

For the politicians, too much worrying about what their constituents will do at the polls, rather than what we need to do as a nation. They don't have the courage of their convictions, just listen

*continued next page*

From previous page or read or watch the news media and you'll understand perfectly what is happening to us and the ineffectiveness of our politicians. For the government officials too much worrying about their jobs rather than what their roles should be doing. For the rest of the community and the villages, too much thinking about what is good for them rather than what is good for the Cook Islands.

My fifth option is that we synchronise our time zone with NZ the same as Samoa. So if you leave NZ to go to Raro or vice versa, you leave or arrive on the same day depending on flight schedules not a day or even two days later. This makes really good sense for our businesses and our tourists. For our businesses it would be same day business and transactions with NZ. For our tourists, the end to years of confusion about what their arrival and departure dates and times are.

It is no use complaining about the exodus of Cook Islanders overseas to NZ and Aussie. The current strategies if any don't seem to have arrested the declining population. Government and business have not got together and articulated a strategy for doing this. Government wants business to develop the strategy (think money) because it is business that is crying out for workers who have marketable skills. It is also business that is slow in investing in its current or potential workers because they want workers who come off the production line already skilled and trained and ready to hit the ground running. It is business that believes government should be investing more in upskilling and training the nation so that they are

employable with skills that the market wants. Business also believes that we are not educating our children for the local job market. We are educating them for export to NZ or Australia. Our human capacity is being exported off-shore by the hundreds every year to drive economic growth in those countries and not here. Business wants workers that will actually turn up for work and will work. They also want flexible work hours, flexible conditions of pay and flexible working conditions. Businesses need to be able to manage and drive their businesses as they see fit. A work force that is inflexible and unresponsive to a changing business environment is a recipe for business bankruptcy. By the same token workers also want flexible working conditions, flexible working hours, and surety of work and want their pay to reflect their efforts. Government wants everyone to work, to pay taxes and thereby drive economic growth and emigration stability. In all these scenarios, nobody wants to put their hand into their pocket and put their money where their mouth is, they want someone else to foot the bill, usually donor money or Aid.

In addition it is of very little value to think about enticing Ex-pat Cook islanders back with promises of large salary and benefit packages when we should be investing in building the capacity of Cook islanders already here. We also don't want the particular scenario when as a result of bringing them back; we create the conditions for the rise of a second class citizen Cook Islander from those who loyally stayed here. So what's it to be, "talk and no do or more talk and lots of doodo".

## Restaurant of the year competition begins

In a series of stories about the participants of the Cook Island Restaurant of the year 2015 we will be visiting restaurants exploring the atmosphere and sampling their Cook Islands style menus, paired with matching wines/ beverages: CONTESTANTS for Restaurant of the year 2015:

Manuia Beach Resort, Sails Restaurant, Pacific Resort Muri, Nautilus Resort, Little Polynesian Resort, Pacific Resort Aitutaki .

Book at any of the above restaurants to be a judge and go into the draw to win one of seven "Dinners for two" at the above Resorts. Help decide who will become the Cook Islands Restaurant of the Year 2015 by dining and voting at the above establishments.

Join us for the Awards Dinner with live entertainment, welcome drinks and show at 18:00 on Saturday, 10th Oct. \$ 60.00 per person @ The Islander Hotel

## Chooks extra

A player for an English school rugby team was injured and was taken to hospital. The school later received an ambulance bill of \$800 plus other hospital costs which came to a total of \$1,200 Inside the ambulance was just the driver and a nurse. What an expensive ambulance ride! All of 3 minutes from the TSA to the hospital! Cheaper than a taxi?

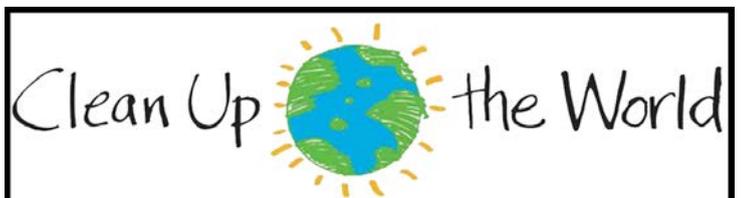


### GIS AND DATA MANAGEMENT OFFICER

Full-time position available for the provision of Geographic Information Systems [GIS] services to the Authority – including preparation and management of mapping services to assist in the allocation and management of SBM licences, the Register and Data management needs for the Authority as required under the SBM Act and in line with best international GIS standards expected of a governmental minerals management agency.

For details contact Caroline Tiria on 29-193  
Email Applications and CVs to [carolinetiria@seabedminerals.gov.ck](mailto:carolinetiria@seabedminerals.gov.ck)

Closes- 3pm 9 September 2015



18 September 2015

Call Matthew Rima or Moana Vaevae  
to register

Phone: 21 256

or email: [matthew.rima@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:matthew.rima@cookislands.gov.ck)

# 18 feeling 21 Crunch Time

By *Lucianne Vainerere*

For us latecomer babies where our parents listened to Marvin Gaye and had sexual healing over the festive season we're counting down the days till we finally become legal. Being as inexperienced as we should be, rebellion took its toll and we supposedly already 'know' what being legal is all about. For some parents this is when their teenagers can start making their own decisions, paying for their own bikes, be a grown up and to go experience whatever the world has to offer.

From a teenagers point of view (depending on how tight the parents are holding the reigns) it doesn't mean anything, just a year older and hopefully a year smarter, to others its just a number because they're focused on other things that doesn't include their social life and lastly for the very, extremely social butterflies it means clubbing. But in Raro it means hitting Rehab and Hidies. But I am pretty sure most of us (you know who you are) have already been there and done that so the so-called 'count down' doesn't have much significance.

Whatever the circumstance that doesn't stop us from counting down, the excitement of having slightly more freedom then we do now. Some of us look older than we actually are and get mistaken for our parents' siblings (no they don't look younger it's the other way around I'm sure of it haha).

So what's the point in being excited to do things we've been doing already illegally? Well I don't have an answer to that but I guess it's simply a confirmation that we CAN do all those things, because for 'some' teenagers they've already matured and reached the extent of having responsibilities that 'western life' takes on when they leave high school. We adopt it when we turn 16 and get our driver license and start working.

My point is there is no point. Life goes on and excitement comes and goes, there's build up and eventually we'll purchase alcohol for ourselves and go clubbing with friends, stay out later than usual, have one night stands, take contraceptives, crave money and push people away. It's our reality. That's usually what people do when they turn 21. I wouldn't know because I haven't reached that age yet, but I've seen it happen and it's a bit sad but some people make it out and manage to turn it all around and make something good out of it. That's strength. A few people I know, 16, 17, 18 have been through all of those, still at school and working hard.

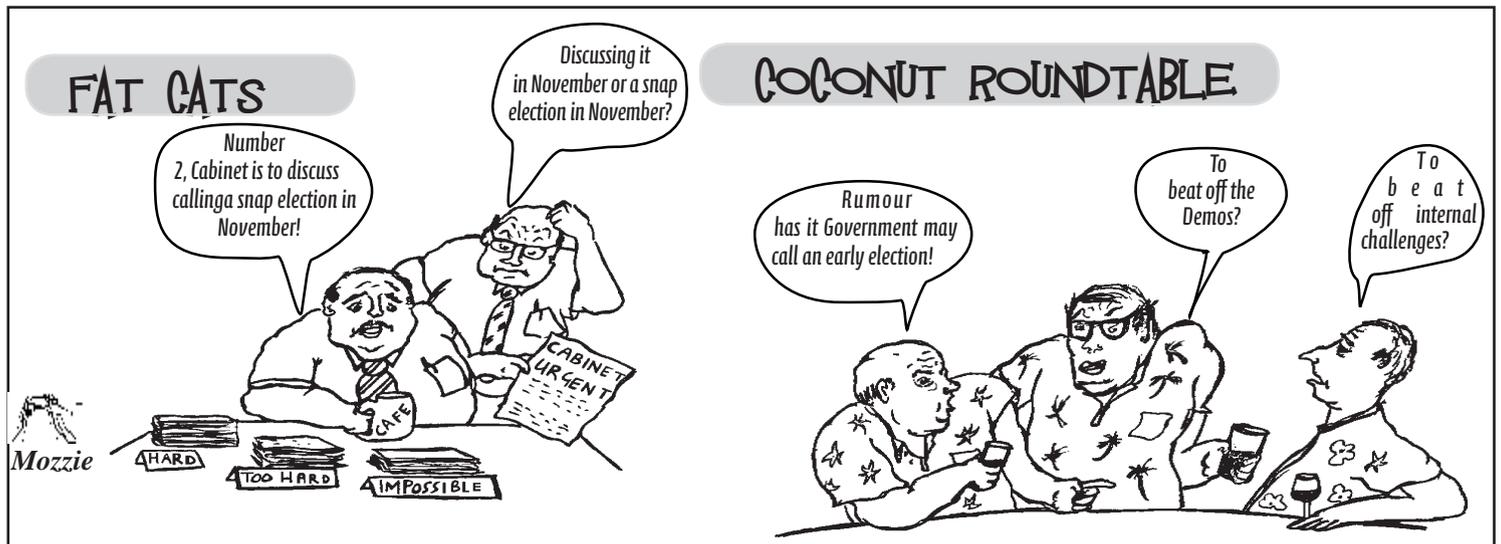
So if I told you I was 21 would you believe me? If I told you I've already done all those things would you still believe me? So what will you do when you finally turn 18 and done all that? What now? You have so many years ahead of you and you may look at is as living? But is that what it is really?

*Teherenui Koteka*

As Term three begins it is that time of the where seniors or those of us at NCEA levels one, two and three begin to prepare for the dreaded mock exams. When I think of term three I think ... crunch time. The time of schooling year where you really cannot afford to muck around. Last year I used to hear people at NCEA level two say "NCEA level two is so much harder than NCEA level one." I used to think that statement was false but I can now state that they were indeed correct. For me it is not so much the work itself that is harder but more the fact the earing your credits seem harder because your internals are spread over long periods of time. It may just be me but I personally feel as though many of my fellow level two peers have not yet made it back to school this term. If you are sitting at home reading this and you know you should be back at school I encourage you to make your way back to the schooling life. After all things only get more difficult if you put them off for long periods of time. I myself made it back to school this Monday and once first period started the race was on. I managed to catch up on work I have missed but now I need to start preparing for my mock exams which will take place only a few weeks from now. Yes, exams can be scary, especially if you are someone like me who does not tend to do well when it comes to tests.

As an NCEA student I strive to achieve at levels that will allow me to gain endorsements. I personally tend to do quite well when it comes to internals but struggle when it comes to externals, so it is quite nerve raking to think that I could trip up in a test and fail getting an endorsement. It is for this reason term three is so important. It is the final time of the schooling year where your teachers groom you to achieve the best you can in your mock exams. That final opportunity to re-read the novel you studied in English this year or the final chance to learn your lines for your drama production. I know it can be tiring to think of the amount of work you have to do, or stressful to even consider reviewing your notes from the past year, but that it the necessary challenge we as students have to endure.

Finally I would like to remind my fellow NCEA students that the year is almost over, so make the most of it. Time to knuckle down everyone. Good luck with your exams.



A prominent member of the Chamber of Commerce was peed off they weren't included in Elvis travelling circus on the State visit to Bully land. He took it up with Mickie Enry who handpicked the team which excluded any Opposition member, in the presence of Brown Markie and Elvis heated verbals were exchanged with neither of them intervening or saying a word. Mickie is now the CIP Government's chief selector, as the Cook Islands Investment Corporation chairman despite having no notable business success or qualification selected the members for the government Boards and was one of three panellists who decided who would be the new Heads of Ministries, not a bad reward for being a convicted tax dodger. 

Those who think CITV was the cause of Aitutaki TV being turned off during the Blue Sky nationwide broadcasts of the MNSO celebrations need to look closer to home. While the whole country was glued to their TV sets watching live telecasts from the National Auditorium, Aitutaki viewers were watching black screens, why? It was because TV station operator Mickie Enry hadn't paid his huge \$3,000 overdue power bill. Like the schoonegate fiasco maybe he expects his corrupt CIP government to pay it for him. It's just another one of his failed business attempts. 

Elvis has announced more millions of dollars solar energy installations, this time for the southern outer islands. Political crystal ball gazers are predicting he will start with the very marginal seat of Mitiaro which is there for the taking if they can get the Mayor Freddy to stand, then Mangaia's Tamarua as a reward for the party hopping Matapo before he calls a snap election. Buying votes with Donor funds is one of Elvis' honed skills. 

Behind his back he's being laughed at, the four times loser and lucky to still be the DPM the angry T. Heta isn't a happy man. Reduced to now having to suck up to Elvis to keep his job in Cabinet the bully bulldozer driver boasted for months he had the numbers to become the Party leader and now is too embarrassed to show his face about town because he isn't getting any sympathy. Despite the Atiu



and Mangaia delegates promising they would vote for him they didn't. Heta's 18 votes were 7 from the outer Islands 10 from Rarotonga and 1 vote from the Executive pool. 

The CIP inner circle has lost faith in the loser Heta, first he assured Cabinet they would keep the Murienua seat after Tom Tom became the Queen's Rep. They were first past the post but candidate Koata resigned before he lost a petition by Jimmy Larger. In the second bye election the loser Heta assured Cabinet it was in the bag only to lose again. Come the snap Election loser Heta assured Cabinet all three Puaikura seats were in the bag and he was lucky to hang on to Akaoa against first timer Chopper Baker. He then assured the CIP would win the drawn Mitiaro seat but lost that too. Heta's next failed prediction was after assuring his fellow Ministers Tamarua was in the bag. Multiple loser Heta is the CIP's false prophet who will be tossed out the next time there is an Election. 

Chooks we reveal it cost just \$24,000 to get Tapi's boat to take the Palmerston islanders back. And that chooks, is way cheaper than the original estimate of \$35,000 for such a charter thanks also to Tapi's generosity. Palmerston of all the northern group is a deserving case, you see, Palmerston is the only outer island actually generating an income by exporting fish (mainly Parrot fish) to Rarotonga for sale. Last year, some 20 tonnes of fish came from Palmerston. Well done those people. They deserve their own MP. 

Why is all the cargo for the outer islands pouring into Michelangelo Henrico's shed on the wharf? Why can't Tapi's boat be utilized by government?

Hasn't government done enough for Michelangelo? How about spreading the love around? 

A snap election in November? It's on the cards chooks and remember it came by way of Big Red's chirper. PM Henri knows he's gone if loane's Vaipae seat comes up for a by-election. The DPM has been in Atiu-campaigning no doubt. 

What was Airport Authority Chairman Taoro Brown doing in NZ with Henry Puna's tere party? Checking how Auckland runs its airport? Who paid his way? And what was Michelangelo Henrico chair of CIIC doing there? A chin wag with the new consultant hired to teach Board members governance policies? Yes, a NZ based policy advice consultant, a Cookie at that, has been hired by CIIC to spend a week each month teaching all Board members how to be a good board member. 

Penrhyn island 100% solar? Crapola and doggie doo dahs at that chooks! Did anyone spot the barge at Avatiu being loaded for Penrhyn? Why were there 3 large diesel fuel tanks on board? When that question was put to Penrhyn MP Wee Willie, he was at a loss for words and could not answer! That's not the only concern. Penrhyn resident claims it now costs more for power than it used to when diesel fuel was used. Result? One resident is going back to diesel. 

After spending millions of other people's money on solar power up north, it transpires there is not enough power available to create new industries to provide employment and incomes for locals not to mention new revenues for the nation. There's only enough power

to local householders needs like keeping the beer chilled. So what now? 

Team Heather 8, team Smiley 9. Total 17. Goodbye CIP, goodbye OCI. 

Bollywood wannabe puts on 10 week after hours training course for wannabe actors. Says on being certificated, they can apply for acting jobs in films or commercials! Oh really? Where are the jobs? Get real. We have no film industry. There's only one talent agency on the island. Why start something no-one can finish? It's another case of a foreigner with too much time on their hands, meddling and hoping to make a name for themselves in a small country by starting something. 

Puna needs to take a leaf out of NZ PM Johnno Key's book on political etiquette. Surely Puna has noticed that when Johnno makes an official visit somewhere he makes sure his delegation includes the Leaders of the Opposition Parties. Johnno's delegation to our 50th knees up, numbered 84 and included; Winnie, the Greens, Labour et al. By stark contrast, Puna's measly band of troubadours only included highly paid government appointed lackeys and his in crowd-no Smiley or Teina! Seems Puna is focusing all the attention on himself. Get with the programme Henri, eh, eh. 

Why is government putting up \$500,000 per year in the budget for the next 3 years (\$1.5m total), to subsidize inter-island shipping when a consultant hired by the DPM produced a report last Christmas which showed a yearly subsidy of \$360,000 would be more than adequate to subsidize twelve voyages a year up north. The DPM's submission did not go to Cabinet, why? Now the shipping contract has gone to Senor Michelangelo Henrico of Pacifico Schoonero for the Taro Taporo (no apologies to Christophos Columbus) for the inflated subsidy of \$500,000! May be Michelangelo's bill of lading includes the south? Perhaps it includes Cabernet Sauvignon at El Capitan's table? 

If El Emperor Puna claims he is transparent, how come no-one can see his under wear?

PUBLIC NOTICE



**MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS**  
**Social Impact Fund (SIF)**  
**Project Funding**

The Cook Islands Social Impact Fund (SIF) is a contestable fund administered by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and financed by the Cook Islands and New Zealand Governments until June 2016. Registered Cook Islands Civil Society Organisations can apply to SIF for funds to deliver services to vulnerable groups in 3 areas: Gender equality (including domestic violence), Children and Youth, and Disabilities (including mental health, physical health and care for the elderly).

For further inquiries please contact the SIF Manager on Telephone: 29378 or email: [angeline.tuara@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:angeline.tuara@cookislands.gov.ck), [www.intaff.whupi.com](http://www.intaff.whupi.com), Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Closing date for Project Funding Application is Friday 25 September 2015. No applications will be accepted after this date.



**PUBLIC NOTICE – AVATIU VALLEY ROAD**

Residents and users of Avatiu valley road are advised of an impending project start for TAU civil works at the Power station that will affect road traffic between now and November 2015. In particular they are asked to show:

1. Carefulness in the area in question from the Power station to the intersection at Avatiu Ara metua.
2. Awareness of heavy vehicles, plant and machinery which may be parked on the Avatiu valley road
3. Adherence to speed limit, warning signs, traffic direction from time to time etc.

TENDER



**MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS**  
**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**  
Social Impact Fund (SIF) Board Member

EOI's are now invited from CSO's, Private sector and Individuals who wish to be considered for the above. There are 3 positions available for one year.

For further inquiries please contact the SIF Manager on Telephone: 29378 or email: [angeline.tuara@cookislands.gov.ck](mailto:angeline.tuara@cookislands.gov.ck) Ministry of Internal Affairs [www.intaff.whupi.com](http://www.intaff.whupi.com).

Closing date for Expressions of Interest is Wednesday 9 September 2015.

TENDER



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC  
MANAGEMENT**  
**RE-ADVERTISEMENT**

Request for Tender for a Maritime Technical Advisor for the Ministry of Transport

The Development Co-ordination Division (DCD) of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) and Ministry of Transport seek a suitably qualified company or individual to submit a tender for the provision of a technical advisor to work in the Maritime division. The technical advisor will be based at the Ministry of Transport in Rarotonga.

Tender documents can be obtained from the Development Coordination Division, MFEM, Level 3, Cook Islands Government Building, Avarua or downloaded from the Cook Islands Government Procurement website: <http://procurement.gov.ck> Tender documents are also available from the Tender Manager.

For any enquiries please contact: Tender Manager, Mr Boyd Ellison

Email: [boyd@akairoconsulting.com](mailto:boyd@akairoconsulting.com); Ph: +682 22226 or +682 54221.

Tenders Close: 3pm Tuesday 1 September, 2015 (Cook Islands Time).



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**  
**LAPTOP AND IPAD MINI TENDER NOTICE**

Tenders are invited for the bulk supply of Laptops and IPAD Minis for schools in the Cook Islands. Quality and specifications document can be uplifted from the Ministry of Education office or download from MOE website: [www.education.gov.ck](http://www.education.gov.ck) or contact Director of Information Technology and Communication Mr Robert Matheson on phone 29357, fax 28357 or email [itcdirector@education.gov.ck](mailto:itcdirector@education.gov.ck)

Tender submission will close @ 4.00pm Thursday 10th September, 2015

Tenders shall be in a sealed envelope

MOE 2015 Laptop Tender 151608

MOE 2015 IPAD Mini Tender 151609

Secretary of Education,

Ministry of Education, PO Box 97

Rarotonga, Cook Islands

**eat less**  
**move more**

# Te angaanga akarakara i te moana oonu i teia ra

*Tukuanga i te au patianganga*

**M**e akamata te Akapapaanga Ture no te Mīnera Takere Moana, ka kapiki te Kopapa Akaaere i te au Patianganga no ko i te au putuputuanga tei anoano e tei tau meitaki kia pati i tetai tikaanga no tetai raitini kia akarakara ki roto i te au moana o te Kuki Airani.

Ko te kapikianga no te Tukuanga Patianganga no tetai tikaanga Raitini Akarakara e takainga maata teia no te Kuki Airani kia o atu ki roto i te tuanga tango mīnera takere moana o teiane i ao e kia tangaanga i to tatou mekameka o te mīnera ei āngai i te anoano o teiane i ao no te mīnera e te au mētala.

Ko ta tatou Akapapaanga Akateretere i te Mīnera Takere Moana tei roto i reira te au takainga paruru ta tatou ka inangaro no teia tuanga angaanga kia vai rai te anoano o te pātireia Kuki Airani ei rotopu tikai i te au papauanga te ka akatupuia.

Akarakaraanga – tukuanga patianganga e te au vāitoanga ma te au paunuanga

Ko te akarakaraanga i te au patianganga ka o mai te kavamani e tetai au putuputuanga tei tau ki roto i te akarakaraanga.

I muri ake i te akarakaraanga,

te ka raveia e tetai au tangata kite no te Kuki Airani ma tetai au pōrena, me kua rauka i tetai tei pati i te tikaanga akarakara i te turanga meitaki e te numero tai, ka ōronga te Kopapa Akaaere o te Runanga Takere Moana i te au peapa akatika kia ratou e ka ōronga'ia kia ratou e 30 ra no te ariki i te akatikaanga.

Me tae mai te au peapa akatikaanga ki te Runanga Takere Moana, ka ōronga'ia te Raitini Akarakara e rima mataiti tona tuatau akakotinga (ka tutakia te moni oko raitini, e te au turanga ma te au akapapaanga tei tau) te ka akaari mai i te au mea pouroa i raro ake i teia raitini akatikaanga no te akarakara. E au vāitoanga tetai no te au akateretereanga ei akapāpū e ko te anoano o te iti tangata Kuki Airani kua akamanako meitaki ia te reira i roto i te au akateretereanga tei oti i te papauia.

Ko te Putuputuanga tei autū kua rauka tana Raitini e ka tikaia aia i te akamata i tana angaanga akarakara i roto i te tai moana Kuki Airani, i roto rai ra i tana Tuanga Moana tei Raitiniia (e ārea mei te 100 kilomētera x 100 kilomētera te maata). Ka akarakara matatio ia te au angaanga i te au taime roarai kia tau ki te au papauanga tei akatakaia i roto i te Raitini



Alex Herman and Tou Ariki

Akarakara. Me ope te tuatau o te raitini, ka tikaia te putuputuanga mou raitini kia akaou i tana raitini me kare kia takore atu i te reira. Ko te au tāta pouroa kia akaariia mai te reira ki te Kuki Airani no te akarakaraanga. Ko te tukuanga tika no te kerianganga ka uri ia te reira i muri ake, kia tau ki te akairo o te akarakaraanga.

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**FOOTBALL UPDATE**

# Blatter warns reform is coming

As he enters the final phase of what will be almost 18 years as FIFA president, Sepp Blatter insists he cannot be held morally responsible for the dishonest activities of his inner circle and that he himself has been “clean” throughout his long and often tempestuous tenure.

Blatter stands down on February 26 next year after some 40 years with world football’s governing body and rejects accusations, primarily in the west, that he will always be remembered for leading a corrupt organisation.

Unrelated US and Swiss criminal investigations into FIFA’s workings - the former exposing widespread confederation fraud following the arrest of a raft of footballing executives who had a major say in how the game was run - have shaken FIFA to its knees under Blatter’s watch.

But some three months after his decision to lay down his mandate, as he put it, following that infamous dawn raid in Zurich just before he was elected for a fifth term, Blatter says it’s unfair to accuse FIFA of deep-rooted, systematic corruption even though these were the words used by the US Justice department when announcing 47 counts including racketeering, wire fraud and money laundering.

“It’s not true,” Blatter declared. “The institution is not corrupt. There is corruption with individuals (but) there is no general organised corruption. That’s what I cannot understand when the world’s media says FIFA is corrupt. On the field of play, it’s easy to control footballers. Outside the field of play, who can control 300 million people directly and



Sepp Blatter

1.6 billion indirectly? It’s impossible.”

Roughly half of the executive committee who voted five years ago for the 2018 and 2022 World Cup hosts have since left, most of them as a result of bribery and corruption allegations. Throw in the seven high-profile footballing officials indicted by the US authorities and it is little surprise Blatter has been accused of incompetence.

But in an interview with the BBC, he challenged that view, saying he had no control over who joins FIFA’s top brass since none of them are elected by the full 209-nation membership.

“The problem with FIFA - and this is the ultimate reform we have to do now - is the composition of the executive committee,” said Blatter.

“It is not elected by the same entity as the president. I have a government that is elected through the confederations. So I have (had) to take people who are not my people. I cannot take moral responsibility for their

behaviour.”

The serious allegations levelled at the likes of former FIFA powerbrokers Jack Warner and Chuck Blazer and the recent arrest of Warner’s successor as president of CONCACAF, Jeffrey Webb, have heaped disgrace on FIFA’s image and reputation. But Blatter argued his critics needed to understand how the organisation’s hierarchy actually works.

“We have no rights to go to any confederations and ask them what they are doing with their money. That’s their problem. All those who were arrested in Zurich were arrested over activities in their confederations.”

Blatter has not been cited in either of the two ongoing probes but leaves office with a cloud hanging over his presidency. His legacy may be seriously tarnished as far as western opinion is concerned but he told the BBC his own conscience was clear and that the work he has done is appreciated far more than many might imagine.

“I know I’m an honest man. I am clean,” he said. “Go to Asia, go to Africa and ask them what they think about FIFA and Blatter. It’s different. At least (I am) respected because I and FIFA have done a lot.”

Refusing to specifically discuss either of the two investigations, he nevertheless warmed to the theme of being unfairly treated.

“Tell me what I have done wrong. I made my decision (to stand down) to protect FIFA, not myself. I know what I have done and not done.

“I am not a worried man. You will see how this tsunami will come out for FIFA. People will realise that the job I have done is a good job. If there are people who don’t like me, they will realise they have been wrong.”

And who will he be supporting in the race to become his successor? “Don’t ask the president who is elected to make a comment. It’s the Congress who will decide, not me.”