We want our

Island Back

% Newsletter
March 2005
Chief Seattle
(c.1786-1866)

Whatever befalls the earth befalls the son of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand of it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

Come to our next meeting
on Thursday 14th April
at St Thomas’ Church Hall
Val Plaisant (to the left of the Church)
7.30—9pm
Letter from the Editor

We are constantly told that tourism and agriculture are all but dead, don't we? Finance is the only game in town, they say. Do you find this insulting? I do.

The thing about the finance industry is that it has grown to such an extent that the Island has become totally dependant on it. It has sucked in large numbers of workers and wealthy people from outside the Island, and has pushed prices up way beyond the level at which the tourism and agricultural industries can profitably operate. As a consequence there has been little investment in either for years if not decades.

Few of us are happy with what has happened over the past 30 years. Nothing personal, but I would have been happier if not quite so many banks and finance workers had come to Jersey. The Island has been spoilt by over-population. Our industries crowded out by high costs. Our culture decimated. Where will Jersey be in a few years' time when international policy measures taken against tax havens really start to bite? Make no mistake, this will happen.

The notion that Jersey people should be grateful to offshore banks is frankly laughable. The
banks have profited enormously. They have wrecked the local economy, leaving it utterly dependant upon an industry which earns its living largely by enabling big companies and the very wealthy to avoid paying their fair share of tax in the country where the money was made. Such tax revenues which have been paid here in the past have often been frittered away on prestige projects which have been of little value to ordinary people.

So, we need our Island industries back, don't we? No, not turn the clock back but look at the very real possibilities that have been there and which are still available to us. What possibilities you may well ask?

Some 10 years ago we were offered the opportunity of participating in a really big tourism project. At the time the Europeans were working on a plan to link the breadth and length of Europe, bringing tourists via northern France - passing close to Saint Malo. This would enable people to enjoy holidays around the countries of Europe via a network of existing autoroutes and estuaries. The idea was to create a programme for marketing the entire region - including the Channel Islands as a related tourism destination with a distinct regional identity. The plans
included the redevelopment of heritage sites such as le Mont Saint Michel, and the development of closer relationships with the tourism industries in the Channel Islands in order to market a comprehensive package. Wonderful for us! We're just off the coast of France.

Islands are a major tourism attraction in their own right. The thinking of the planners was long-term and took account of newly-emerging trends in tourism - away from fixed, low-cost packages towards more flexible holidays. This means cheaper flights, small friendly hotels, self-catering, chemical-free/organic Jersey-grown food. Of course, inflation must be controlled if anyone is going to want to come here. We need to hang on to our fields for this purpose.

Sadly, this project, "Autoroutes et Estuaires", was turned down by Jersey. Spoilsports!

Europe went ahead with it and it is flourishing, attracting huge numbers of tourists to the Normandy/Brittany region.

The good news is it's still there for the taking. What are we waiting for?

Pat Lucas
### GST (Goods and Services Tax)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost per week</th>
<th>Annually</th>
<th>Add GST</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>GST Annual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Shopping</td>
<td>£100.00</td>
<td>£5,200.00</td>
<td>£5.00</td>
<td>£105.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petrol per week</td>
<td>£20.00</td>
<td>£1,040.00</td>
<td>£1.00</td>
<td>£21.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electricity per week</td>
<td>£15.00</td>
<td>£780.00</td>
<td>£0.75</td>
<td>£15.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rent States Approx p.w.</td>
<td>£70.00</td>
<td>£3,640.00</td>
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<td>£73.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone with internet use for the children's homework p.w.</td>
<td>£10.00</td>
<td>£520.00</td>
<td>£.50</td>
<td>£10.50</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total per year**

**Cost**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Annually</th>
<th>Add GST</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>GST Annual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing annually including school uniforms</td>
<td>£1,200.00</td>
<td>£1,200.00</td>
<td>£60.00</td>
<td>£1,260.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hairdressers Annual</td>
<td>£180.00</td>
<td>£180.00</td>
<td>£9.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctors x 6 visits</td>
<td>£21.00</td>
<td>£126.00</td>
<td>£1.05</td>
<td>£22.05</td>
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<td>School Bus tickets p.w.</td>
<td>£10.00</td>
<td>£520.00</td>
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<td>£10.50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Car Parking p.w.</td>
<td>£18.80</td>
<td>£977.60</td>
<td>£.94</td>
<td>£19.74</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Total per year**

**£14,183.60**

**£709.18**
These figures are based on the very minimum for a family of 4 with an income of £16,000. If you can relate to this family situation firstly you must take off your Social Security contribution £1,040.00 which leaves you £14,960.00. Take off the above outgoings of £14,183.60 and you are left with £776.40 just enough to cover the added GST of £709.18 leaving you £67.22. If you have a television you also need to find £120.00 for a license

**So you cannot therefore afford the proposed added 5% GST. If this is passed by the States will you not be asking your employer for a minimum 5% pay rise to cover the proposed tax?**

What is not included above are items that you again can consider such as servicing your car. £120.00 basic would become £126.00, a take-away for 4 say £40.00 becomes £42.00 and it is all these little bits that add up over the year. What about a new 3 piece suite at say £800.00; that’s yet another £40.00.

Then we must ask how many staff will our Government need to employ to run this Department? Where will it be located and how much will it cost year on year to maintain the offices and cost in salaries?

Will we be employing the Head of the Department from the UK and what will that salary be?
An interesting item on 5 Live over Christmas was that VAT fraud had doubled in the UK. Has this also been taken into consideration as there must also be a departmental investigation team? Cost again?

We have been told time and time again it will not hurt us – I say, think again. Is the above a life or an existence for some families living in this already costly Island? As you will note I did not include any luxuries such as meals out, school trips, children’s activities, day trips, holidays, dentists, eye tests, replacing furniture/electrical goods or repairs. The list is endless.

Denise Carroll

Does anyone in Jersey suffer from poverty?

First of all, we have to make a clear distinction between absolute and relative poverty. Absolute poverty is best demonstrated by what we as westerners see in the media in such places as the Sudan and other African nations. Relative poverty in western nations is where those at the bottom of the income and wealth divide struggle to meet the financial demands of everyday life, such as visits to the doctor, dentist or optician, the replacement of white goods, clothing yourself and your children and paying your regular bills, to name a few.
Word of warning

The first Professor of Social Policy, Richard Titmuss* argued that if any government favoured the finance industry over the well-being of the people, income and wealth inequality would expand, leading to increased poverty. With the pending introduction of a Goods and Services Tax, the freezing of income tax allowances and wage settlements being pegged at the cost of living or less, an increase of people living in poverty can be expected.

Poverty indicators

Some people who live in poverty find it tempting to turn to crime as a means of meeting demands on their income. This may be seen in the analysis of prison populations. The accepted norm is 100 prisoners per 100,000 of the population. For example, Japan has 40 prisoners per 100,000 of population and a low rate of poverty, while the USA has 640 prisoners per 100,000 of population and a high rate of poverty. Jersey has circa 190 prisoners for a population of 87,500, over twice the accepted norm.

Jersey also has circa 200 people living in homeless shelters, halfway houses, temporary accommodation, addiction units, refuges and care homes for adolescents. With various States Departments cutting back on funding to the very organisations that care for these people, things will probably only
get worse.

Jersey only has 14% of all housing allocated to the social sector compared to Britain’s 21%, despite having little or no investment over the last twenty-five years. The States of Jersey Housing Department currently have 246 families on their waiting list, and 166 families in unsuitable accommodation of which 38 are deemed urgent. With the current and future economic climate looking bleak, these numbers will surely rise.

What is needed

We need to support those of our people who are on low incomes. This can be achieved by the redistribution of income and wealth, otherwise homelessness, incarceration and poverty will grow. In twenty-first century Jersey, it is socially and economically unjustifiable to allow relative poverty to flourish or even exist.

The responsibility for ALL our peoples’ well-being lies at the door of our democratically elected politicians.


A reply to February's Newsletter

"Thank you for sending me the correspondence on your organisation 'Attac'. I have read it through and confess to agreeing with ALL I read, and possibly a lot more. .................Basically, I am a supporter of the Conservative Party. I dislike the Labour Party, Socialist and Communist Parties and what they stand for. Does that eliminate me from your ideals?"

John Heys of Attac Jersey answered this as follows:

" Thank you for your interesting reply. I agree with much that you say but please do not feel that being controversial is a bad thing. Without it we would be more like puppets than we are, being dictated to completely by a gang in the States that are and have run this Island onto the rocks for one thing only - the progress of the finance industry. Perhaps I should give you a bit of background information on A.T.T.A.C. to put your mind at rest.

A.T.T.A.C. is a large organisation operating in many countries in the world and our closest group is in Brittany. The translation of A.T.T.A.C. from French into English is ' the Association for the Taxation of financial Transactions for the Benefit of the People '. Quite a mouthful, I admit, but basically the movement is totally against countries anywhere in the world investing their money, whether legally accrued or not, in Tax Havens like Jersey. The tax that should have been paid into the country concerned is hived off, thus depriving the support it would have brought to the people of that country. In many cases this
brings ill health, starvation and deprivation to the populace.

As far as our political aspirations are concerned, there are none. The association is not communist, left or right wing, religiously hidebound or linked with any such organisation except the Tax Justice Network. When asked about such as our position in things, we say we try to be middle of the road. We do not enquire as to what factions our members belong. It does not matter as long as we have the same aim which is

**FAIR TAX FOR ALL.**

So, I hope this has shown you that we are not the ogres that the clique in the States would like to paint us. And if you want to be radical well be radical. It is the difference between mediocre and radical that washes out to a consensus of opinion. I am sure you would enjoy coming to our next meeting and seeing for yourself what it is all about.

**Interested in what you have read?**

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or e-mail jeanandersson42@hotmail.com
For more information go to www.jersey.attac.org