



Unit 1 / 17 Counihan Road
Seventeen Mile Rocks

PO Box 1692
Sunnybankhills QLD 4109

Ph; 0431 385 628

Attn; Celina Edmonds

Sky News Presenter

Good Morning Celina

My young family and I moved to Norfolk in Jan this year. The Kids adore it. We are Aussie which is not the most popular nationality on Norfolk at the moment. In conjunction with some notable Engineers I am also the person responsible for providing the Islands community with an alternate design concept capable capitalising on cruise line tourism and more efficient cargo transportation methods. Attached is the News Paper article displaying supporting bodies. Please do not misinterpret this correspondence as a promotion of this design concept. This above info is background only.

What Matters;

I watched your interview with Jamie from last Friday and with Lisle and David today. You know something isn't quite right but it's difficult to find. Your feeling is correct. I now live on Norfolk Island and only through confidences earned was I able to gain a better understanding. Although I do not believe Jamie Briggs is lying I do not consider the Australian community is being told the truth about Norfolk. I hope this may provide some degree of clarity.

Norfolk Island has been promoted to the Australian Public as a small community where residents don't pay income taxes, retain their own personally motivated form of government all while living on an island paradise. This existence has apparently been funded by sponging 40 to 50 million dollars out of the Australian tax payer to date. It has been somewhat likened to the 'Russel Island effect'.

In response the Australian Government (AG) has been trying to dismantle the Norfolk Island Assembly or its unique form of Government for the past ten years. To date it has alluded them. The AG has now dropped this task on the desk of Jamie Briggs. Jamie is referred to as a rising star and by all means based on his achievements versus his age alone he would have to be one of Australia's most brilliant political minds. Apparently a promise was made to the Australian people at election time to eliminate this Norfolk Island burden on the Aussie tax payer. If anyone can expedite this annoyance it is the best and brightest, Jamie. It does however lead you to wonder why a minor governance issue relevant to a small remote community has taken 10 years, 10 findings and millions of dollars in consultants to get, know where. Why?

Why is very simple.

Employment;

The islands majority workforce from all industry areas earns between \$13.00 to \$16.00 per hr. Tradies who supply all necessary tools can fetch up to \$22.00 per hr. A good week will involve 30 to 50 hrs most likely spread between multiple employers. One litre of milk costs \$7.00 How is your own hrly rate starting to look while your drinking an espresso? I fly in and fly out.

I am not an economist but common sense tells us that;

- There is no component of tax in \$13.00 or \$16.00
- The rates would in turn be halved if the Australian tax system applied regarding multiple employers. A second job attracts 48% tax (that's \$6.50 - \$8.00 /hr)
- This is not generally promoted by residents because not many people could survive on these rates and the net effect of advertising this will result in further population decline.
- On Norfolk Island if the Government increased the nominal hrly rate then the tourism industry must wear the cost. The effect of this will result in increased costs which results in less tourists which means fewer jobs. I believe NIG is aware of this and has not shifted rates for some 5 yrs
- The general population of residents when not working spend time ensuing less fortunate residents are cared for. Remember there is little support services with a population average age of 56.

Government Restricted;

For multiple reasons the NIG is insolvent. Norfolk Island owes Australia 40 – 50 Million. To ensure there investment remains an investment Australia appoints an administrator to run or oversee NIG. Ultimately the administrator has final say under advice from Canberra. What needs to be understood is that NIG cannot legally borrow money, it cannot enter into private investment agreements and in the event a prospective business is granted a licence to operate in any form than the Administrator can cancel any such agreement. With this lack of cohesion is there any wonder why Norfolk Island is referred to as 'a no investment zone'. The NIG simply has no power while at the same time is being blamed for failed delivery. To make matters worse while Australia restricts all avenues of financial resources Australian representatives have the ignorance to use local radio and media to direct criticism at the NIG for NIG's inability to deliver essential services or for NIG being at fault using funds gained through areas like inflated electrical charges to delivery such services. Somehow this criticism is supposed to gain community support. It has achieved the opposite. There have been two protest marches, government vehicles and walls graffiti which has never before occurred at Norfolk. As an Australian citizen this drip feed or ransom type tactic by the Federal Government seems appalling. While the Australian PR machine expresses its deepest devoted concern for the poor Norfolk residents the fact is tourist numbers decline because who wants to go to a war zone which has been more created by Australia and not by the Norfolk Government?

Make sense of "The Tab"

Norfolk Island owes Australia 40 – 50 million. Let's call it the 'Tab'. Maybe I am not as observant as the Australian politicians but I haven't been able to see where this 40 odd million went. I have asked but no-one seems to know exactly. Out of this so called Tab what portion is the cost for both the current and previous Australian contingents, all the consultants, specialists and joint standing committees commissioned by Australia to play their part in "reforming Norfolk Island"? As an Australian tax payer I would really like the below confirmed or denied and do these amounts form part of this Norfolk Tab supposedly owed to the Australian Tax Payer.

- Did Jamie commission a 727 to fly in to Norfolk for a very brief meeting. What cost \$
- Did Neil Pope and Gary Hardgrave commission military planes to remove and or delivery their belongings to Norfolk. What cost \$
- It this standard practice?
- Does every Australian political employee receive a new vehicle when sent to Norfolk? What cost \$
- Do Australian political employees and support staff continue to pay Australian income tax when working on Norfolk Island ?
- It was published Gary Hardgrave attracted a salary of 200k. is this taxed?
- How can the Australian contingent voice disapproval of any alternate party or person when they themselves may benefit from the system they criticise?

I think we all know the answers here. I also know as an Australian you hear of and see a terrible amount of waste by our government but surely in a community which currently has a requirement for the issuing of food vouchers there cannot be this level of inconsiderate financial waste!!

Social;

Jamie makes a point that there is no child protection policy on Norfolk. Lisle says there is. What I do know is if you choose to harm a child on Norfolk Island then the safest place you should hide is in the Police lock-up. Even there would be questionable. I moved my young family to Norfolk because I know they are safe. Australian policy on child protection is just another reflexive policy that deals with issues after the fact. Norfolk has an unwritten understanding of **Don't**

The residents and or government has been referred to as archaic or relics. Celina I do not know how old you are but I am 48. As a Brisbane kid I played cricket and football on the street, went to the creek swimming and got home at dark for dinner. Being harmed by some sick predator was not even a consideration. We did not lock our house or car. We did not need to. Norfolk continues to hold true to these and many more community values which sadly Australia has lost. If Jamie is looking for the 'top job' or if he is grooming Gary for it then he should re-consider these values.

The Australian tax payer has been misled yet again by its government. The above are some of the facts. Instead of allowing a very small number of politically motivated individuals to expedite judgement on the future of Norfolk Island how about lets see what the Australian Public has got to say when they have the facts. Aussies support their mates and always have. Aussies need to support Norfolk Island residents because the Australian tax payer has been feed a load of crap. Norfolk people have the right to select a suitable model of government the same as Aussies have a right to select their government.

The Solution;

Is simple. There are two major issues and a few minor issues to be addressed.

Governance correction;

The people of Norfolk want a change of government. The wish for change it is not due to their dislike of the people representing them it is simply that this government structure is cost prohibitive to such a small community. There may be some levels of self-interest but you would not want to draw a comparison with levels of self-interest displayed by Australian politicians.

All that needs to happen is three sample platforms of government should be presented to the community and the community will select by majority the one best suiting their requirements. I think someone once called this process democracy! Australian politicians, given their far superior levels of education and spin doctoring should be able to provide these three samples.

Economy correction;

Cease applying the muscle tactics of political gain for commercial return to this community. Flicking a few bucks to NIG as long as NIG commits to a new tax or a few bucks for the people in exchange for their support in abolishing the NIG. These are appalling tactical agendas. Maybe consider the hrly rate of the islands work force first. Assist NIG in better management of funds already approved for changes to infrastructure. Those funds are enough to fire the economy if you give enough of a shit to look. This Island is built on tourism and need only be given the chance to increase tourist numbers from cruise line operations. This well documented fact will enable people to be able to pay tax. From here remove the bulk of the Australian contingent which would be a staggering saving to the Australian tax payer. For example the multiple premises currently occupied by this contingent could be rented out which would gain sufficient income to eliminate any further requirement for food vouchers on the Island. Food for thought so to speak.

Honestly this is not rocket science. What the hell has gone so terribly wrong here?

I hope this correspondence may assist you in gaining a clearer picture regarding the continuing and somewhat escalating conflict between these governments. This correspondence is not in support of NIG but more so to simply point out the fact that not all the truth has been made available. For ten years Australia has failed in trying to dismantle Norfolk Governance. Hopefully this explains why. If Australian intentions were to support and not dismantle then there would not be a tax burden. If the Norfolk economy was buoyant Australia would not be there.

I sincerely hope that common sense prevails but as per usual in Australian politics, it appears it may need a push?

Kind regards

Glen Wood