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Editorial

Sorry, folks! It's happened again! In last months' editorial the main punch-line in the last paragraph was not printed, the actual quote from the old Bard! It should have read, "To quote a famous Englishman, 'me thinks they doth protest too much!!' etc. If you read last months' editorial again with this correction, you will get my meaning!!!

Well now, we have just held our Society AGM, hosted by the Hamilton Club this year. I feel it was a very good meeting, with everyone wishing to 'air' a gripe getting a good hearing from the members present. Unfortunately, as has been the case for most of the last few AGMs, at least half of the discussion time was taken up by this vexed question of consecutive

NZ governments refusing to change these obnoxious laws allowing said government to 'deduct' any Swiss pension from the New Zealand National Super! I call this practice by a far blunter name!!! "But it wouldn't be fair on the NZ-born taxpayer who payed taxes in New Zealand all their lives," the politicians howl in excuses! Oh yeah, what's fair? Since when are our politicians suddenly so concerned about fairness for the majority of voters? I have already alluded to the generous perks, allowances and pensions our present and ex-MP's receive, nearly all paid for by the Taxpayer! All this is fair?!!! (See June Helvetia).

Why was the old 'twenty-year residency' law considered 'fair enough' for almost thirty years, until the mid-

1960s, when a 'National' Government suddenly decided otherwise?! In my opinion it is nothing but greedy successive governments desperately seizing funds from anywhere to help cover their fiscal shortfalls because of their own extravagant spending mistakes!!!

Remember the hated 'surcharge' on National Super brought in by the 'Lange' Labour Government? A blatant double tax if ever I saw one!! "This will be the first injustice we will get rid of when we become the government" Bolger yelled on the televised hustings during the 1990 General Election campaign! Yep, I'm sure most of the elderly voters swung in behind the National Party on the trust that they would keep their Leaders' promise! Yours truly was one of those voters!! And what happened? Within a few weeks the new government said 'sorry, no we can't afford to wipe the surcharge because fiscal books of the outgoing government did not show the true seriousness of the Nations' financial situation'! So, again, it was the old pensioner who got clobbered first, the citizen who was too old to work to supplement their miserly NS! And they had to wait three years until that obnoxious tax was finally wiped! Yep, like thousands of other oldies, 1990 was the last time I voted for either of the two main Parties!

Our chief delegate to the OSA conferences, Mr Heinz Leuenberger, gave us a brief report on the last conference, but, most of his discussion was also on this vexed "Pensioner" debate! Heinz held up a fistful of papers and correspondence and admitted to utter frustration at what appeared deliberate stymieing by Politicians, of any discussions on this vexed matter! Another member opened that it was useless to argue with any government bureaucrat as they were only enforcing government laws and until the government changed these, we will get nowhere.

Unfortunately I have to agree completely! That is why it is so important we all e-mail or write to the Party Leaders now, before a General Election, demanding an open, public promise to revise these obnoxious laws!!!

Cheerio until next month!

Paul

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