

I have decided to put my name forward as a candidate for the Camp Constituency in this general election for three main reasons.

- 1) I have twelve years' experience of politics both internally and externally. Those years have also given me a very good insight as to what works and what does not in the FIG system.
- 2) I still have a positive outlook for the future of the Falklands. In my opinion, a positive outlook is important to anyone representing their country. Negativity achieves nothing.
- 3) I still regard it as a great honour and privilege to speak on your behalf when required, at any time at any overseas fora.

So, what are the challenges this new assembly face? A massive capital programme for a start which has been committed over the last few budget sessions.- in no particular order—new power station, vulnerable peoples home, MPA road, Stanley Airport, possible renovation of air terminal at MPA and port facilities to name a few. These things have to be followed up, but they are only part of the remit.

The maintenance of our entire road system, the ferry and air service should always be priorities of any assembly. If we are truly committed to keeping people in the Camp, we have to make sure that these three lifelines are given more than lip service by FIG. The RDS has addressed this in part but much more needs to be done.

Our roads are being used by more vehicles each year, and in some places are deteriorating faster than they are being maintained. Welcome investment on the outer islands over several years has meant that the ferry is being stretched in a way that wasn't foreseen on its introduction. FIGAS is flying more passengers and that trend looks set to continue, especially if another external flight happens in the next few years.

I believe roads to all occupied farms/businesses are important if the Camp is to contribute more to our economy. There is already discussion underway about enhancing the service of the Concordia Bay by way of fitting a larger crane and perhaps bringing forward the annual dry-dock.

A paper was presented to the last Assembly on the future of FIGAS, and that is there as a guide and I hope very much a living document as things change during the course of the next four years.

All these are vital to the growth of our industries, let alone the thorny subject of communications.

This next assembly will have to judge whether or not the monitoring of the Regulator is sufficient and satisfactory to us and support it if they see fit. Considering that the post of regulator was approved in 2010, the last and previous assembly have been remiss in not having this post established sooner. For my part in that failure I can only apologise.

Our constitution was last reviewed over ten years ago. I believe the next review should at least begin in the next four years. It took over two assemblies last time around so to begin a review during the life of the next assembly would be a sensible thing to do.

There has been a massive amount of legislation passed over the last few assemblies, not least that concerning possible oil production. We don't know yet whether oil production will be sanctioned next year or five, ten or fifteen years down the line, but we have to be prepared for the eventuality.

Internationally, I strongly believe that the Argentine claim over our country has to be refuted first and foremost by us, the people of the Falklands. During the last 12 years that I have been involved in overseas travel, I can assure you have that whenever a Falkland Islander (not only MLAs) speaks of the way of life here and our right to self-determination, it is far better received than coming from an UK embassy official. It can be frustrating and disheartening at times to address the Committee of 24 at the UN, year after year with a strong and honest argument about our rights, only to hear the same tired and misguided drivel emanating from Argentina and their cronies. However, all opportunities to express our views and feelings must be taken. Experience in this field is important, and I feel confident that I have this experience.

There is no doubt in my mind that Argentina, (under whatever Government) will not drop their claim to our Islands, nor can they be trusted.

I won't go into Brexit and its consequences on us as an overseas territory, simply because we do not know enough yet. Any comment would be pure speculation, not fact.

One of the issues in this election looks as though it is going to be the re-introduction of the Holiday Credit Scheme. To promise- a vote winner- to achieve a- bit more difficult. It obviously has its advantages for many people, but there are questions to be asked about the reality of re-introduction.

For instance, is it fair that high earners get it? Should it be just for travel? In this day and age is £1 a day enough? (It would now take five years to accumulate enough credits for a flight as opposed to three when it was first introduced). Would it be more cost effective to FIG to fund those eligible a free flight every three years if they wished to take it? All these options have been put to me. I think the next assembly should consider all the above along with any other options or suggestions before making a firm decision.

I guess finally my main personal disappointment over the last four or possibly six years has been the failure to have vehicle tax removed entirely. However if elected I will continue to push this, as it is a totally unfair system of taxing. It is divisive to the Camp in particular and in my view would not affect FIG revenue in any serious way if it were to be abolished, island wide.

In summary, as you will have gathered, I do not advocate promising the impossible, or even the improbable to collect votes. It has been a privilege to serve the Falklands for the time I have been fortunate to do so. I am willing to serve another four years if you, the electorate wish.

I can be contacted at any time to further discuss anything anyone wishes to bring to my attention.

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