

## **SUBMISSION FROM JOHN T NELLIS MBE**

Whilst never agreeing with the principle of the Community Charge, I have no desire for the Scottish Government to write off this debt. The reasons for this are set out below:

At the time of the Community Charge was introduced as I was a serving member of Her Majesty's Armed Forces serving in Scotland, I had no choice in the matter of withholding payment it was taken straight out of my pay., but I suffered financial hardship compared to my erstwhile companions who were serving in other parts of the UK . This was against the principle of the Armed Forces that no serving member should pay different taxes no matter where they served in the UK.

If the Scottish Government is determined to write off this debt, will they then reimburse the millions of law abiding people who for many years paid their Community Charge, even though they did not agree with it in principle? In my opinion by writing off this debt, the Scottish Government is agreeing with those individuals who in essence broke the law that is okay not to pay your debt to society because after a predetermined time this will be written off.

By doing so the Scottish Government is setting a dangerous precedent. What if in future if the Scottish Government decides to increase the Tax levies, a power which they have had since the Parliament's conception, then can individuals and companies just wait out, until there is a change of government which decides that the increase was unfair and so this debt should also be written off?

I firmly believe that in a democratic society, that every individual has the right to demonstrate peacefully against government policies, but it appears to me that the Scottish Government is bowing to mob rule, and this too sets a dangerous policy for future governments.