

Dear Sirs

I read in the JEP tonight that you were reviewing Jersey's options with regards the use of cash or not as a means of payment.

On one hand, we probably use cash less and less as a society and covid may have accelerated this trend (I always wondered if touching a bank note could suffice to infect an individual, as was alleged by authorities who might have other motives?). Electronic transfers and electronic payments are probably safer – on average – than payments with bank notes which require shops to manually deposit their cash balances in banks. Presumably this has a cost too.

On the other hand, when everything else fails, cash, silver and gold will remain currencies of exchange. I witnessed Cyprus' bankruptcy in 2013 (sovereign debt default and banks failures) where all the usual debit and credit cards issued by local banks ceased working for over three weeks. This also stopped businesses charging their clients with electronic payments terminals from local banks (in any event it would have been imprudent to add to cash balances of bankrupt banks. This led to serious strains in the local economy. Only families who had cash at hand did not suffer to purchase goods (particularly food) over those three weeks. Since then, I changed our family habits – we were virtually cashless in those days – and we retain approximately one month expenditure in cash in the event of a lasting electronic payment systemic system failure.

We live in a world where we are increasingly made dependent on electronics from GPS navigation to payments. It is also likely that in the event of a military conflict, paralysing the payment and navigation systems will be attempted.

Because of the above, I feel it is not prudent to get rid of cash all together. Further – whilst trivial – I found that entrusting our children with a little bit of cash for their authorised purchases had educational values about money management. Charities are also benefitting from collection boxes dotted around the island and a cashless system would likely impede their fund-raising efforts.

I trust the above considerations will be incorporated in your wider thinking.

Kind regards

Jérôme Thérèse