

# *Rich, Famous and...Tax Evaders*

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The dark financial wheelings and dealings of aristocrats, magnates, personalities of the arts and sports world, and politicians, among others, were revealed to the world following the publication of thirteen million archives that show how they hide their earnings and how they place their money in fiscal paradises in order to avoid complying with their citizens' duties and pay taxes.

The filtered documents basically belong to well known law offices: Appleby, with offices in the Bermudas, Cayman Islands, the Virgin Islands, the island of Mauritius and the Seychelles. Managing this complex web was entrusted to the off-shore firm of Asiacity Trust.

Similar to an incident that broke out months ago, known as the Panama Papers, the incriminating data was collected by an investigating think tank known as International Consortium of Investigating Journalists, a group of 381 reporters and 96 media people in sixty seven nations, led by the German newspaper *Suddeutsche Zeitung*.

Even though the materials just released must be investigated in for criminal violations, a task that falls upon each concerned State, what is really evident is that serious crimes have been committed by many of the world's richest tycoons to hide their fortunes and many criminal dealings and to avoid paying taxes and contribute to the maintenance of public institutions in their countries of origin and of wheelings and dealings.

The name of the game is for the rich to become richer and the poor destitute.

This new scandal already has a name: Paradise Papers and involves hundreds of well known personalities, especially in the United Kingdom, where the Government of Prime Minister Theresa May, who is not personally involved, could be seriously compromised, as Queen Elizabeth the Second herself and the main Tory financial backer Michael Ashcroft, who appear to be personally involved.

In the case of the Queen, Elisabeth the Second has investments worth thirteen million dollars in the Bermudas and the Cayman Islands.

In turn, Ashcroft heads a four hundred and fifty million dollar fund in the Bermudas and is well known as an investor of huge funds in fiscal paradises.

The administration of Donald Trump has not escaped being tainted by the scandal. Involved, so far, are Wilbur Ross, Commerce Secretary, Gary Cohn, Trumps economic advisor, Jon Huntsman, new Ambassador to Russia and some are including in the list the Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson.

In Latin America, the main beneficiaries include, so far, Colombian President, Juan Manuel Santos, the Brazilian Agriculture Secretary Blairo Borges, the former Mexican Internal Security Minister, Alejandro Gertz, and former Costa Rican President, José María Figueres.

Now we will witness a wave of denials and justifications, but as long as the world lacks appropriate legal structures and moral standards are not reinforced, the globe will be watching new scandals of this type flourishing in the quote "Free world" unquote.

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