



Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

CASE REPORT

Case no: K/004

Complaint: Inappropriate use of public resources and inappropriate behaviour consisting in the dissemination of a press statement on a private interest matter through the Department of Information.

Complainant: Dr Andrew Borg Cardona

Complaint Date: 6th February 2019

Report date: 9th August 2019

The Complaint

1. By email of the 6th February 2019 (attached and marked Document A), Dr Andrew Borg Cardona referred to a press statement by the Ministry for Tourism issued by the Department of Information (attached and marked Document B) and requested me to determine whether, in its tone and content, the press statement constituted an appropriate use of public resources and an appropriate manner of behaviour on the part of the Minister and his officials.
2. The Complainant did not refer to any specific clause in the Code of Ethics for Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries (the Code), now forming part of the *Standards in Public Life Act* (Chapter 570 of the Laws of Malta) (the Act), as the basis of the alleged breach.

Decision to Investigate

3. I decided that the Complaint warranted further investigation under the Act.

Investigation Procedure

4. I wrote to the Minister for Tourism on the 5th March 2019 (copy of letter attached and marked Document C) and referred him to the provisions of the Code that appeared to me relevant to this complaint:

4.9 Ministers shall keep their roles as Ministers and as Representatives separate, as well as their role as a member of a political party.



4.10 Ministers shall respect the principle of political impartiality of the public service.

5. The Minister was invited to comment on the following points:
 - (a) whether an official press release should have been issued about what appeared to be a private matter;
 - (b) whether the press release in question respected the concept of separation between his roles as Minister and as member of a political party;
 - (c) whether the press release respected the principle of political impartiality of the public service, particularly with regards to content and tone, since it had been issued through the Department of Information.
6. I also exchanged correspondence with the Principal Permanent Secretary and with the Director of Information requesting them to state what is the procedure, if any, relating to statements issued by the Department of Information, as per attached correspondence marked Document D and Document E, respectively.
7. Minister Mizzi, through his lawyer Dr Aron Mifsud Bonnici, replied by letter dated 13th March 2019 (copy attached and marked Document F) wherein he rebutted the allegations and made the submissions reproduced below.
8. On 4 April 2019 and on the 30th July 2019 I met with Minister Mizzi in the presence of his lawyer Dr Mifsud Bonnici and invited him to explain his position further.
9. Following the meeting of the 4th April 2019 Minister Mizzi forwarded documentation related to the court cases to which the press release at issue referred.

Written Submissions

10. In reply to the Complaint, the Minister's lawyer formally submitted that:
 - 1. Our Client is not aware of any specific rules regarding the dissemination of statements by the Department of Information (DOI). His role in this context is merely to review a drafted statement, which is then forwarded to the DOI. It is certainly in the discretion of the DOI to distribute or decline distributing any information, and our Client has never been advised that any statement of his fails to meet required standards.*
 - 2. This notwithstanding, our Client would find any such hypothetical rejection rather peculiar for many reasons, including:*



a. The Department of Information “aims to provide the public with up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful information on Government policies, services and activities as well as on matters of public interest.”¹ Clearly, this allows DOI to publish material and information which is not strictly government business, provided that it relates to a matter of public interest. The subject matter of the press statement complained of was judicial action instigated against our Client by prominent figures of the party in opposition. These allegations are not private in nature but are intrinsically related to our Client’s work as government Minister, and to government contracts. This judicial action was the subject of intense media interest, and the said prominent figures made numerous public statements alleging wrongdoing by our Client whilst performing his functions as government Minister. It would be preposterous to expect that our Client would not be able, as government Minister and through official channels, to express himself when the Courts eventually rejected such allegations.

b. The subject matter of the statement lamented of was therefore clearly not, as is being alleged, “a private matter”. There is no doubt that DOI was correct in publishing the statement, given that it was a matter of public interest relating to challenges made against our Client as a government Minister, which were determined to be mere speculation and thus unfounded. Our client did not issue a press statement on his private life, but on a matter which clearly relates to a very public challenge of his conduct as a government minister made by rival politicians.

c. We submit that in publishing the statement, the DOI acted consistent with its terms of reference (given the public interest in the topic) and consistent with its conduct over time, spanning many years over several legislatures. In this respect, our Client is attaching a number of press releases (of many others in similar vein) where it is clear that Nationalist Party government ministers and parliamentary secretaries have issued statements through the DOI which both in tone and content are far from impartial. These statements contain partisan comments such as:

- “Għalhekk il-kritika tal-Partit Laburista bħal dejjem m’għandha ebda skop kostruttiv li tgħin biex f’pajjiżna xogħlijiet bħal dawn isiru b’mod effiċjenti iżda skop purament aljenattiv biex il-Partit Laburista jagħmel ta’ bir-ruħu li m’hawnx l-kaos li sab ruħu f’dawn l-aħħar ġimgħat.”
- “Dr. Debono’s continuous attacks on the Prime Minister and fellow Nationalist MPs are only a fickle attempt to compensate for an ambition he did not achieve. At the same time, however, they strengthen my will to serve and they deepen my loyalty towards the PN. Dr. Debono has no understanding of loyalty and will therefore find it difficult to understand my

¹ DOI Website at <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Pages/default.aspx>.



stance. I will immediately resign if the Prime Minister or PN ask me to, but I will not do so when Dr. Debono deems fit. We have been through far tougher times than those which Dr. Debono is now seeking to create and we will still be there after Dr. Debono's tantrums have become a thing of the past – whether he will, is exceedingly doubtful.”

- *“Dr Chris Cardona bil-kliem u l-aġir tiegħu qed ipogġi lilu nnifsu bħala ‘l fuq mill-Qorti ta’ l-Appell – ħaġa din li la tagħmel għieh lilu u lanqas il-Partit li jirrapreżenta.”*
- *“Għal darb’oħra l-Onor. Leo Brincat reġa kkonferma li l-iktar importanti għalih huwa li jitfa’ t-tajn... Għal darb’oħra dan juri kemm l-Onor Brincat huwa amateur.”*
- *“L-Onor Leo Brincat irid jibqa’ jipprova jitfa’ t-tajn, u ma jiddejjaq xejn jikkontradixxi lilu nnifsu.”*
- *“Il-Malta Labour Party ta’ Dott Muscat ikompli bit-tradizzjoni tiegħu li jgħawweġ il-fatti u jieħu dikjarazzjonijiet barra mill-kuntest biex jipprova jirbaħ punti politiċi. Dan jagħmlu sforz is-sensazzjonalizmu li jemmen fih... Dan kollu juri wkoll kemm il-Malta Labour Party u Dott Muscat għadhom l-istess u m’hu qed joffri xejn gdid.”*
- *“Illum il-Ministru tal-Finanzi John Dalli għamel libell lill-Malta Labour Party dwar billboard li twaħħal madwar Malta b’insinwazzjonijiet u gideb li huma malafamanti.”*
- *“Il-Ministru John Dalli jfakkar li r-rigward ta’ l-HSBC diġa kien għamel u infatti rebaħ libell kontra r-radju Super One, kemm l-Qorti kriminali, kif ukoll f’dak Ċivili. Matul dawn il-proċeduri, is-Super One abbandunaw l-insinwazzjonijiet li għamlu u ġabu l-iskuża li min kien qed imexxi l-programm ma kienx jaf iħaddem il-buttuni ta’ quddiemu.”*
- *“Sfortunatament l-MLP u l-kap tiegħu jibqgħu ma jistgħux jirrikonoxxu l-avvanz li qed isir minħabba l-għamad politiku li għandhom.” “Bħas-soltu, xejn ġdid mill-Oppożizzjoni ... Sfortunatament anke matul iż-żmien tal-festi, il-Malta Labour Party jagħżel li jkompli jipprova jfixkel is-servizzi tas-saħħa.”*
- *“Għal darb’oħra, bl-iskop li jħammeg il-qasam tas-saħħa, il-Malta Labour Party uza il-ġurnal tiegħu biex ixandar rapporti mimlija gideb.”*
- *“L-Onor. Brincat għal darb’oħra qed jipprova jhawwad l-imħuħ u jibni argument fuq premissa żbaljata... L-Onor. Brincat ma jistax jittieħed bis-serjetà.”*

Our Client emphasises that the above DOI statements were issued by members of the Nationalist Government Cabinet during various legislatures, including the 1998-2003 legislature. Therefore, there is a clear and established practice for members of Cabinet to refer statement of public interest, sometimes containing



political criticism, to the DOI for publication. This is a custom that is well-established in the Maltese political system.

In his statement, our Client stated that:

“Defending against baseless allegations and repelling slander takes both an emotional and administrative toll. Yet Minister Mizzi has delivered major change by leading the shift of Malta's power plants from dirty fuel oil to clean gas, the attraction of the largest foreign direct investment into an ailing national energy company, which has now registered profits, the closure of old and polluting power plants, major reduction in emissions and particulate matter, the building of a new Medical Unit block at Mater Dei Hospital, the eradication of out of stock medicines, the diversification of tourism markets, and record number of arrivals and the ongoing turnaround of Airmalta, Malta's national carrier.”

This is a matter of public interest, and relates to our Client's ability to perform his duties as a government Minister. Furthermore, even when a Minister is involved in legal proceedings in his private capacity, these may have implications on the ministerial role. Our Client should not be singled out for using a distribution channel previously used for the same purposes by Cabinet members from the opposing political sphere.

d. Our Client did not act in breach of articles 4.9 and 4.10 when he explained that he would be withdrawing a number of libel cases to focus on Ministerial work. Indeed, the cited articles are to be balanced with reference to other obligations found in the Code, e.g. article 5.6 which requires Ministers to “give reasons for their decisions and actions.”

e. We submit, finally, that a law, or an interpretation thereof that would restrict anyone from choosing how to convey his message, would be in breach of the fundamental human right of freedom of expression as protected by the Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights.

Our Client therefore submits that the Complaint is to be rejected.

The Context

11. On the 6th February 2019 Minister Mizzi filed a note of withdrawal of the six libel cases that are listed below and that had been instituted by him between March 2016 and April 2017:



Case No: 52/2016	Dr Konrad Mizzi vs Dr Beppe Fenech Adami	In respect of statements made on the television programme Times Talk on the 8th March 2016.
Case No: 70/2016	Dr Konrad Mizzi vs Ray Bugeja noe	In respect of Times of Malta report of the 5th April 2016
Case No: 79/2016	Dr Konrad Mizzi vs Dr Simon Busuttil	In respect of statements made during a press conference on the 13th April 2016.
Case No: 106/2017	Dr Konrad Mizzi vs Daphne Caruana Galizia	In respect of allegations made in an article dated 15th April 2017 in Running Commentary – Daphne Caruana Galizia’s Notebook, entitled “Egrant Inc.: Hiding in plain sight” and September 2015 ‘Konrad Mizzi caught by reporter leaving Pilatus Bank in unmarked car”.
Case No: 109/2017	Dr Konrad Mizzi vs Daphne Caruana Galizia	In respect of allegations regarding loan payments allegedly made by a company owned by Leyla Aliyeva of Azerbaijan to Hearnville, Egrant and Tillgate.
Case No: 112/2017	Dr Konrad Mizzi vs Dr Simon Busuttil et	In respect of statements made during a press conference on the 20th May 2016.



12. The cases had been filed by Minister Mizzi, in his personal capacity, to claim damages for the alleged libel.

13. In the press statement issued through the DOI, the Ministry for Tourism explained that the cases were being withdrawn following decisions in other court cases that in his view had determined that the *“allegations of money laundering in connection with the Panama Papers revelations”* were *“mere speculation”* and *“conjecture”* and that *“by withdrawing distracting libel cases, Minister Mizzi can focus greater energy on delivering projects in areas which will continue to provide a significant boost to the economy and to make a positive change to the lives of Maltese families.”*

Considerations

14. The arguments put forward may be summarised as follows:

- a) *The Minister is not aware of any specific rules regarding the dissemination of statements by the Department of Information (DOI).*

15. The Minister is quite correct to make this statement since there seems to be no specific departmental policy that regulates which statements forwarded by ministers to the DOI should be issued by it and which should not.

16. Enquiries with the Principal Permanent Secretary and with the Director at the DOI confirmed, to my surprise, that the DOI does not have such a specific policy in place.

17. The Principal Permanent Secretary stated:

... Jien ma jidhirlix li qatt rajt policy miktuba għad-dipartiment u dejjem imxew bi prassi fil-limiti li tagħti l-ligi u r-regoli.

18. A directive for public employees on political participation and communications with the media makes a passing reference to guidelines issued by the DOI. Paragraph 6.4 of Directive 5, as issued by the Principal Permanent Secretary under the Public Administration Act on 24 February 2011, states that *“Media releases should be initialled by the appropriate Minister, Permanent Secretary, or whichever official has been delegated accordingly. The guidelines issued by the Department of Information are to be duly adhered to.”* The Director of the Department of Information was requested to forward to this office any guidelines issued by the DOI in keeping with this directive. In his reply, the Director of the Department of Information stated:

As mentioned in Directive 5 (Section 6.4) duly authorised media releases forwarded to the Department of Information are disseminated accordingly as long as the content abides with the basic legal concepts featuring in the Media



and Defamation Act. As far as I can recall during the past four years there has never been any controversies about the language used in media releases issued by the Department. It is normal procedure that if the Department deems that the phraseology of the media release content is offensive and/or libellous, the Department invariably requests the author to use the appropriate wording. This has always been the case.

19. The only filter therefore seems to be that relating to potential breaches of the Media and Defamation Act, that is to say, whether “*content is offensive and/or libelous.*”

20. The DOI web-site states that the Department of Information “*aims to provide the public with up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful information on Government policies, services and activities as well as on matters of public interest.*”

21. This makes sense. However, it implies that a statement forwarded to the DOI for publication should be vetted to determine whether, or not, it communicates Government policy, and whether, or not, it relates to a matter of public interest. Statements that do not satisfy either criterion should be withheld and drawn to the attention of the minister concerned. In the absence of such vetting, the DOI cannot know whether press statements published by it are in line with its aims.

b) *The Minister’s role in this context is merely to review a drafted statement, which is then forwarded to the DOI.*

22. This statement is confusing at best. An admission of having merely “reviewed” a statement, presumably as opposed to having been the author, cannot be used to exonerate oneself from responsibility therefor. Ministers are to assume responsibility for statements drafted and issued by their ministry whether, or not, they had authored those statements.

c) *It is certainly in the discretion of the DOI to distribute or decline distributing any information...*

23. True, but it is not the abuse or otherwise of the DOI’s discretion that is being examined in this report.

24. The real challenge for all concerned, but mainly for the DOI, is to distinguish between what is a matter of public interest and what is a personal or partisan matter. Admittedly this is not always evident and extra effort should be made to make this distinction.

d) *... and the Minister has never been advised that any statement of his fails to meet required standards.*



25. This statement is credible particularly in view of the lax attitude adopted by the DOI in accepting to publish releases fed to them, but it is incorrect to justify one's actions by shifting the blame upon the DOI for not using its discretion to refuse publication. If at all, the DOI's responsibility or lack of it is a matter that should be discussed elsewhere.

- e) *The DOI's publication was consistent with its conduct over time, spanning many years over several legislatures.*

26. It is acknowledged that (as illustrated by the copies of statements attached to the Minister's written submissions) the practice of issuing official press statements with a partisan slant is longstanding. However, this does not justify the perpetuation of the practice. The enactment of the Standards in Public Life Act and the appointment of a Commissioner for Standards in Public Life were surely intended *inter alia* to re-evaluate past practices in order to take the standards of our political class to a higher level. It would be in my view self-defeating if any conduct were to be evaluated by reference to past, possibly incorrect, practices.

- f) *Ministers are required to "give reasons for their decisions and actions".*

27. The obligation to give reasons for decisions and actions relates to decisions and actions relating to their duties qua ministers, not in their private capacity.

- g) *A restriction on how to convey a message would be in breach of the fundamental human right of freedom of expression.*

28. It is highly unlikely that a restriction on the use of a public resource (the DOI) for disseminating a statement on matters that are intrinsically private could constitute a breach of some charter of fundamental human rights for ministers.

- h) *The Department of Information "aims to provide the public with up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful information on matters of public interest."*

29. This, in my view, is the main point at issue. Was the subject matter of the press release of a private nature or one related to Minister Mizzi's ministerial duties and responsibilities?

30. In the absence of a specific policy addressing this issue, one must refer to the general principles governing public administration in Malta, which would indicate that a government department serves a public purpose and should not be used to further the private interest of anyone. In my view the DOI as the Government's official mouthpiece should:

- i. publish and take ownership of statements on Governmental policy and information;



- ii. publish statements by ministries on matters that are directly related to ministerial work, without taking ownership; and
- iii. refuse to publish any statement by ministers on matters that are of personal nature and not directly related to their ministerial duties.

31. In fact, the submissions made by the Minister implicitly acknowledge (ii) above. It is stated that:

*[The] judicial action was the subject of intense media interest, and the said prominent figures made numerous public statements alleging wrongdoing by our Client **whilst performing his functions as government Minister**. ... The subject matter of the statement lamented of **was therefore clearly not, as is being alleged, "a private matter"**. There is no doubt that DOI was correct in publishing the statement, given that it was a matter of public interest relating to challenges made against our Client **as a government Minister**, ... Our client did not issue a press statement on his private life, but on **a matter which clearly relates to a very public challenge of his conduct as a government minister** made by rival politicians. [Emphasis added.]*

32. The contention is that the court cases related to conduct of the Minister in the exercise of his duties as a minister and therefore cannot be considered a private matter. The question is whether this argument can be considered valid.

Considerations

33. The court cases that were withdrawn by the Minister were in response to allegations of wrong-doing (money-laundering) by the Minister. In my view this could only have been a private matter of the Minister and by no stretch of the imagination could actions related to the subject matter of the allegations ever be considered an extension of his public function, even if the actions were somehow linked to activities that fall within his ministerial portfolio.

34. By way of example, it is one thing to state that you do not agree that Malta needed a new power station or that fuel is being bought at a high price as a result of a wrong (political) decision on hedging the price of fuel, and quite another to state that the Minister got a kick-back from the owners of the power station or from the purchase of fuel. The first relates to a ministerial decision that one may or may not agree with, whereas the latter is an allegation that, if true, can never be considered an extension of ministerial duty or responsibility. The fact that the subject of the allegation is a minister or that the wrongdoing was somehow "related" to his functions, is merely coincidental and the inevitable defence of that allegation is necessarily a purely private matter. In fact the court cases were instituted in the Minister's own name, as they should have been; he was assisted by a private lawyer and not by the Attorney General, and, of course, one assumes



that his legal representation was not financed by public funds; and had he pursued his libel suits to a successful conclusion, the damages would have been awarded to him personally.

35. What in my view also gives rise to concern is that a Government minister would wittingly or unwittingly draw a Government department into the political fray by using it to disseminate statements in furtherance of a personal or partisan agenda and that are not directly related to Government policy or matters of public interest. This amounts to an abuse of public resources. The fact that the tone used is aggressive or inappropriate adds to the concern. Language such as “*web of deceit*”, “*mud-slinging*”, “*ploy*”, “*baseless allegations and slander*” and “*loss of political credibility*” should best not be used in official statements issued by the DOI.

36. The Minister makes the argument that the matter is in fact a matter of public interest. I do not share that view. I make a distinction between matters of interest to the public, in the sense that they would arouse, or satisfy, public curiosity, and matters of public interest in the sense that they concern decisions and actions taken by the holders of state or public office in their official capacity, or are otherwise directly related to public services or public policy. Not all that is of interest to the public is of public interest. The fact that a minister chooses to withdraw court cases instituted by him may be interesting news but is not of public interest in the sense used here.

37. The DOI’s website states that the main function of the Department of Information is “*to provide a link between the Government and the public and ... provides members of the general public with information and material relevant to Government services and activities...*”. The content of the statement that is being considered in this report does not constitute *material relevant to Government services and activities*.

Conclusion

38. In my opinion, the content of the press statement under consideration addresses a political issue arising from the Minister’s personal interests and it is not related to his official duties.

39. To argue that the Minister’s decision to withdraw a court case instituted in his private capacity will allow him to carry out better his ministerial duties is tantamount to reducing the distinction between personal interest and public interest to insignificance. By such reasoning practically any action by a minister could, with a little bit of stretching and creativity, be passed off as being of public interest.

40. Furthermore, the practice of feeding the Department of Information with such statements, whether or not the statement relates to a matter that is of interest to



the public, and whether or not this is a *custom that is well established in the Maltese political system*, is not correct and should be stopped. The Standards in Public Life Act provides us with an opportunity to challenge customs that are well established in the Maltese political system if such customs fall short of the standards that we collectively aspire to embrace.

41. The Department of Information should be jealous of its political impartiality and should fiercely resist this imposition by members of the executive. Ministers on the other hand should respect the principle of political impartiality of the public service by not placing it in an uncomfortable position and not testing the resolve and resilience of civil servants to stand up to them.

42. Moreover, as stated above the tone of the press statement is overtly partisan. There exists enough space in the media, especially the social media, for expressing oneself in the most provocative of tones. The DOI should not be drawn into that space. DOI statements should be as factual, non-partisan and authoritative as possible.

43. On the other hand, it should be acknowledged that Minister Mizzi may have been misled by the absence of a policy that determines which statements ought to be issued and which ought not to be issued by the DOI and the fact that the DOI does not have a history of resisting the publication of statements delivered to it by ministries.

44. I therefore feel that this issue, on this occasion and in these circumstances, may be determined by the application of the procedure set out in art 22 (5) of the Act, whereby a case need not be referred to the Committee if appropriate remedial action is taken.

45. In my view, the appropriate remedial action in this case is that the Minister should undertake to direct his officers to be more sensitive to the distinction between official and private/partisan statements and not to make use of the services of the Department of Information for private/partisan matters in the future.

46. Given that the Minister has agreed to take such action, I am closing this case.

47. A copy of this report is being given to the Complainant, to Minister Konrad Mizzi, and submitted to the Standing Committee for Standards in Public Life, for information purposes.

48. A copy of this report is also being given to the Principal Permanent Secretary, who is invited to bring its contents to the attention of other ministers and parliamentary secretaries as well as the Director of the DOI in order to avoid similar breaches, and to consider the formulation of a policy on the dissemination of press



statements by ministries or possibly a wider policy on the role of the Department of Information in the media world.

49. I shall be monitoring the publication of press statements through the DOI to ensure that the tone and content respect the principles established above.

Dr George-Marius Hyzler
Commissioner for Standards in Public Life



Documents Attached:

- Document A Complaint by Dr Andrew Borg Cardona
- Document B Press Statement by the Ministry for Tourism published by the DOI dated 6th February 2019
- Document C Commissioner's letter to Minister Mizzi dated 5th March 2019
- Document D Correspondence between the Commissioner and the Principal Permanent Secretary
- Document E Correspondence between the Director General in the Office of the Commissioner and the Director of the Department of Information
- Document F Written reply by Minister Mizzi, through his lawyer Aron Mifsud Bonnici, dated 13th March 2019.

Charles Polidano - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

From: Polidano Charles at HOR <charles.polidano@parlament.mt> on behalf of Standards Commissioner at Parlament-MT <standardscommissioner@parlament.mt>
Sent: Wednesday, 20 February 2019 11:19
To: Office
Subject: FW: Request for determination

From: Andrew Borg Cardona [andrewbc@bcgladvocates.com]
Sent: 06 February 2019 22:45
To: Standards Commissioner at Parlament-MT
Subject: Request for determination

The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

Sir

I refer you to the url reproduced below and request that you determine whether the tone and content of the Press Release carried constitute an appropriate use of public resources and an appropriate manner of behaviour on the part of the Minister and his officials.

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/February/06/pr190241.aspx>

Andrew Borg-Cardona

Sent from my iPhone for andrewbc@bcgladvocates.com: my points might be succinctly made!

DOCUMENT B

PR190241

06/02/2019

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY FOR TOURISM

In January, significant milestones were reached in untangling the web of deceit spun against Minister for Tourism Konrad Mizzi, by Simon Busuttil, David Casa, and others in the old PN guard.

The Criminal Court has determined that the allegations of money laundering in connection with the Panama Papers revelations are mere speculation. In the absence of evidence (and there is none), the court dismissed Busuttil's mud slinging as nothing but conjecture.

In utmost contempt of the ruling, and disrespecting the Court, Simon Busuttil and David Casa sought further action by the Court of Magistrates. They again asked for an investigation which had just been declared as unwarranted and baseless by the Criminal Court. Not surprisingly, the Court of Magistrates saw through the ploy and dismissed the second request. It declared that there is no uncertainty in the prevailing legal situation – the courts had already decreed conclusively that Busuttil and Casa's allegations are no valid basis for a criminal inquiry.

Clearly, Simon Busuttil and his acolytes sought a platform to remain politically relevant after a humiliating defeat at the 2017 polls. They have now collected further defeats in the Courts of Law.

Defending against baseless allegations and repelling slander takes both an emotional and administrative toll. Yet Minister Mizzi has delivered major change by leading the shift of Malta's power plants from dirty fuel oil to clean gas, the attraction of the largest foreign direct investment into an ailing national energy company, which has now registered profits, the closure of old and polluting power plants, major reduction in emissions and particulate matter, the building of a new Medical Unit block at Mater Dei Hospital, the eradication of out of stock medicines, the diversification of tourism markets, and record number of arrivals and the ongoing turnaround of Airmalta, Malta's national carrier.

In view of the outright rejection of the allegations by the Courts of Law, Minister Mizzi notes that it has now been determined that there is no evidence supporting allegations of wrongdoing. Using media law to punish those who made such allegations would serve no purpose greater than that which has already been decided by the Courts.

Consequently, Minister Mizzi will be withdrawing several related libel cases. While some defendants may rejoice to know that they will not shoulder a monetary cost for their lies, it should also be clear to them that they already lost their political credibility.

By withdrawing distracting libel cases, Minister Mizzi can focus greater energy on delivering projects in areas which will continue to provide a significant boost to the economy and to make a positive change to the lives of Maltese families.



5 March 2019

Hon Dr Konrad Mizzi
Minister for Tourism
233 Republic Street
Valletta VLT 1116

By post and by email to konrad.mizzi@gov.mt

Dear Minister,

Complaint concerning press release issued by your ministry

I have received a complaint concerning a press release issued by your ministry through the Department of Information on 6 February 2019 and available at:

<https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/February/06/pr190241.aspx>.

The complainant has asked me to determine whether the tone and content of this press release constitutes an appropriate use of public resources and an appropriate manner of behaviour on your part and on the part of your officials. A copy of the complaint is attached.

The following provisions of the Code of Ethics for Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, as set out in the second schedule of the Standards in Public Life Act (chapter 570 of the laws of Malta), appear relevant to this complaint:

4.9 Ministers shall keep their roles as Ministers and as Representatives separate, as well as their role as a member of a political party.

4.10 Ministers shall respect the principle of political impartiality of the public service.

You are kindly invited to comment on the following points:

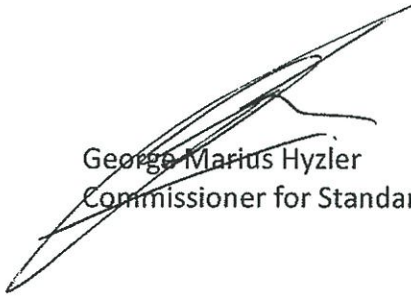
- (a) whether an official press release should have been issued about what appears to be a private matter;



- (b) whether the press release in question respects the concept of separation between your roles as Minister and as member of a political party;
- (c) whether the press release respects the principle of political impartiality of the public service, particularly with regards to content and tone, since it was issued through the Department of Information.

You are kindly requested to reply by **Friday 15 March 2019**.

Yours sincerely,



George Marius Hyzler
Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

Charles Polidano - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

From: George Hyzler - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life
Sent: Thursday, 7 March 2019 12:34
To: Cutajar Mario at OPM
Subject: RE: Policy dwar Stqarrijiet Ministerjali

Grazzi.



Dr George Marius Hyzler
Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

11 St Paul Street, Valletta VLT 1210, Malta
+356 27 269 593 www.standardscommissioner.com

From: Cutajar Mario at OPM <mario.cutajar@gov.mt>
Sent: Thursday, March 7, 2019 11:28 AM
To: George Hyzler - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life
<commissioner@standardscommissioner.com>
Subject: RE: Policy dwar Stqarrijiet Ministerjali

Dr Hyzler

Hajr għall-email tiegħek li tinsab mehmuza hawn taht għal riferenza faċli.

Nahseb milli kkomunikajtli li d-Direttur tal-Infommazzjoni tak li għandu u li jimxi fuqu. Jien ma jidhirlix li qatt rajt policy miktuba għad-dipartiment u dejjem imxew bi prassi fil-limiti li tagħti l-ligi u r-regoli.

Hajr u tislijiet

Mario Cutajar
Principal Permanent Secretary and Cabinet Secretary
Office of the Principal Permanent Secretary

t +356 22001489 e mario.cutajar@gov.mt
www.opm.gov.mt | www.publicservice.gov.mt
Valletta 2018 - European Capital of Culture www.valletta2018.org
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OFFICE OF THE PRIME MIN
AUBERGE DE CASTILLE, VALLETTA, I

From: George Hyzler - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life
<commissioner@standardscommissioner.com>
Sent: Thursday, 07 March 2019 09:44
To: Cutajar Mario at OPM <mario.cutajar@gov.mt>
Subject: RE: Policy dwar Stqarrijiet Ministerjali

Għażiż Segretarju Permanenti Ewlieni,

Dak li tlabt lis-sur Polidano hu biex jindaga tezistix policy dwar x'tip ta' stqarrijiet ghandhom johorgu mid-DOI.

Dak li jinteressani mhux daqstant xi jmur kontra l-ligi tal-istampa, ghalhiex dak ovvjament m'ghandux jigi pubblikat, izda l-policy dwar stqarrijiet li jkunu ta' natura personali aktar milli ta' natura ministerjali.

Xtaqt nifhem Ministru jistax/ghandux juza d-DOI ghal stqarrijiet li ma jikkoncernawx xoghol ministerjali.

Qed jinformani li d-Direttur tad-DOI irrisponda b'dan il-mod:

As mentioned in Directive 5 (Section 6.4) duly authorised media releases forwarded to be Department of Information are disseminated accordingly as long as the content abides with the basic legal concepts featuring in the Media and Defamation Act. As far as I can recall during the past four years there has never been any controversies about the language used in media releases issued by the Department. It is normal procedure that if the Department deems that the phraseology of the media release content is offensive and/or libelous, the Department invariably requests the author to use the appropriate wording. This has always been the case.

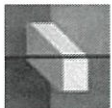
Ghalhekk forsi jiena ma kontx car bizzejjed izda ma nistax nghid li l-mistoqsija tieghi giet mwiegba.

Mit-twegiba jiena nifhem li d-DOI ma tidholx fil-kontenut per se, izda tippublika kull ma jigi awtorizzat u mghoddi lilha minn Ministeru, diment li ma jmurx kontra l-ligi tal-istampa.

Jekk tezisti policy/guidelines oltre l-procedura ossia prattika deskritta mis-Sur Azzopardi, tajjeb li nkun naf biha.

Inselli ghalik,

George Hyzler



Dr George Marius Hyzler
Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

11 St Paul Street, Valletta VLT 1210, Malta
+356 27 269 593 www.standardscommissioner.com

From: Cutajar Mario at OPM <mario.cutajar@gov.mt>

Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2019 3:48 PM

To: George Hyzler - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life
<commissioner@standardscommissioner.com>

Subject: Policy dwar Stqarrijiet Ministerjali

Dr Hyzler

Naghmel riferenza ghall-email tieghek bid-data tal-5 ta' Marzu 2019 dwar is-suggett imsemmi fuq.

Ghadni kemm gejт mgharraf mid-Direttur tal-Infommazzjoni li s-Sur Charles Polidano mill-Ufficcju tieghek qed jikkomunika mieghi dwar l-istess suggett u mgharraf ukoll li baghat twegiba.

Nistaqsi jekk b'dan gietx sodisfatta t-talba ta' informazzjoni kif inghad minnek fl-email tieghek.

Hajr u tisljiet

Mario Cutajar

Principal Permanent Secretary and Cabinet Secretary
Office of the Principal Permanent Secretary

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OFFICE OF THE PRIME MIN
AUBERGE DE CASTILLE, VALLETTA, I

Charles Polidano - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

From: Azzopardi Paul C at OPM <paul.c.azzopardi@gov.mt>
Sent: Wednesday, 6 March 2019 16:13
To: Charles Polidano - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life
Subject: RE: Guidelines for press releases

Director General
Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life

As mentioned in Directive 5 (Section 6.4) duly authorised media releases forwarded to be Department of Information are disseminated accordingly as long as the content abides with the basic legal concepts featuring in the Media and Defamation Act. As far as I can recall during the past four years there has never been any controversies about the language used in media releases issued by the Department. It is normal procedure that if the Department deems that the phraseology of the media release content is offensive and/or libelous, the Department invariably requests the author to use the appropriate wording. This has always been the case.

Regards

Paul Azzopardi
Director
Department of Information

t +356 22001725 e paul.c.azzopardi@gov.mt
www.opm.gov.mt | www.publicservice.gov.mt

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MIN
3, PJAZZA KASTILJA, VALLETTA, M

Kindly consider your environmental responsibility before printing this e-mail

From: Charles Polidano - Office of the Commissioner for Standards in Public Life
<charles.polidano@standardscommissioner.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2019 2:44 PM
To: Azzopardi Paul C at OPM <paul.c.azzopardi@gov.mt>
Subject: Guidelines for press releases

Director
Department of Information

Paragraph 6.4 of Directive 5, as issued by the Principal Permanent Secretary under the Public Administration Act, states that "Media releases should be initialled by the appropriate Minister, Permanent Secretary, or whichever official has been delegated accordingly. The guidelines issued by the Department of Information are to be duly adhered to."

You are kindly requested to forward to this office a copy of any guidelines issued by the DOI concerning media releases.

Charles Polidano
Director General

Document F



13 March 2019

Dr George Hyzler
Commissioner for Standards in Public Life
11 St Paul Street
Valletta VLT1211

Dear Sir,

We write on behalf of Dr Konrad Mizzi (“our Client”).

We refer to your letter of the 5 March 2019 addressed to our Client, wherein you notified him of a complaint (the “Complaint”) you received by means of an email dated 6 February 2019 sent to you by Dr Andrew Borg Cardona (the “Complainant”).

In his email, the Complainant asks you to determine whether the tone and content of a press release issued by our Client constitutes “an appropriate use of public resources and an appropriate manner of behaviour on the part of the Minister and his officials.”

In your letter of the 5 March 2019, you have identified provisions of the Code of Ethics for Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries which you deemed relevant to the Complaint, namely articles 4.9 and 4.10. From the wording of your letter, we note that there is no allegation that our Client has acted in breach of such provisions. We do note that you have highlighted these articles as they appear relevant and helpful for the purpose of providing our Client’s reply.

In reply to your questions in connection with the Complaint, our Client submits the following for your consideration:

1. Our Client is not aware of any specific rules regarding the dissemination of statements by the Department of Information (DOI). His role in this context is merely to review a drafted statement, which is then forwarded to the DOI. It is certainly in the discretion of the DOI to distribute or decline distributing any information, and our Client has never been advised that any statement of his fails to meet required standards.
2. This notwithstanding, our Client would find any such hypothetical rejection rather peculiar for many reasons, including:
 - a. The Department of Information “aims to provide the public with up-to-date, comprehensive and meaningful information on Government policies, services and activities as well as on matters of public interest.”¹ Clearly, this allows DOI to publish material and information which is

¹ DOI website at <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Pages/default.aspx> (Emphasis added).



not strictly government business, provided that it relates to a matter of public interest. The subject matter of the press statement complained of was judicial action instigated against our Client by prominent figures of the party in opposition. These allegations are not private in nature, but are intrinsically related to our Client's work as government Minister, and to government contracts. This judicial action was the subject of intense media interest, and the said prominent figures made numerous public statements alleging wrongdoing by our Client *whilst performing his functions as government Minister*. It would be preposterous to expect that our Client would not be able, as *government Minister* and through official channels, to express himself when the Courts eventually rejected such allegations.

- b. The subject matter of the statement lamented of was therefore clearly not, as is being alleged, "a private matter". There is no doubt that DOI was correct in publishing the statement, given that it was of matter of public interest relating to challenges made against our Client as a government Minister, which were determined to be mere speculation and thus unfounded. Our client did not issue a press statement on his private life, but on a matter which clearly relates to a very public challenge of his conduct as a government minister made by rival politicians.
- c. We submit that in publishing the statement, the DOI acted consistent with its terms of reference (given the *public interest* in the topic) and consistent with its conduct over time, spanning many years over several legislatures. In this respect, our Client is attaching a number of press releases (of many others in similar vein) where it is clear that Nationalist Party government ministers and parliamentary secretaries have issued statements through the DOI which both in tone and content are far from impartial. These statements contain partisan comments such as:

"Għalhekk il-kritika tal-Partit Laburista b'hal dejjem m'għandha ebda skop kostruttiv li tgħin biex f'pajjiżna xogħlijiet b'hal dawn isiru b'mod effiċjenti iżda skop purament aljenattiv biex il-Partit Laburista jagħmel ta' bir-ruħu li m'hawnx l-kaos li sab ruħu f'dawn l-aħħar ġimgħat."

"Dr. Debono's continuous attacks on the Prime Minister and fellow Nationalist MPs are only a fickle attempt to compensate for an ambition he did not achieve.

At the same time, however, they strengthen my will to serve and they deepen my loyalty towards the PN. Dr. Debono has no understanding of loyalty and will therefore find it difficult to understand my stance. I will immediately resign if the Prime Minister or PN ask me to, but I will not do so when Dr. Debono deems fit.



We have been through far tougher times than those which Dr. Debono is now seeking to create and we will still be there after Dr. Debono's tantrums have become a thing of the past – whether he will, is exceedingly doubtful.”

“Dr Chris Cardona bil-kliem u l-aġir tiegħu qed ipoġġi lilu nnifsu bħala 'l fuq mill-Qorti ta' l-Appell – ħaġa din li la tagħmel għieh lilu u lanqas il-Partit li jirrapreżenta.”

“Għal darb'oħra l-Onor. Leo Brincat reġa kkonferma li l-iktar importanti għalih huwa li jitfa' t-tajn... Għal darb'oħra dan juri kemm l-Onor Brincat huwa amateur.”

“L-Onor Leo Brincat irid jibqa' jipprova jitfa' t-tajn, u ma jiddejjaq xejn jikkontradixxi lilu nnifsu.”

“Il-Malta Labour Party ta' Dott Muscat ikompli bit-tradizzjoni tiegħu li jghawweġ il-fatti u jieħu dikjarazzjonijiet barra mill-kuntest biex jipprova jirbaħ punti politiċi. Dan jagħmlu sforz is-sensazzjonalizmu li jemmen fih... Dan kollu juri wkoll kemm il-Malta Labour Party u Dott Muscat għadhom l-istess u m'hu qed joffri xejn gidid.”

“Illum il-Ministru tal-Finanzi John Dalli għamel libell lill-Malta Labour Party dwar *billboard* li twahhal madwar Malta b'insinwazzjonijiet u gideb li huma malafamanti.

“Il-Ministru John Dalli jfakkar li r-rigward ta' l-HSBC diga kien għamel u infatti rebah libell kontra r-radju Super One, kemm l-Qorti kriminali, kif ukoll f'dak Civili. Matul dawn il-proceduri, is-Super One abbandunaw l-insinwazzjonijiet li għamlu u gabu l-iskuza li minn kien qed imexxi l-programm ma kienx jaf ihaddem il-buttuni ta' quddiemu.”

“Sfortunatament l-MLP u l-kap tiegħu jibqgħu ma jistgħux jirrikonoxxu l-avanz li qed isir minħabba l-għamad politiku li għandhom.”

“Bħas-soltu, xejn ġdid mill-Oppożizzjoni ... Sfortunatament anke matul iż-żmien tal-festi, il-Malta Labour Party jagħzel li jkompli jipprova jfixkel is-servizzi tas-saħħa.”

“Għal darb'oħra, bl-iskop li jħammeg il-qasam tas-saħħa, il-Malta Labour Party uża il-ġurnal tiegħu biex ixandar rapporti mimlija gideb.”

“L-Onor. Brincat għal darb'oħra qed jipprova jhawnaw l-imħuħ u jibni argument fuq premessa żbaljata... L-Onor. Brincat ma jistax jittiehed bis-serjeta'.”

Our Client emphasises that the above DOI statements were issued by members of the Nationalist Government Cabinet during various



legislatures, including the 1998-2003 legislature. Therefore, there is a clear and established practice for members of Cabinet to refer statement of public interest, sometimes containing political criticism, to the DOI for publication. This is a custom that is well-established in the the Maltese political system. In his statement, our Client stated that:

“Defending against baseless allegations and repelling slander takes both an emotional and administrative toll. Yet Minister Mizzi has delivered major change by leading the shift of Malta's power plants from dirty fuel oil to clean gas, the attraction of the largest foreign direct investment into an ailing national energy company, which has now registered profits, the closure of old and polluting power plants, major reduction in emissions and particulate matter, the building of a new Medical Unit block at Mater Dei Hospital, the eradication of out of stock medicines, the diversification of tourism markets, and record number of arrivals and the ongoing turnaround of Airmalta, Malta's national carrier.”

This is a matter of public interest, and relates to our Client's ability to perform his duties as a government Minister. Furthermore, even when a Minister is involved in legal proceedings in his private capacity, these may have implications on the ministerial role. Our Client should not be singled out for using a distribution channel previously used for the same purposes by Cabinet members from the opposing political sphere.

- d. Our Client did not act in breach of articles 4.9 and 4.10 when he explained that he would be withdrawing a number of libel cases to focus on Ministerial work. Indeed, the cited articles are to be balanced with reference to other obligations found in the Code, e.g. article 5.6 which requires Ministers to “give reasons for their decisions and actions.”
- e. We submit, finally, that a law, or an interpretation thereof that would restrict anyone from choosing how to convey his message, would be in breach of the fundamental human right of freedom of expression as protected by the Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights.



MIFSUD BONNICI
— ADVOCATES —

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(+356) 21246977
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info@mb.com.mt

Our Client therefore submits that the Complaint is to be rejected.

Sincerely,

Aron Mifsud Bonnici
Mifsud Bonnici Advocates

News Release



STATEMENT BY MINISTER AUSTIN GATT

So as to quell unnecessary speculation, I want to clarify that I shall continue serving as Minister in the present Government as long as I enjoy the trust and confidence of the Prime Minister.

Dr. Debono's continuous attacks on the Prime Minister and fellow Nationalist MPs are only a fickle attempt to compensate for an ambition he did not achieve.

At the same time, however, they strengthen my will to serve and they deepen my loyalty towards the PN.

Dr. Debono has no understanding of loyalty and will therefore find it difficult to understand my stance.

I will immediately resign if the Prime Minister or PN ask me to, but I will not do so when Dr. Debono deems fit.

We have been through far tougher times than those which Dr. Debono is now seeking to create and we will still be there after Dr. Debono's tantrums have become a thing of the past – whether he will, is exceedingly doubtful.

04.10.2012

PR0042

13/01/2013

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GHAS-SAHHA, L-ANZJANI U KURA FIL-KOMUNITÀ

L-MLP JERĠA JIGDEB DWAR IS-SAHHA

Wara li Dott Muscat żbalja meta qal li f'Malta għandna rata għolja ta' incidenza ta' kanċer, meta il- fatti juru li pajjiżna għandu it-tieni lanqas rata ta' incidenza minn fost il-pajjiżi tal-Unjoni Ewropea, issa il-Malta Labour Party reġa' hareġ b'gidba oħra fuq is-sit elettroniku tiegħu

F'pass iehor intiż biex iħammeġ lill-ħaddiema fil-qasam tas-sahha, l-MLP, f'artiklu mhux iffirmat intitolat "No operations at Mater Dei half of the times" ivvinta ħrafa oħra.

Kull min hu involut fil-qasam tas-sahha jaf li mhux l-ispeċjalisti kollha joperaw.

It-tieni, l-ispeċjalisti li joperaw, minbarra l-operazzjonijiet, ikollhom viżti mal-pazjenti qabel u wara l-operazzjonijiet kif ukoll żjarat fis-swali.

Dawn iż-żewġ punti diġa jindikaw nuqqas enormi ta interess, mhux biss fil-mod li bih jaħdmu il-professjonisti imma wkoll fis-sistema li tintuża minn ċentru mediku. Jekk mhux hekk l-MLP qed jigdeb apposta.

Ta min ifakkar li operazzjoni fl-isptar Mater Dei tinvolvi mill-inqas 2 professjonisti - kirurgu u anestetista. Iżda fil-maġġoranza, l-operazzjonijiet li jisru jirrikjedu l-intervent ta' aktar professjonisti, bħall-radiografi u nurses, fost oħrajn.

Il-Ministeru jieħu din l-okkażjoni biex, f'isem il-pazjenti kollha li ġew operati, jirringrazzja lill- professjonisti kollha li permezz tagħhom, għal darb oħra, inqabeż ir-rekord ta' operazzjonijiet li saru f'sena. Matul is-sena li għaddiet saru total ta 45.492 operazzjoni fl-Isptar Mater Dei. Dan ifisser żieda ta' aktar minn 12,000 operazzjoni fuq l-aħħar sena shiħa tal-Isptar San Luqa.

STQARRIJA TAL-MINISTERUGĦALL-INFRASTRUTTURA, TRASPORT U KOMUNIKAZZJONI: IL-PARTIT LABURISTADWAR IL-PONT MANWEL DIMECH

Il-Ministeru għall-Infrastruttura, Trasport u Komunikazzjoni jirreferi għal stqarrija tal-Partit Laburista li kkritikat lill-Gvern għax talab lill-ADT tirraporta x'kienu fil-fehma tagħha r-raġunijiet għad-dewmien fit-tlestija tal-Pont Manwel Dimech.

Il-Ministeru jfakkar li xogħol il-kuntrattur għadu ma tlestiex u li fil-mument preżenti hu meqjus li l-ewwel priorità hi li jitlesta x-xogħol kollu li għandu jsir.

Il-Ministeru diġà stqarr li l-Awtorità għandha struzzjonijiet tfitteż l-interessi legali kollha tagħha. Konvenjentement, il-Partit Laburista dan ma jgħidux.

Fil-frattemp il-Gvern iqis li hu xieraq li fl-ewwel lok tkun l-Awtorità stess li tagħti rendikont ta' x'nuqqasijiet jidhrilha li kien hemm biex tispjega d-dewmien m'hux aċċettabbli fit-tlestija tal-proġett. Fl-ebda istanza ma l-Gvern eskluda li jitqabbdha proċessi ta' verifika ulterjuri dwar dan il-proġett.

Il-Partit Laburista jhawwad il-kwistjonijiet meta jallega ksur t'etika fir-relazzjonijiet kuntrattwali tal-proġett. Jekk dawn l-allegazzjonijiet għandhom xi bażi, xorta ma jispjegawx id-dewmien li kien hemm.

Għalhekk il-kritika tal-Partit Laburista bħal dejjem m'għandha ebda skop konstruttiv li tghin biex f'pajjiżna xogħlijiet bħal dawn isiru b'mod effiċjenti iżda skop purament aljenattiv biex il-Partit Laburista jagħmel ta' bir-ruħu li m'hux fil-kaos li sab ruħu fih f'dawn l-aħħar ġimgħat.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GHAS-SAHHA, L-ANZJANI U KURA FIL-KOMUNITÀ

L-MLP JERĠA JIGDEB DWAR IS-SAHHA

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It-tieni, l-ispeċjalisti li joperaw, minbarra l-operazzjonijiet, ikollhom viżti mal-pazjenti qabel u wara l-operazzjonijiet kif ukoll żjarat fis-swali.

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STQARRIJA KONGUNTA TAL-MINISTERU TA' L-INTERN U TAL- ĠUSTIZZJA

Il-Ministeri ta' l-Intern u tal-Ġustizzja ddeskrivew b'halha gidba l-allegazzjoni magħmula minn Dr Chris Cardona li Charles Attard "qiegħed il-ħabs bla ħtija."

Fil-fatt l-imsemmi Charles Attard kien ammetta l-involviment tiegħu fl-attentat ta' qtil ta' Richard Cachia Caruana, l-Assistent Personali tal-Prim Minstru, tliet darbiet. L-ewwel darba fi stqarrija li għamel lill-Pulizija fl-1996; it-tieni darba quddiem il-Maġistrat Inkwerenti u sentejn wara, meta żgur kellu ċans li jerġa' jaħsibha, ammetta fil-Qorti l-istess involviment, fil-preżenza ta' l-avukat tiegħu, fit-28 ta' Settembru 1998; anzi dak inhar il-Qorti Kriminali, kif inhi obbligata skond il-liġi, tat żmien lill-istess akkużat sabiex jaħsibha, u minkejja li wissietu bl-aktar mod solenni dwar il-konsegwenzi legali ta' tali ammissjoni, reġa' ikkonferma din l-ammissjoni, u għe ikkundannat 14-il sena ħabs fis-7 ta' Settembru 1998.

Fis-26 ta' April, 2001, l-istess Attard tilef bl-aktar mod assolut l-appell li għamel kontra l-ammissjoni li għamel hu stess. Il-kliem segwenti tal-Qorti ta' l-Appell huma elokwenti biżżejjed:

"Il-Qorti tifhem li l-appellant f'ċertu hin wara li evidentement xi hadd kien tarrafflu xi informazzjoni fuq ix-xhieda ta' Nicholas Jensen, u wara li seta' intraveda xi possibiltà li is-sorta, id-destin tiegħu, jista' jitbiddel, approfitta ruħu mis-sitwazzjoni, cioe ipprova jieħu vantaġġ minnha u ipprova jsib mezz kif jirtira mill-isqaq li kien poġġa lilu nnifsu ġo fih minhabba l-ammissjoni tiegħu. Dan hu metodu li addotta l-appellant li din il-Qorti semplicement ma tistax tissanzjona."

Dr Chris Cardona bil-kliem u l-aġir tiegħu qed ipoġġi lilu nnifsu b'halha 'l fuq mill-Qorti ta' l-Appell – haġa din li la tagħmel għeħ lilu u lanqas il-Partit li jirrapreżenta.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GĦAR-RIŻORSI U AFFARIJJIET RURALI

It-tender dwar pannelli fuq soqfa pubbliċi huwa wieħed pubbliku

Għal darb'ohra l-Onor. Leo Brincat reġa kkonferma li l-iktar importanti għalih huwa li jitfa' t-tajn. Dan reġa għamlu lllum bl-istqarrija li ħareġ dwar il-proġett ta' twaħhil ta' pannelli fuq soqfa pubbliċi. Qabel xejn ta' min ifakkar li dan kien tender pubbliku, miftuħ għal skrutinju pubbliku, skont regoli ċari u trasparenti. Dan ifisser ukoll li l-informazzjoni li talab l-Onor Leo Brincat diġa hija pubblika.

Għar-rigward tal-feed-in tariff, irid jiġi mfakkar li dan kien tender li għalaq fi Frar tal-2012. Ir-rata ntgħazlet abbażi ta' sejha kompetittiva u hija ta' €0.22,95 ċ. Għar-rigward tal-power purchasing agreement, l-Onor Leo Brincat messu jaf li t-termini u l-kundizzjonijiet tiegħu diġa ġew ikkomunikati fit-tender. Din il-Feed-In-Tariff tobbliga lill-kumpanija li rebħet dan il-kuntratt biex twettaq l-investment kollu marbut mal-installazzjoni tal-panelli fotovoltajiċi u tinstalla wkoll strutturi biex jieħdu fuqhom dawn il-panelli peress li dawn iridu jitpoġġew fuq soqfa antiki jew soqfa ta' ġibjuni. Il-Kuntrattur intrabat li jiggarrantixxi li s-sistema ta' panelli fotovoltajiċi taħdem għal 25 sena b'ammont ta' produzzjoni ta' elettriku garantit kull sena. Għal dan il-għan hadd ma jista' jqabbel il-Feed-in Tariff li habbar il-Gvern mal-Feed-in Tariff li ħarġet minn din is-sejha pubblika għax hemm kundizzjonijiet onoruzi ħafna fuq il-kuntrattur. Anke hawn l-Oppożizzjoni tipprova tiżra d-dubju biex tfixkel.

Iż-żmien minn meta ntgħazel l-aħjar bidder sakemm ġie ffirmat il-kuntratt, u li donnu tant inkwieta lill-Onor Brincat, huwa żmien raġjonevoli li jiġri fi kwalunkwe tender fejn il-partijiet jiċċaraw xi dettalji ta' ftehim li ta' min ifakkar, jinvolvi ħafna entitajiet Governattivi. Il-fatt li ħareġ tender jikkonferma kemm il-Gvern ried li jikseb l-aħjar prezz li joffri s-suq.

Għar-rigward tad-dubju mqajjem mill-Onor Brincat dwar il-ġenerazzjoni tal-enerġija, ta' min ifakkru li d-dokument tat-tender kien isemmi li l-enerġija li tiġi mixtrija hija ta' madwar 7,5GWh u l-offerta magħzula tmur f'din id-direzzjoni. Dan il-proġett se jikkontribwixxi 0.1% għall-miri ta' pajjiżna fil-ġenerazzjoni tal-enerġija ġġenerata minn sorsi nodfa.

L-Onor Leo Brincat jipprova joħloq ukoll dubji dwar il-kompożizzjoni tal-konsorzju li rebaħ it-tender. Hija evidenti li l-Onor Brincat id-dokument ma qrahx, jew aghar minn hekk, qraħ u jrid iqarraħ. Id-dokument jispeċifika li jista' jkun hemm bdil fil-formazzjoni tal-konsorzju. Għal darb'ohra dan juri kemm l-Onor Brincat huwa amateur.

Dawn huma fatti pubbliċi. Dawn lill-Onor Leo Brincat ma jinteressawhx, l-istess kif ma interessatux l-informazzjoni pubblika li għaddejna dwar il-kummenti tal-awditur ġenerali dwar l-operat tal-Wasteserv. L-Onor Leo Brincat moħħu biss biex jitfa' t-tajn.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GĦAR-RIŻORSI U L-AFFARIJJIET RURALI

Il-Ministeru għar-Riżorsi u L-Affarijjet Rurali jirreferi għall-konferenza stampa tal-Onor Leo Brincat. Leo Brincat, kif għamel f'okkażjonijiet oħrajn, jasal għal konklużjonijiet infondati magħmulin biss għal sensazzjonalizmu.

L-Onor Brincat jagħżel li jinjora l-argumenti magħmula mill-WS kemm fir-rapport tal-awditur kif ukoll fid-diversi stqarrijiet u informazzjoni li ngħatat inkluz fi tweġibiet għal mistoqsijiet parlamentari. Din mhux l-ewwel darba li biex jipprova jitfa' t-tajn, L-Onor Brincat saħansitra spicċa biex żelaq fin-niexef. L-Onor Brincat żbalja:

- fuq l-Awdituri tal-WasteServ meta qal li nbiddu għax kienu kkritikaw, meta filfatt kienu ġew kkonfermati;
- meta qal li bl-iskart tal-ħġieġ f'Wied Fulija ma kien qed isir xejn, iżda propju fl-istess ġurnata tal-istqarrija tiegħu ammont qawwi ta' ħġieġ kien qed jitgħabba fuq vapur biex jiġi esportat;
- fuq interpretazzjoni ta' statistika marbuta mas-separazzjoni tal-iskart meta kien qed uża ċifri li kienu antiki;
- meta vvinta li qed jiġu impurtati karkassi biex ikunu trattati fl-incieneratur, u rapport indipendenti qal li din hrafa.

L-Onor. Brincat għal darb'oħra qed jipprova jħawwad l-imħuħ u jibni argument fuq premessa żbaljata.

Fost l-argumenti li ressaq Leo Brincat illum huwa għoġbu jsemmi l-kuntratt lil kumpanija privata biex tipprovdi servizzi ta' ħaddiema biex jaħdmu fl-impjanti tal-WasteServ. Kuntrarjament għal dak li ta x'jifhem Leo Brincat il-valur tal-aġġudikazzjoni kien abbażi tal-management fee (commission) għal kull ħaddiem u ma kienx jinkludi spejjeż oħra bħal pagi, bonuses u allowances. B'hekk il-valur tat-tender mhux veru li tela' minn miljun għal tletin miljun Ewro peress li t-tletin miljun jinkludi wkoll l-ispejjeż tal-pagi li ma kinux inkluzi fil-valur tal-kuntratt. Ta' min jgħid ukoll li kull estensjoni għall-kuntratt oriġinali kellha dejjem l-approvazzjoni tad-Dipartiment tal-Kuntratti. Dan kollu ġie spjegat b'mod dettaljat mill-WasteServ lill-Awditur

L-Onor. Brincat ma jistax jittieħed bis-serjetà. L-Onor Brincat u l-Oppożizzjoni li illum qed jgħid li jaqbel mal-immaniġjar tal-iskart, dejjem fi klu l-pjani tal-Gvern biex mill-iskart li pajjiżna jipproduci jkun trattat u tiġi ġġenerata l-enerġija nadifa. Dott. Muscat, illum Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni, kien saħansitra heġġeġ biex tingabar petizzjoni kontra l-immodernizzar tal-Impjant ta' Sant' Antnin u jtellef il-fondi Ewropej għal Malta. Li kien għall-Oppożizzjoni l-Magħtab ma ngħalqitx u pajjiżna għadu juża dik il-miżbla mingħajr kontroll b'riskji għas-saħħa tal-bniedem.

Il-fatt li l-immaniġjar tal-iskart f'pajjiżna hu storja ta' suċċess iwegġa' l-Partit Laburista, u għalhekk qed

jiprova jisforza biex iċajpar dak li bil-fatti dan il-Gvern wettaq f'dan il-qasam, minkejja t-tfixkil kollu tal-
Oppożizzjoni.

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STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GHAS-SAHHA, L-ANZJANI U KURA FIL-KOMUNITÀ

GIDBA OĦRA MILL-MLP, FIL-ĠURNAL KULĦADD

Wara li dak li qal Dott Muscat dwar ir-rata ta' incidenza tal-kanċer ġie michud, u l-gidba dwar l-operazzjonijiet, għat-tielet darba f'temp ta' ftit siegħat dan il-Ministeru qed jiċċhad gidba oħra tal-Malta Labour Party.

Għal darb oħra, bl-iskop li jħammeg il-qasam tas-saħħa, il-Malta Labour Party uża il-ġurnal tiegħu biex ixandar rapporti mimlija gideb.

Fil-fatt b'referenza għar rapport intitolat "Aktar problemi serji fil-qasam tas-saħħa" il-Ministeru jgħarraf lill-pubbliku li l-mediċini imsemmija fir-rapport huma fil-fatt in stock u ma hemmx nuqqas tagħhom.

L-ebda mill-mediċini msemmija fl-artiklu ma huma out of stock la mill-isptar u lanqas mill-POYC. Fir-rigward tal-'fibrates', bħalissa qiegħed jingħata 'fibrate' ieħor mill-istess klassi u għalhekk il-pazjenti baqgħu jingħataw dak li għandhom bżonn.

Il-Ministeru jappella għal aktar maturita, għallinqas b'rispett lejn il-pazjenti li jallarmaw irwiehom kif jaqraw dawn it-tip ta' rapporti.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GHAS-SAHHA, L-ANZJANI U KURA FIL-KOMUNITÀ

Bhas-soltu, xejn ġdid mill-Oppożizzjoni

Sfortunatament anke matul iż-żmien tal-festi, il-Malta Labour Party jagħżel li jkompli jipprova jfixkel is-servizzi tas-saħħa.

Minkejja l-hafna stqarrijiet li ħarġet l-Oppożizzjoni dwar il-qasam, u minkejja l-isforzi kollha li għamlet biex tifa dell ikrah fuq il-qasam tas-saħħa, il-Eurobarometer li gie ppubbikat ftit tal-ġimgħat ilu wera li l-poplu jaf xinhi il-verita u li 82 fil mija tal-poplu hu sodisfatt bis-servizzi tas-saħħa. Dan il-persentaġġ, li saħansitra huwa zieda fuq dak tas-sena li għaddiet, jaqbeż sew il-medja ta 60% tal-pajjiżi Ewropej.

Hasra li l-MLP qatt ma jgħid grazzi lil min jaħdem f'dan is-settur li wassal biex żdiedu in-numru u tip ta' operazzjonijiet, li żdiedu s-servizzi, li zdidu t-testijiet ta' prevenzjoni fost l-oħrajn. L-MLP jinjora it-titjib kontinwu li jsehħ fil-qasam, bħal ma sehħ, fost oħrajn, fil-każ tal-Colorectal Screening, li dwarha l-Oppożizzjoni ma qalet xejn.

Il-Ministeru jirringrazzja lill dawk il-professjonisti kollha li bis-saħħa tagħhom illum għandna servizz aktar b'saħħtu u ta' kwalità għolja, li qieghed iwassal biex aħna ngħixu aktar.

Il-Ministeru jinnota wkoll li b'ironija, din l-istqarrija tal-Oppożizzjoni waslet fil-jum li fih grupp ta' esperti barranin fit-teknoloġija ġew jiddiskutu l-avvanzi fit-teknoloġija li saru fil-qasam tas-saħħa ta' pajjiżna. Anke din, ġiet injorata mill-MLP.

Għalhekk, sfortunatament, fl-istqarrija tal-Oppożizzjoni ma kien hemm xejn ġdid.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU TA' L-EDUKAZZJONI, ZGHAZAGH U IMPIEG GHAD-DISKORS TA' DALGHODU, TAL-KAP TA' L-OPPOZIZZJONI

Hija kompletament żbaljata u mingħajr bażi l-istqarrija tal-Kap ta' L-Oppożizzjoni li "fl-edukazzjoni waqajna lura" m'hemm l-ebda prova jew statistika li turi li dan qed iseħħ anzi bil-kontra, kull statistika jew studju li jsir juri li pajjiżna qed jagħmel passi importanti 'l quddiem b'aktar studenti jkomplu jistudjaw, b'aktar Maltin ikomplu jiksbu livelli ogħla ta' edukazzjoni u taħriġ u b'numru dejjem jikber ta' adulti li qed isegwu l-korsijiet tul hajjithom. **Sfortunatament l-MLP u l-kap tiegħu jibqgħu ma jistgħux jirrikonoxxu l-avanz li qed isir minħabba l-għamad politiku li għandhom.**

Minbarra l-iżviluppi importanti li seħħew f'dawn l-aħħar ġimgħat wara li intlahaq ftehim importanti ma' L-MUT, u r-riforma li qed isseħħ inkluż bis-sistema tal-kulleġġi li t-tnejn għandhom il-mira ta' edukazzjoni ta' l-ogħla kwalita' għal kulhadd biex uliedna jirnexxu il-koll, b'dak li sar f'dawn l-aħħar snin kien irregistrat titjib f'kull livell u qasam ta' l-edukazzjoni. Fost il-kisbiet ewlenin u bil-fatti insibu:

Żieda ta' 12% f'perjodu ta' 3 snin (2002-2005) ta' l-istudenti ta' bejn l-20 u l-24 sena li jkomplu jistudjaw f'livell post-sekondarju. Barra minn hekk fl-istess perjodu l-ammont ta' studenti li ma jkomplux l-edukazzjoni nizeł b'14%. Il-miżuri li qed jieħu l-Gvern huma wkoll riflessi fl-ammont ta' studenti li qed japplikaw għal korsijiet ta' l-MCAST. Din is-sena kważi 3000 applikaw għal xi wieħed mill-korsijiet offruti minn din l-istituzzjoni. Għalkemm l-oppożizzjoni tħobb tuża statistika ta' l-UE tużaha barra mill-kuntest u kif jaqblilha.

Żieda fin-numru ta' persuni li jattendu korsijiet terzjarji. Hadd ma jista jinnega li kien dan il-Gvern li fetaħ il-bibien ta' l-edukazzjoni beraħ biex l-Universita issa tilqa fiha madwar 10,000 student. L-istess sar dan l-aħħar bl-MCAST li issa jilqa fih madwar 4000 student full-time u madwar 5000 part-time. Iż-żewġ istituzzjonijiet se jkomplu jikbru fis-snin li ġejjin biex ikomplu jkattru l-opportunitajiet ta' taħlim u taħriġ. L-MLP żgur li m'għandux lezzjonijiet x'jaqti f'dan il-qasam.

Kompla jiżdied il-perċentaġġ ta' studenti li jgħaddu mill-eżami tal-Junior Lyceum - Ir-riżultati ta' l-eżami ta' 2007 għad-dhul fil-Junior Lyceums juru titjib ġenerali fuq is-snin l-imghoddija. Aktar minn 61%, għaddew mill-eżami fil-ħames suġġetti. Dan hu l-għola perċentwal ta' studenti li qatt għaddew minn kemm ilu jsir l-eżami tal-Junior Lyceum.

Tkompli tonqos ir-Rata ta' l-Illitteriżmu - L-aħħar ċensiment juri żieda fil-perċentaġġ ta' persuni li jafu jiktbu u jaqraw u b'hekk tnaqqis fir-rata ta' l-illitteriżmu. Fl-aħħar 10 snin ir-rata ta' dawki li jafu jiktbu u jaqraw żdiedet minn 88.7% għal 92.8% rata fost l-aqwa fid-dinja. Dan fisser li hemm 10,000 persuna anqas li ma jafux jiktbu u jaqraw u dan grazzi għall-opportunitajiet ta' taħriġ li hawn fil-pajjiż u t-titjib fil-kwalità ta' l-edukazzjoni b'mod ġenerali. Din l-istatistika hi prova oħra li turi kemm l-Oppożizzjoni jew ma tafx x'qed jiġri jew inkella qed tipprova tqarraq. F'diversi okkażjonijiet kelliema

ta' l-MLP allegaw u l-inteljenzmu qed jizdied.

U hemm diversi indikaturi oħrajn li juru li l-edukazzjoni f'pajjiżna miexja il-quddiem u li l-Maltin qed jiksbu l-aqwa riżultati. Fuq kollox, l-aqwa konferma tal-kisbiet li pajjiżna qed jagħmel fil-qasam edukattiv hija l-fiduċja li juru l-investituri Maltin u barranin li qed jinvestu miljuni kbar f'industriji li jinħtieġu haddiema u professjonisti imħarrġa u b'livell ogħli ta' edukazzjoni. L-oppożizzjoni qatt ma tista' tkun kredibbli sakemm tibqa' tagħmel mill-edukazzjoni ballun politiku.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU TAL-FINANZI DWAR LIBELL LI GHAMEL IL-MINISTRU LILL-MALTA LABOUR PARTY

Illum il-Ministru tal-Finanzi John Dalli ghamel libell lill-Malta Labour Party dwar *billboard* li twahhal madwar Malta b'insinwazjonijiet u gideb li huma malafamanti.

Il-Ministru John Dalli jfakkar li fir-rigward ta' l-HSBC diga kien ghamel u infatti rebah libell kontra r-radju Super One, kemm fil-Qorti kriminali, kif ukoll f'dak Civili. Matul dawn il-proceduri, is-Super One abbandunaw l-insinwazjonijiet li ghamlu u gabu l-iskuza li minn kien qed imexxi l-programm ma kienx jaf ihaddem il-buttuni ta' quddiemu.

Dwar id-Daewoo, il-Ministru tal-Finanzi jerga' jfakkar li hadd mill-Partit Laburista qatt ma attribwilo xejn direttament ghalkemm b'mod ta' gifa, ghoxew fl-insinwazjonijiet. Ifakkar wkoll li l-ahhar self tal-kumpanija u t-tbaghbis li sar bill-*bills of exchange*, kien fi zmien Gvern meta Dr Alfred Sant kien Prim Ministru u meta bhala Chairman tal-Bank of Valletta kien hemm appuntat ex-kandidat Laburista.

Dwar l-Isptar tal-Qroqq, il-Ministru tal-Finanzi jsostni li t-tender ta' l-ghoti tal-medicina li fuqha qed jaghmlu dan l-ghajjat kollu tal-Malta Labour Party qed jinghata fi process trasparenti ghal kollox u li fih minn ihossu ngurjat jista' jappella, kif fill-fatt sar. Il-hazin qieghed li l-Malta Labour Party jipprova jintimida biex id-decizjoni xxaqleb lejn negozjanti li qed jippretendu 7 miljun Euro aktar.

Din il-kampanja ta' hmieg hi sinonimu mal-Malta Labour Party li, ghax nieqes mill-vizjoni u mill-kapacita', jipprova jimmina lill-avversarji tieghu b'kampanja ta' gideb u qerq.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU TAL-ĠUSTIZZJA, KONSULTAZZJONI PUBBLIKA U L-FAMILJA

Twegiba għall-istqarrija tal-Mexxej tal-Malta Labour Party Dott Muscat

Il-Malta Labour Party ta' Dott Muscat ikompli bit-tradizzjoni tiegħu li jgħawweg il-fatti u jiehu dikjarazzjonijiet barra mill-kuntest biex jipprova jirbaħ punti politiċi. Dan jagħmlu sforz is-sensazzjonalizmu li jemmen fih. Minflok jipprova jipparteċipa f'diskussjoni serja dwar liġi daqstant importanti bħal dik tal-koabitazzjoni, issa Dott Muscat qed jipprova jirkeb fuq interpretazzjoni hażina ta' dikjarazzjoni li saret biex jgħawweg dak li qal il-Ministru tal-Ġustizzja, Konsultazzjoni Pubblika u L-Familja Chris Said waqt konferenza tal-aħbarijiet dwar l-Abbozz ta' Liġi dwar id-Drittijiet u l-Obbligi ta' Persuni li Jikkoabitaw.

Waqt il-konferenza tal-aħbarijiet li ngħatat nhar it-Tlieta li għadda, il-Ministru Chris Said fl-ebda mument ma għamel dikjarazzjonijiet omofobiċi. Meta kien mistoqsi mill-ġurnalisti dwar il-liġi tal-koabitazzjoni, il-Ministru Chris Said qal li fil-kuntest ta' dan l-abbozz ta' liġi, koppji gay ma jitqiesux bħala familja b'koppja miżżewġa. Il-Ministru Chris Said kien qed jispjega issues legali.

Il-Ministru Chris Said jiddikjara li r-relazzjoni personali bejn persuni differenti hi xi haġa prezzjuża għal dawk li jgħixu din l-esperjenza u jifhem ukoll li għalihom dik ir-relazzjoni hi n-nukleu familjari tagħhom anke jekk ma jkunux miżżewġin.

Konvenjentement iżda Dott Muscat ikompli fuq it-tradizzjoni tal-mexxejja Laburisti ta' qablu u jinsa l-kuntest biex jipprova jagħti l-interpretazzjoni li jrid hu.

Dott Muscat, bħala politiku li jaspira li jilhaq, imissu jaf li fil-liġijiet ta' Malta m'hemmx definizzjoni ta' familja. Il-Liġi taż-Żwieġ tagħti definizzjoni ċara ta' x'inhu żwieġ. Il-liġi tal-koabitazzjoni ma tidholx f'dan il-mertu. Dan għaliex il-liġi tal-koabitazzjoni, kif qed tiġi proposta, għandha l-għan li tirregola l-koabitazzjoni stat ta' fatt – kemm għall-eterosesswali kif ukoll għall-omosesswali – li hi realta' barra miż-żwieġ. Din il-liġi għall-ewwel darba tistabbilixxi wkoll id-drittijiet u d-dmirijiet ta' persuni li jagħzlu li jikkoabitaw. Dan tagħmlu sabiex prinċipalment thares lill-parti l-aktar dgħajfa f'dik l-istess relazzjoni.

Mill-ġdid il-Ministru Chris Said jirrifjuta l-allegazzjonijiet u l-mizinterpretazzjonijiet hażina tal-Malta Labour Party ta' Dott Muscat.

Il-kredenzjali tal-Gvern u tal-Ministeru tal-Ġustizzja, Konsultazzjoni Pubblika u L-Familja favur id-drittijiet ta' persuni omosesswali u b'identita' tal-ġeneru differenti ma titkejilx bis-sensazzjonalizmu ta' Dott Muscat iżda titkejjel bil-fatti.

F'dawn l-aħħar xhur, fuq inizzjattiva tal-Ministru Chris Said u wara diskussjonijiet mar-rappreżentanti tal-

Malta Gay Rights Movement u tal-Aditus fost l-oħrajn, il-Gvern għadda liġijiet mill-Parlament, liġijiet li permezz tagħhom stabbilixxa bħala reati aktar serji kull tip ta' vjolenza fil-konfront ta' persuni jew gruppi ta' persuni fuq bażi ta' ġeneru, identità tal-ġeneru, u/jew orjentazzjoni sesswali.

Barra minn hekk għaddiet liġi li permezz tagħha l-Kummissjoni għall-Ugwaljanza tipproteġi u tiggarrantixxi l-ugwaljanza fl-istess oqsma għal kulhadd irrispettivament mill-orjentazzjoni sesswali, mill-identità tal-ġeneru u mit-twemmin.

Dan kollu juri wkoll kemm il-Malta Labour Party u Dott Muscat għadhom l-istess u m'hu qed joffri xejn ġdid.

STQARRIJA TAL-MINISTERU GĦAR-RIŻORSI U AFFARIJIET RURALI

L-Onor Leo Brincat irid jibqa' jipprova jitfa' t-tajn, u ma jiddejjaq xejn jikkontradixxi lilu nnifsu.

Il-fatt li l-proġetti li jiġġeneraw energija mix-xemx jirrikjedu meded kbar ta' art jagħtu raġun lill-Gvern li fil-pjan tiegħu għall-ġenerazzjoni ta' energija minn sorsi nodfa alloka 0.7 fil-mija tal-miri tiegħu li ser jiġu minn energija solari.

Jekk xejn kien l-Onor Brincat, u l-Oppożizzjoni li għoġobhom jikkritikaw dan il-pjan billi bħas-soltu jippruvaw joħolqu dubji mingħajr ma joffru alternattiva. Il-fatt li dan il-proġett ta' pannelli fuq 67,000 metru kwadru ta' soqfa pubbliċi se jwassal biex jintlaħaq 0.1 fil-mija tal-miri nazzjonali jikkonferma kemm pajjiżna għandu restrizzjonijiet tal-art għal proġetti simili. Imma għall-Onor Brincat l-importanti li jikkritika u li jiżra d-dubji.

Din il-Feed-In-Tariff tobbliga lill-kumpanija li rebħet dan il-kuntratt biex twettaq l-investment kollu marbut mal-installazzjoni tal-panelli fotovoltajċi u tinstalla wkoll strutturi biex jieħdu fuqhom dawn il-panelli peress li dawn iridu jitpoġġew fuq soqfa antiki jew soqfa ta' ġibjuni.

L-aħħar stqarrija tal-Onor Brincat tikkonferma li għall-Oppożizzjoni l-importanti mhux l-interess nazzjonali imma dak partigġjan.

STQARRIJA KONGUNTA TAL-MINISTERU TA' L-INTERN U TAL- ĠUSTIZZJA

Il-Ministeri ta' l-Intern u tal-Ġustizzja ddeskrivew b'halha gidba l-allegazzjoni magħmula minn Dr Chris Cardona li Charles Attard "qiegħed il-ħabs bla ħtija."

Fil-fatt l-imsemmi Charles Attard kien ammetta l-involviment tiegħu fl-attentat ta' qtil ta' Richard Cachia Caruana, l-Assistent Personali tal-Prim Minstru, tliet darbiet. L-ewwel darba fi stqarrija li għamel lill-Pulizija fl-1996; it-tieni darba quddiem il-Maġistrat Inkwerenti u sentejn wara, meta żgur kellu ċans li jerġa' jaħsibha, ammetta fil-Qorti l-istess involviment, fil-preżenza ta' l-avukat tiegħu, fit-28 ta' Settembru 1998; anzi dak inhar il-Qorti Kriminali, kif inhi obbligata skond il-liġi, tat żmien lill-istess akkużat sabiex jaħsibha, u minkejja li wissietu bl-aktar mod solenni dwar il-konsegwenzi legali ta' tali ammissjoni, reġa' ikkonferma din l-ammissjoni, u għe ikkundannat 14-il sena ħabs fis-7 ta' Settembru 1998.

Fis-26 ta' April, 2001, l-istess Attard tilef bl-aktar mod assolut l-appell li għamel kontra l-ammissjoni li għamel hu stess. Il-kliem segwenti tal-Qorti ta' l-Appell huma elokwenti biżżejjed:

"Il-Qorti tifhem li l-appellant f'ċertu hin wara li evidentement xi hadd kien tarrafflu xi informazzjoni fuq ix-xhieda ta' Nicholas Jensen, u wara li seta' intraveda xi possibiltà li is-sorta, id-destin tiegħu, jista' jitbiddel, approfitta ruħu mis-sitwazzjoni, cioe ipprova jieħu vantaġġ minnha u ipprova jsib mezz kif jirtira mill-isqaq li kien poġġa lilu nnifsu ġo fih minhabba l-ammissjoni tiegħu. Dan hu metodu li addotta l-appellant li din il-Qorti semplicement ma tistax tissanzjona."

Dr Chris Cardona bil-kliem u l-aġir tiegħu qed ipoġġi lilu nnifsu b'halha 'l fuq mill-Qorti ta' l-Appell – haġa din li la tagħmel għeħ lilu u lanqas il-Partit li jirrapreżenta.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GĦAR-RIŻORSI U AFFARIJJIET RURALI

It-tender dwar pannelli fuq soqfa pubbliċi huwa wieħed pubbliku

Għal darb'ohra l-Onor. Leo Brincat reġa kkonferma li l-iktar importanti għalih huwa li jitfa' t-tajn. Dan reġa għamlu lllum bl-istqarrija li ħareġ dwar il-proġett ta' twaħhil ta' pannelli fuq soqfa pubbliċi. Qabel xejn ta' min ifakkar li dan kien tender pubbliku, miftuħ għal skrutinju pubbliku, skont regoli ċari u trasparenti. Dan ifisser ukoll li l-informazzjoni li talab l-Onor Leo Brincat diġa hija pubblika.

Għar-rigward tal-feed-in tariff, irid jiġi mfakkar li dan kien tender li għalaq fi Frar tal-2012. Ir-rata ntgħazlet abbażi ta' sejha kompetittiva u hija ta' €0.22,95 ċ. Għar-rigward tal-power purchasing agreement, l-Onor Leo Brincat messu jaf li t-termini u l-kundizzjonijiet tiegħu diġa ġew ikkomunikati fit-tender. Din il-Feed-In-Tariff tobbliga lill-kumpanija li rebħet dan il-kuntratt biex twettaq l-investment kollu marbut mal-installazzjoni tal-panelli fotovoltajiċi u tinstalla wkoll strutturi biex jieħdu fuqhom dawn il-panelli peress li dawn iridu jitpoġġew fuq soqfa antiki jew soqfa ta' ġibjuni. Il-Kuntrattur intrabat li jiggarrantixxi li s-sistema ta' panelli fotovoltajiċi taħdem għal 25 sena b'ammont ta' produzzjoni ta' elettriku garantit kull sena. Għal dan il-għan hadd ma jista' jqabbel il-Feed-in Tariff li habbar il-Gvern mal-Feed-in Tariff li ħarġet minn din is-sejha pubblika għax hemm kundizzjonijiet onoruzi ħafna fuq il-kuntrattur. Anke hawn l-Oppożizzjoni tipprova tiżra d-dubju biex tfixkel.

Iż-żmien minn meta ntgħazel l-aħjar bidder sakemm ġie ffirmat il-kuntratt, u li donnu tant inkwieta lill-Onor Brincat, huwa żmien raġjonevoli li jiġri fi kwalunkwe tender fejn il-partijiet jiċċaraw xi dettalji ta' ftehim li ta' min ifakkar, jinvolvi ħafna entitajiet Governattivi. Il-fatt li ħareġ tender jikkonferma kemm il-Gvern ried li jikseb l-aħjar prezz li joffri s-suq.

Għar-rigward tad-dubju mqajjem mill-Onor Brincat dwar il-ġenerazzjoni tal-enerġija, ta' min ifakkru li d-dokument tat-tender kien isemmi li l-enerġija li tiġi mixtrija hija ta' madwar 7,5GWh u l-offerta magħżula tmur f'din id-direzzjoni. Dan il-proġett se jikkontribwixxi 0.1% għall-miri ta' pajjiżna fil-ġenerazzjoni tal-enerġija ġġenerata minn sorsi nodfa.

L-Onor Leo Brincat jipprova joħloq ukoll dubji dwar il-kompożizzjoni tal-konsorzju li rebaħ it-tender. Hija evidenti li l-Onor Brincat id-dokument ma qrahx, jew aghar minn hekk, qra u jrid iqarra. Id-dokument jispeċifika li jista' jkun hemm bdil fil-formazzjoni tal-konsorzju. Għal darb'ohra dan juri kemm l-Onor Brincat huwa amateur.

Dawn huma fatti pubbliċi. Dawn lill-Onor Leo Brincat ma jinteressawhx, l-istess kif ma interessatux l-informazzjoni pubblika li għaddejna dwar il-kummenti tal-awditur ġenerali dwar l-operat tal-Wasteserv. L-Onor Leo Brincat moħħu biss biex jitfa' t-tajn.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GĦAR-RIŻORSI U L-AFFARIJIET RURALI

Il-Ministeru għar-Riżorsi u L-Affarijiet Rurali jirreferi għall-konferenza stampa tal-Onor Leo Brincat. Leo Brincat, kif għamel f'okkażjonijiet oħrajn, jasal għal konklużjonijiet infondati magħmulin biss għal sensazzjonalizmu.

L-Onor Brincat jagħżel li jinjora l-argumenti magħmula mill-WS kemm fir-rapport tal-awditur kif ukoll fid-diversi stqarrijiet u informazzjoni li ngħatat inkluz fi tweġibiet għal mistoqsijiet parlamentari. Din mhux l-ewwel darba li biex jipprova jitfa' t-tajn, L-Onor Brincat saħansitra spicċa biex żelaq fin-niexef. L-Onor Brincat żbalja:

- fuq l-Awdituri tal-WasteServ meta qal li nbiddu għax kienu kkritikaw, meta filfatt kienu ġew kkonfermati;
- meta qal li bl-iskart tal-ħġieġ f'Wied Fulija ma kien qed isir xejn, iżda propju fl-istess ġurnata tal-istqarrija tiegħu ammont qawwi ta' ħġieġ kien qed jitgħabba fuq vapur biex jiġi esportat;
- fuq interpretazzjoni ta' statistika marbuta mas-separazzjoni tal-iskart meta kien qed uża ċifri li kienu antiki;
- meta vvinta li qed jiġu impurtati karkassi biex ikunu trattati fl-incineratur, u rapport indipendenti qal li din hrafa.

L-Onor. Brincat għal darb'oħra qed jipprova jħawwad l-imħuħ u jibni argument fuq premessa żbaljata.

Fost l-argumenti li ressaq Leo Brincat illum huwa għoġbu jsemmi l-kuntratt lil kumpanija privata biex tipprovdi servizzi ta' ħaddiema biex jaħdmu fl-impjanti tal-WasteServ. Kuntrarjament għal dak li ta x'jifhem Leo Brincat il-valur tal-aġġudikazzjoni kien abbażi tal-management fee (commission) għal kull ħaddiem u ma kienx jinkludi spejjeż oħra bħal pagi, bonuses u allowances. B'hekk il-valur tat-tender mhux veru li tela' minn miljun għal tletin miljun Ewro peress li t-tletin miljun jinkludi wkoll l-ispejjeż tal-pagi li ma kinux inkluzi fil-valur tal-kuntratt. Ta' min jgħid ukoll li kull estensjoni għall-kuntratt oriġinali kellha dejjem l-approvazzjoni tad-Dipartiment tal-Kuntratti. Dan kollu ġie spjegat b'mod dettaljat mill-WasteServ lill-Awditur

L-Onor. Brincat ma jistax jittieħed bis-serjetà. L-Onor Brincat u l-Oppożizzjoni li illum qed jgħid li jaqbel mal-immaniġjar tal-iskart, dejjem fi klu l-pjani tal-Gvern biex mill-iskart li pajjiżna jipproduci jkun trattat u tiġi ġġenerata l-enerġija nadifa. Dott. Muscat, illum Kap tal-Oppożizzjoni, kien saħansitra heġġeġ biex tingabar petizzjoni kontra l-immodernizzar tal-Impjant ta' Sant' Antnin u jtellef il-fondi Ewropej għal Malta. Li kien għall-Oppożizzjoni l-Magħtab ma ngħalqitx u pajjiżna għadu juża dik il-miżbla mingħajr kontroll b'riskji għas-saħħa tal-bniedem.

Il-fatt li l-immaniġjar tal-iskart f'pajjiżna hu storja ta' suċċess iwegġa' l-Partit Laburista, u għalhekk qed

jiprova jisforza biex iċajpar dak li bil-fatti dan il-Gvern wettaq f'dan il-qasam, minkejja t-tfixkil kollu tal-
Oppożizzjoni.

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STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GHAS-SAĦĦA, L-ANZJANI U KURA FIL-KOMUNITÀ

GIDBA OĦRA MILL-MLP, FIL-ĠURNAL KULĦADD

Wara li dak li qal Dott Muscat dwar ir-rata ta' inċidenza tal-kanċer ġie michud, u l-gidba dwar l-operazzjonijiet, għat-tielet darba f'temp ta' ftit siegħat dan il-Ministeru qed jiċċad gidba oħra tal-Malta Labour Party.

Għal darb oħra, bl-iskop li jħammeg il-qasam tas-saħħa, il-Malta Labour Party uża il-ġurnal tiegħu biex ixandar rapporti mimlija gideb.

Fil-fatt b'referenza għar rapport intitolat "Aktar problemi serji fil-qasam tas-saħħa" il-Ministeru jgħarraf lill-pubbliku li l-mediċini imsemmija fir-rapport huma fil-fatt in stock u ma hemmx nuqqas tagħhom.

L-ebda mill-mediċini msemija fl-artiklu ma huma out of stock la mill-isptar u lanqas mill-POYC. Fir-rigward tal-'fibrates', bħalissa qiegħed jingħata 'fibrate' ieħor mill-istess klassi u għalhekk il-pazjenti baqgħu jingħataw dak li għandhom bżonn.

Il-Ministeru jappella għal aktar maturita, għallinqas b'rispett lejn il-pazjenti li jallarmaw irwiehom kif jaqraw dawn it-tip ta' rapporti.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU GHAS-SAHHA, L-ANZJANI U KURA FIL-KOMUNITÀ

Bhas-soltu, xejn ġdid mill-Oppożizzjoni

Sfortunatament anke matul iż-żmien tal-festi, il-Malta Labour Party jagħżel li jkompli jipprova jfixkel is-servizzi tas-saħħa.

Minkejja l-hafna stqarrijiet li ħarġet l-Oppożizzjoni dwar il-qasam, u minkejja l-isforzi kollha li għamlet biex tifa dell ikrah fuq il-qasam tas-saħħa, il-Eurobarometer li gie ppubbikat ftit tal-ġimghat ilu wera li l-poplu jaf xinhi il-verita u li 82 fil mija tal-poplu hu sodisfatt bis-servizzi tas-saħħa. Dan il-persentaġġ, li saħansitra huwa zieda fuq dak tas-sena li għaddiet, jaqbeż sew il-medja ta 60% tal-pajjiżi Ewropej.

Hasra li l-MLP qatt ma jgħid grazzi lil min jaħdem f'dan is-settur li wassal biex żdiedu in-numru u tip ta' operazzjonijiet, li żdiedu s-servizzi, li zdidu t-testijiet ta' prevenzjoni fost l-oħrajn. L-MLP jinjora it-titjib kontinwu li jsehħ fil-qasam, bħal ma sehħ, fost oħrajn, fil-każ tal-Colorectal Screening, li dwarha l-Oppożizzjoni ma qalet xejn.

Il-Ministeru jirringrazzja lill dawk il-professjonisti kollha li bis-saħħa tagħhom illum għandna servizz aktar b'saħħtu u ta' kwalità għolja, li qieghed iwassal biex aħna ngħixu aktar.

Il-Ministeru jinnota wkoll li b'ironija, din l-istqarrija tal-Oppożizzjoni waslet fil-jum li fih grupp ta' esperti barranin fit-teknoloġija ġew jiddiskutu l-avvanzi fit-teknoloġija li saru fil-qasam tas-saħħa ta' pajjiżna. Anke din, ġiet injorata mill-MLP.

Għalhekk, sfortunatament, fl-istqarrija tal-Oppożizzjoni ma kien hemm xejn ġdid.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU TA' L-EDUKAZZJONI, ZGHAZAGH U IMPIEG GHAD-DISKORS TA' DALGHODU, TAL-KAP TA' L-OPPOZIZZJONI

Hija kompletament żbaljata u mingħajr bażi l-istqarrija tal-Kap ta' L-Oppożizzjoni li "fl-edukazzjoni waqajna lura" m'hemm l-ebda prova jew statistika li turi li dan qed iseħħ anzi bil-kontra, kull statistika jew studju li jsir juri li pajjiżna qed jagħmel passi importanti 'l quddiem b'aktar studenti jkomplu jistudjaw, b'aktar Maltin ikomplu jiksbu livelli oġhla ta' edukazzjoni u taħriġ u b'numru dejjem jikber ta' adulti li qed isegwu l-korsijiet tul hajjithom. **Sfortunatament l-MLP u l-kap tiegħu jibqgħu ma jistgħux jirrikonoxxu l-avanz li qed isir minħabba l-għamad politiku li għandhom.**

Minbarra l-iżviluppi importanti li seħħew f'dawn l-aħħar ġimgħat wara li intlahaq ftehim importanti ma' L-MUT, u r-riforma li qed isseħħ inkluz bis-sistema tal-kulleġġi li t-tnejn għandhom il-mira ta' edukazzjoni ta' l-oġhla kwalita' għal kulhadd biex uliedna jirnexxu il-koll, b'dak li sar f'dawn l-aħħar snin kien irregistrat titjib f'kull livell u qasam ta' l-edukazzjoni. Fost il-kisbiet ewlenin u bil-fatti insibu:

Żieda ta' 12% f'perjodu ta' 3 snin (2002-2005) ta' l-istudenti ta' bejn l-20 u l-24 sena li jkomplu jistudjaw f'livell post-sekondarju. Barra minn hekk fl-istess perjodu l-ammont ta' studenti li ma jkomplux l-edukazzjoni nizeł b'14%. Il-miżuri li qed jieħu l-Gvern huma wkoll riflessi fl-ammont ta' studenti li qed japplikaw għal korsijiet ta' l-MCAST. Din is-sena kważi 3000 applikaw għal xi wieħed mill-korsijiet offruti minn din l-istituzzjoni. Għalkemm l-oppożizzjoni tħobb tuża statistika ta' l-UE tużaha barra mill-kuntest u kif jaqblilha.

Żieda fin-numru ta' persuni li jattendu korsijiet terzjarji. Hadd ma jista jinnega li kien dan il-Gvern li fetaħ il-bibien ta' l-edukazzjoni beraħ biex l-Universita issa tilqa fiha madwar 10,000 student. L-istess sar dan l-aħħar bl-MCAST li issa jilqa fih madwar 4000 student full-time u madwar 5000 part-time. Iż-żewġ istituzzjonijiet se jkomplu jikbru fis-snin li ġejjin biex ikomplu jkattru l-opportunitajiet ta' taħlim u taħriġ. L-MLP żgur li m'għandux lezzjonijiet x'jaġhti f'dan il-qasam.

Kompla jiżdied il-perċentaġġ ta' studenti li jgħaddu mill-eżami tal-Junior Lyceum - Ir-riżultati ta' l-eżami ta' 2007 għad-dhul fil-Junior Lyceums juru titjib ġenerali fuq is-snin l-imġhoddija. Aktar minn 61%, għaddew mill-eżami fil-ħames suġġetti. Dan hu l-għola perċentwal ta' studenti li qatt għaddew minn kemm ilu jsir l-eżami tal-Junior Lyceum.

Tkompli tonqos ir-Rata ta' l-Illitteriżmu – L-aħħar ċensiment juri żieda fil-perċentaġġ ta' persuni li jafu jiktbu u jaqraw u b'hekk tnaqqis fir-rata ta' l-illitteriżmu. Fl-aħħar 10 snin ir-rata ta' daww li jafu jiktbu u jaqraw żdiedet minn 88.7% għal 92.8% rata fost l-aqwa fid-dinja. Dan fisser li hemm 10,000 persuna anqas li ma jafux jiktbu u jaqraw u dan grazzi għall-opportunitajiet ta' taħriġ li hawn fil-pajjiż u t-titjib fil-kwalità ta' l-edukazzjoni b'mod ġenerali. Din l-istatistika hi prova oħra li turi kemm l-Oppożizzjoni jew ma tafx x'qed jiġri jew inkella qed tipprova tqarraq. F'diversi okkażjonijiet kelliema

ta' l-MLP allegaw u l-inteljenzmu qed jizdied.

U hemm diversi indikaturi oħrajn li juru li l-edukazzjoni f'pajjiżna miexja il-quddiem u li l-Maltin qed jiksbu l-aqwa riżultati. Fuq kollox, l-aqwa konferma tal-kisbiet li pajjiżna qed jagħmel fil-qasam edukattiv hija l-fiduċja li juru l-investituri Maltin u barranin li qed jinvestu miljuni kbar f'industriji li jinħtieġu haddiema u professjonisti imħarrġa u b'livell ogħli ta' edukazzjoni. L-oppożizzjoni qatt ma tista' tkun kredibbli sakemm tibqa' tagħmel mill-edukazzjoni ballun politiku.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU TAL-FINANZI DWAR LIBELL LI GHAMEL IL-MINISTRU LILL-MALTA LABOUR PARTY

Illum il-Ministru tal-Finanzi John Dalli ghamel libell lill-Malta Labour Party dwar *billboard* li twahhal madwar Malta b'insinwazjonijiet u gideb li huma malafamanti.

Il-Ministru John Dalli jfakkar li fir-rigward ta' l-HSBC diga kien ghamel u infatti rebah libell kontra r-radju Super One, kemm fil-Qorti kriminali, kif ukoll f'dak Civili. Matul dawn il-proceduri, is-Super One abbandunaw l-insinwazjonijiet li ghamlu u gabu l-iskuza li minn kien qed imexxi l-programm ma kienx jaf ihaddem il-buttuni ta' quddiemu.

Dwar id-Daewoo, il-Ministru tal-Finanzi jerga' jfakkar li hadd mill-Partit Laburista qatt ma attribwilo xejn direttament ghalkemm b'mod ta' gifa, ghoxew fl-insinwazjonijiet. Ifakkar wkoll li l-ahhar self tal-kumpanija u t-tbaghbis li sar bill-*bills of exchange*, kien fi zmien Gvern meta Dr Alfred Sant kien Prim Ministru u meta bhala Chairman tal-Bank of Valletta kien hemm appuntat ex-kandidat Laburista.

Dwar l-Isptar tal-Qroqq, il-Ministru tal-Finanzi jsostni li t-tender ta' l-ghoti tal-medicina li fuqha qed jaghmlu dan l-ghajjat kollu tal-Malta Labour Party qed jinghata fi process trasparenti ghal kollox u li fih minn ihossu ngurjat jista' jappella, kif fill-fatt sar. Il-hazin qieghed li l-Malta Labour Party jipprova jintimida biex id-decizjoni xxaqleb lejn negozjanti li qed jippretendu 7 miljun Euro aktar.

Din il-kampanja ta' hmieg hi sinonimu mal-Malta Labour Party li, ghax nieqes mill-vizjoni u mill-kapacita', jipprova jimmina lill-avversarji tieghu b'kampanja ta' gideb u qerq.

STQARRIJA MILL-MINISTERU TAL-ĠUSTIZZJA, KONSULTAZZJONI PUBBLIKA U L-FAMILJA

Twegiba għall-istqarrija tal-Mexxej tal-Malta Labour Party Dott Muscat

Il-Malta Labour Party ta' Dott Muscat ikompli bit-tradizzjoni tiegħu li jgħawweg il-fatti u jiehu dikjarazzjonijiet barra mill-kuntest biex jipprova jirbaħ punti politiċi. Dan jagħmlu sforz is-sensazzjonalizmu li jemmen fih. Minflok jipprova jipparteċipa f'diskussjoni serja dwar liġi daqstant importanti bħal dik tal-koabitazzjoni, issa Dott Muscat qed jipprova jirkeb fuq interpretazzjoni hażina ta' dikjarazzjoni li saret biex jgħawweg dak li qal il-Ministru tal-Ġustizzja, Konsultazzjoni Pubblika u L-Familja Chris Said waqt konferenza tal-aħbarijiet dwar l-Abbozz ta' Liġi dwar id-Drittijiet u l-Obbligi ta' Persuni li Jikkoabitaw.

Waqt il-konferenza tal-aħbarijiet li ngħatat nhar it-Tlieta li għadda, il-Ministru Chris Said fl-ebda mument ma għamel dikjarazzjonijiet omofobiċi. Meta kien mistoqsi mill-ġurnalisti dwar il-liġi tal-koabitazzjoni, il-Ministru Chris Said qal li fil-kuntest ta' dan l-abbozz ta' liġi, koppji gay ma jitqiesux bħala familja b'koppja miżżewġa. Il-Ministru Chris Said kien qed jispjega issues legali.

Il-Ministru Chris Said jiddikjara li r-relazzjoni personali bejn persuni differenti hi xi haġa prezzjuża għal dawk li jgħixu din l-esperjenza u jifhem ukoll li għalihom dik ir-relazzjoni hi n-nukleu familjari tagħhom anke jekk ma jkunux miżżewġin.

Konvenjentement iżda Dott Muscat ikompli fuq it-tradizzjoni tal-mexxejja Laburisti ta' qablu u jinsa l-kuntest biex jipprova jagħti l-interpretazzjoni li jrid hu.

Dott Muscat, bħala politiku li jaspira li jilhaq, imissu jaf li fil-liġijiet ta' Malta m'hemmx definizzjoni ta' familja. Il-Liġi taż-Żwieġ tagħti definizzjoni ċara ta' x'inhu żwieġ. Il-liġi tal-koabitazzjoni ma tidholx f'dan il-mertu. Dan għaliex il-liġi tal-koabitazzjoni, kif qed tiġi proposta, għandha l-għan li tirregola l-koabitazzjoni stat ta' fatt – kemm għall-eterosesswali kif ukoll għall-omosesswali – li hi realta' barra miż-żwieġ. Din il-liġi għall-ewwel darba tistabbilixxi wkoll id-drittijiet u d-dmirijiet ta' persuni li jagħzlu li jikkoabitaw. Dan tagħmlu sabiex prinċipalment thares lill-parti l-aktar dgħajfa f'dik l-istess relazzjoni.

Mill-ġdid il-Ministru Chris Said jirrifjuta l-allegazzjonijiet u l-mizinterpretazzjonijiet hażina tal-Malta Labour Party ta' Dott Muscat.

Il-kredenzjali tal-Gvern u tal-Ministeru tal-Ġustizzja, Konsultazzjoni Pubblika u L-Familja favur id-drittijiet ta' persuni omosesswali u b'identita' tal-ġeneru differenti ma titkejjilx bis-sensazzjonalizmu ta' Dott Muscat iżda titkejjel bil-fatti.

F'dawn l-aħħar xhur, fuq inizzjattiva tal-Ministru Chris Said u wara diskussjonijiet mar-rappreżentanti tal-

Malta Gay Rights Movement u tal-Aditus fost l-oħrajn, il-Gvern għadda liġijiet mill-Parlament, liġijiet li permezz tagħhom stabbilixxa bħala reati aktar serji kull tip ta' vjolenza fil-konfront ta' persuni jew gruppi ta' persuni fuq bażi ta' ġeneru, identità tal-ġeneru, u/jew orjentazzjoni sesswali.

Barra minn hekk għaddiet liġi li permezz tagħha l-Kummissjoni għall-Ugwaljanza tipproteġi u tiggarrantixxi l-ugwaljanza fl-istess oqsma għal kulhadd irrispettivament mill-orjentazzjoni sesswali, mill-identità tal-ġeneru u mit-twemmin.

Dan kollu juri wkoll kemm il-Malta Labour Party u Dott Muscat għadhom l-istess u m'hu qed joffri xejn ġdid.

STQARRIJA TAL-MINISTERU GĦAR-RIŻORSI U AFFARIJIET RURALI

L-Onor Leo Brincat irid jibqa' jipprova jitfa' t-tajn, u ma jiddejjaq xejn jikkontradixxi lilu nnifsu.

Il-fatt li l-proġetti li jiġġeneraw energija mix-xemx jirrikjedu meded kbar ta' art jagħtu raġun lill-Gvern li fil-pjan tiegħu għall-ġenerazzjoni ta' energija minn sorsi nodfa alloka 0.7 fil-mija tal-miri tiegħu li ser jiġu minn energija solari.

Jekk xejn kien l-Onor Brincat, u l-Oppożizzjoni li għoġobhom jikkritikaw dan il-pjan billi bħas-soltu jippruvaw joħolqu dubji mingħajr ma joffru alternattiva. Il-fatt li dan il-proġett ta' pannelli fuq 67,000 metru kwadru ta' soqfa pubbliċi se jwassal biex jintlaħaq 0.1 fil-mija tal-miri nazzjonali jikkonferma kemm pajjiżna għandu restrizzjonijiet tal-art għal proġetti simili. Imma għall-Onor Brincat l-importanti li jikkritika u li jiżra d-dubji.

Din il-Feed-In-Tariff tobbliga lill-kumpanija li rebħet dan il-kuntratt biex twettaq l-investment kollu marbut mal-installazzjoni tal-panelli fotovoltajċi u tinstalla wkoll strutturi biex jieħdu fuqhom dawn il-panelli peress li dawn iridu jitpoġġew fuq soqfa antiki jew soqfa ta' ġibjuni.

L-aħħar stqarrija tal-Onor Brincat tikkonferma li għall-Oppożizzjoni l-importanti mhux l-interess nazzjonali imma dak partigġjan.