



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & TRAINING**  
**23 Queensway**  
**Gibraltar**

Minister for Education, Employment & Training, The Hon C G Beltran

**PRESS RELEASE**

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In a Party political broadcast on GBC television on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December and the Panorama of Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> December Steven Linares of the GSLP/Liberals accuses Government of allowing children to be taught at St Bernard's School in sub-standard conditions. This has gone down very badly amongst all the staff of that school who vehemently deny the accusation. It is true that that school building is an old one. It is false to state that children there are working in sub-standard conditions. The headteacher of that school, as occurs with all other schools, constantly liaises with Department of Education and Training staff to ensure that all and any necessary repairs and works are carried out in order to ensure that the conditions are conducive to a good teaching and learning environment. In fact it is worth noting that over the last three years over £83,000 have been spent on works carried out at St Bernard's and Mr Linares knows this because he has asked that question in Parliament and received the answer. The accusation is unsubstantiated and, therefore, a crude and shameful attempt to use children for party political gain.

On another matter, Mr Linares goes on to comment that teachers on the supply list have been allowed to work on a supply basis for periods of up to four years. Again, it is true that a few teachers have been on the Department's supply list for three or four years. However, Mr Linares fails to clarify that a teacher may have his or her name on that list for that length of time but that it does not follow that s/he has actually been called upon to work permanently every working day during those four years. He further suggests that these teachers are unable to obtain mortgages from banks because they are not permanently employed. Surely even Mr Linares must know that no bank will offer a loan of that magnitude to anyone, not just teachers, not in permanent employment.

If, then, he is suggesting that teachers on the supply list should be offered permanent employment regardless of the needs of the service, then he needs to be reminded, and he should know this from his days as a teacher and union President, that permanency must be seen in the context of the staffing complement required to deliver the service in accordance with the pupil-teacher ratios arrived at in consultation with the union. Therefore, to give the impression that the Department of Education and Training somehow refuses permanent employment to teachers on the supply list is no more than mischievous and unfounded.

Mr Linares knows full well that the GSD government have employed more teachers, more classroom aides and have spent more in education generally, including the refurbishing of school buildings, than the GSLP, the Party he supports, ever did during the eight years they were in Government.