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PRESS RELEASE

No: 40/2014

Date: 27th January 2014

Opposition behave as if they did not know their own track record in Government

The Opposition has described the Government's point by point rebuttal of many arguments in the Leader of the Opposition's message as "extraordinary". The only thing that is extraordinary about all this is the failure of the Opposition to get their facts right and their evident lack of knowledge as to the way in which they operated when they were in Government.

It also says volumes that they have been unable to answer the specific points raised by the Government at the time and have chosen instead to respond with vague and generalised comments.

The main thrust of the Opposition's criticism was the channelling of public funds through what they described as an unaccountable "web" of Government companies. This echoed the criticisms that they used to make in 1996 before the GSD was elected into Government for the first time. What they have failed to say is that once they were elected into Government in 1996, they not only kept the so-called "web" of companies, but they actually added to the number of companies in the "web".

It is incredible that they should now criticise a mechanism that they used. Therefore it can only be described as a mendacious lie for Mr Feetham to present the issue in this way when it is actually largely exactly the same company structure that his current party used when in Government and in a way which - by his analysis - led to them hiding £100m of losses "off balance sheet" and away from both Parliamentary and public scrutiny!

The data for the financial year 2011/2012, the last time the GSD was in Government, shows a total of 26 Government holding, property and trading companies. Many of these companies had been in existence for many years under their watch. A number of new ones created by the then Government, generated losses of tens of millions of pounds, which they concealed from the public by not accounting for the losses in the estimates of revenue and expenditure. The GSLP/Liberal administration, on coming into office, explained the £ 100 million hole to the taxpayer and now accounts for these losses in a public and transparent manner.

The GSD Government channelled £ 271.3 million through these companies between March 2002 and March 2011. Mr Caruana publicly acknowledged more than once that these funds were not approved by Parliament.

It is clear that the only people who should be nervous when all this is pointed out are Mr Feetham and the current leadership of the GSD who behave as if they did not have a clue about any of this and who continue to cause serious embarrassment to the former leadership of the party.