



PRESS RELEASE

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GSD HYPOCRISY ON ILLEGAL FISHING

Once again, the GSD has again shown utter hypocrisy in its latest statement on illegal fishing. It has failed to recall its own illegal fishing agreement, which was highly damaging, both politically and environmentally.

Moreover, it is clear from a Tweet by a member of the GSD executive that they believe in direct involvement by RGP officers and they even threaten to dismiss the Commissioner of Police if he does not do what he is told.

In contrast, the GSLP/Liberal Government has always recognised and supported the independence of the Royal Gibraltar Police, a fundamental tenet of our democracy.

On the matter of illegal fishing, the GSD is wrong in its assumptions and, again, misleading in its statements. The Government's intentions are clear: there has been a regular presence by Environmental Protection vessels in order to challenge illegal fishing. Contrary to the GSD's statement, RGP vessels have been present to support Environment staff on a number of recent occasions and, as a result, Spanish fishermen have been reported for process.

Nor is it true that there has been discrimination. Spanish anglers are regularly approached and their documentation checked. Indeed, Spanish recreational anglers do hold Gibraltar licences, as permitted by the Marine Protection Regulations, which clearly recognises Gibraltar's jurisdiction over BGTW.

People will not forget the scenes just a few years ago, when rows and rows of Spanish anglers lined our shores, often to the exclusion of locals. Those scenes are now a thing of the past, thanks to this Government and indeed, Spanish commercial fishing is much reduced from those days. This Government will continue to work towards ensuring that the protected status of Gibraltar's waters is respected by all.

The Chief Minister said, "We have full confidence in our police to enforce our laws fairly and without fear or favour. We believe in an independent police force, as provided for in our Constitution and



our laws. I think that the fact that the GSD executive stands for "sacking" police officers who do not follow the political dictats of a potential future GSD government will concern all those who believe in the independence of our institutions, our law enforcement officials and the Rule of Law. It's time someone called out the GSD for this new, grossly undemocratic approach, and I have no hesitation in doing so. Additionally, it is important that the public should recall that it was the GSD that had entered into an agreement to specifically allow Spanish fishermen to break our laws with impunity whilst enforcing our laws against our own citizens. That was an utter disgrace."