

Opposition Press Release 137/2008

The Opposition condemns the Government's action in continuing to kill apes.

The Government has only itself to blame for any adverse publicity that is arising to Gibraltar as a result of the continued killing of the Barbary Macaque population, and which arises from the GSD Government's inability to manage the apes.

The Government, on the one hand, uses the image of the apes to promote Gibraltar (in advertising and at the Lord Mayor's Parade). On the other hand it engages in a process of signing licenses for the killing of the very animals that are emblematic and so closely related to Gibraltar's international image.

The Government therefore has only itself to blame for the adverse publicity that has arisen as a result of its policy of killing apes. To say that the Government should be able to kill sentient mammals with impunity and that the Opposition should not make public comment because the Government's inhuman actions might create bad publicity is really quite incomprehensible. If the Government does not wish to have adverse publicity raised against it and/or Gibraltar as a result of its killing of apes there is only one solution to that, namely, the Government must stop killing apes and must start managing the problem more effectively.

In any event it is totally spurious for the Government to now link the present ape problem to the need to manage human public health. If the Government really were interested in the proper management of the ape problem and human public health it would not allow rubbish dumps to continue to be exposed to the elements and to the apes. This happens to such an extent that in areas of the Upper Town such as Tankerville and Tank Ramp (where rubbish dumps have not

yet been enclosed by cages such as those proposed by the Opposition and which have since worked so well in areas such as Calpe) that the disgorged rubbish is a massive public health problem and has continued unabated despite the killing of apes that has already occurred and has not helped to solve the problem at all. The Government should act immediately and stop dragging its heels in implementing caged rubbish dumps. Until such time as it does so any suggestions by the Government that the killing of the apes arising for any reason other than its inability to manage even primates will carry no weight.

In the interim, the Opposition is committed to supporting the work of the International Primate Protection League ("IPPL") in their campaign to stop the killings in Gibraltar.

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ENDS