

STATEMENT BY THE GSLP/LIBERAL OPPOSITION

108/2009

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Juan Carlos Juarez has called on Gibraltar to do something about the border queues in the context of how they affect La Linea by urging that the matter be taken to the Trilateral Forum. He expressed the extraordinary view that the new controls outside the frontier are “good for Gibraltar” and added, presumably as if he was doing Gibraltar a favour, that sitting in a queue for two hours was not good for anyone. The Mayor also expressed his concern that the new marina project in La Linea could be affected by the queues in the future.

That the Mayor of La Linea should now seek to defend the action he has taken at the frontier queue is completely absurd and increasingly smacks of desperation. It is also the height of political hypocrisy that the Mr Juarez should now cry crocodile tears when he has been the one to have worsened the situation through the new controls being carried out under his instructions.

It is obvious to anyone who has been monitoring the situation that the Mayor’s arguments have no basis in fact. The reality is that this is a new problem and is of Mr Juarez’s own making. It has worsened the traffic situation in La Linea because, as the Opposition predicted, vehicles are driving round the town in circles trying to make their way back to the frontier queue after they have been turned away. The Opposition has already received complaints from persons who have been turned away as many as four times and who had to drive back around La Linea each time in order to try and rejoin the queue.

Therefore if the measures are designed to improve traffic flow into La Linea, the fact is that they have had the opposite effect and made things worse.

Moreover, the traffic that queues up to enter Gibraltar does so on the right carriageway of a two lane highway. The cars on this lane do not obstruct or prevent traffic on the left lane from entering La Linea if they so wish. Given that this must be as obvious to him as it is to everyone else, Mr Juarez has now changed his tune and expressed concerns that the frontier queue could obstruct traffic access to a future marina project. This is even more absurd than anything the Mayor has said to date. In the first place, it is not as if the Marina project will be ready next week and secondly surely the Mayor has heard of traffic lights which can serve to ensure that access in and out of the Marina is not impeded by the queue.

The reality is that there is no justification for the action that the Mayor has taken. It is a huge cheek that he should call on Gibraltar to do something about the queues when this problem has been created by him and he is the one who can solve it by putting an end to the action. What this is about is that tourists have no

interest in visiting La Linea and are prepared to by-pass the town and queue up to visit Gibraltar instead.

ENDS