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PRESS RELEASE

Hunters' Federation denies meetings are to provoke violence

We refer to the news item 'Hunters' meetings could provoke attacks – BirdLife' (Feb. 24). The Federation for Hunting & Conservation – Malta (FKNK) categorically denies any allegations that its meetings are intended to provoke violence. The FKNK has always condemned violent acts and will continue to do so.

The purpose of the forthcoming FKNK mass meetings is to state the true facts about the hunting and trapping situation on the Maltese islands and to guide its thousands of members.

The FKNK leaves the provocation of violence to the experts.

It is extremely hypocritical of Tolga Temuge, BirdLife Malta Director, to talk about "calming the situation" when it is BirdLife itself that is doing exactly the opposite. Is BirdLife trying to calm the situation with the publication of images of bloodied birds on newspaper front-pages, and stirring up readers' emotions against all hunters? Is BirdLife trying to calm the situation by insisting that the government should go against its commitment to open the spring hunting season? Is BirdLife trying to calm the situation by proposing that our thousands of law-abiding members be looked upon as criminals for practising hunting in spring? So on and so forth.

Mr Temuge himself speaks of "Birdlife's campaign to end hunting in spring". He knows very well that hunting in spring is a legitimate activity practised for centuries on the Maltese Islands. So who is muddying the waters? Who has been agitating against Maltese hunting and trapping on the local and foreign media, among the birding societies overseas, and among the members of the European Parliament? Who boasted of being in possession of 'a secret weapon' to use against Maltese hunters and trappers? Was it not Turkish nationalist Tolga Temuge himself on his employment with BirdLife (Malta)?

It is recent activities undertaken by BirdLife that are leading to public unrest. Yet Mr Temuge has the cheek to blame the FKNK. BirdLife sees it fit to criticize the police as well, even though the Police Commissioner went out of his way to scrutinize over 15,000 messages on the FKNK website blog and found nothing illegal.

Mr Temuge fears that the FKNK meetings “could further stoke the fire”. Again he shows his hypocrisy. It is he and his friends overseas who have been stoking the fire and fomenting trouble with their lies and exaggerations. We are referring here to Gozitan David Camilleri of New York, David Conlin of Proact, and Jan Rodts of the Belgian Bird Protection Society, to mention just a few. These people are the ones responsible for putting on the heat against Maltese hunters and trappers with their inflammatory writings to EU Commissioners, MEPs, and local parliamentarians.

Now Mr Temuge says he is “extremely concerned”. He should have been extremely concerned before BirdLife started its insidious and malicious propaganda against Malta’s hunters and trappers by twisting the facts and bombarding the media with its lies, half-truths and misrepresentations of material facts.

Although warned in 2006 to expect “the full wrath of hunters”, he and members of his organization persist with their confrontation.

Mr Temuge “fears things will get worse”. They might, unless BirdLife & Co. cease to manipulate people’s emotions against hunting and trapping and halt their constant agitation against all hunters and trappers.

Finally Mr. Temuge declares that "BirdLife is committed" but does not say to what. Of course he will not say that, probably some part of his ‘secret weapon’. And he need not either, because it is an open secret. Everyone knows that BirdLife Malta under its present management is committed to the elimination of all hunting and trapping on the Maltese Islands. And that is sending a very dangerous message! All political parties, please note.

FKNK Council