



## OF MATCH-FIXING AND SMART METERS

*“Malta’s recent experience has shown that a culture of corruption permeates every aspect of society, ranging in degrees of seriousness from nepotism and clientelism to bribery, embezzlement, theft, fraud, and political and judicial abuse of power for private gain” - “A start has been made with the reform of justice. But this has a long way to go before its implementation and there have been too many examples of good intention foundering on the rocks of vested interests” - “Deterrence can only succeed if people are aware that internal control procedures are tight and the chances of being caught are high” - “The third action rests with society itself. There can be no solutions to social and political problems that do not involve civil society exercising active citizenship in pursuit of civic values and the common interest. We need a change of culture”*

Martin Scicluna - Times of Malta 12 March 2014

Where does this place our main concern, match-fixing? I cannot envisage a strong approach by anybody in power or law enforcement to place match-fixing control at a high priority level. Law enforcers sometimes feel that it is solely up to sport disciplinary bodies to tackle it. However we also need to understand that as it is the police are well overworked and might view football problems as secondary.

During our recent Integrity Tour round the clubs, I witnessed the voluntary dedication and commitment which club administrators put into their organisations. I do not think that it is fair on these people to have their club infiltrated and messed around by individuals who look at football from a different angle, which is far from fair and ethical sporting spirit. Most of them are oblivious to what is happening at their own club, whilst others are unfortunately drawn to board the ride towards fake success.

I appeal to these honest individuals working within the clubs, that it is up to them to protect football, for their children’s sake. Unless these dedicated volunteers are in full control of their own club, then we have a very long way before we can achieve success in salvaging the game from further decay and added negative perception by the public in general. We are witnessing a total disregard to our cries for assistance to a situation, which cannot be handled on our own. We need the authorities and the police to listen to us and look into this criminality with unreserved commitment.

Where does match-fixing feature in the national corruption investigation priority list? I think that presently it is a very hard battle to topple the oil and smart meter sagas plus other big cases. Then we will still need to overtake the numerous scenarios mentioned above, before we are hopefully given some priority. It is a hard and torturous struggle which can only be overcome by the united front of dedicated and honest football people, who now, more than ever before, need to understand their very importance.ft