



WISHING ALL OUR READERS A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

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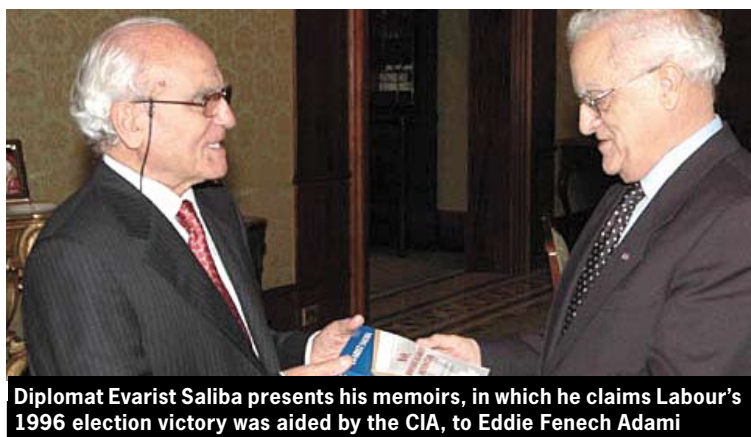
SANT ON INCREDIBLE CIA ALLEGATION

'I'VE NO TIME FOR THIS BULLSHIT'

KARL SCHEMBRI

LABOUR leader Alfred Sant yesterday dismissed the allegations made by former senior diplomat Evarist Saliba that he had won the 1996 elections with the help of the US Central Intelligence Agency as "bullshit".

In his book of memoirs called 'No, Honourable Minister' launched last November, Saliba alleges that he was told by a very high PN official that Sant had won the general election with



Diplomat Evarist Saliba presents his memoirs, in which he claims Labour's 1996 election victory was aided by the CIA, to Eddie Fenech Adami

the help of the American secret service.

Saliba repeated his incredible claims in Monday's Bondiplus on the national broadcaster, although he refused to name his source, adding only that he "trusted the very high PN official 100 per cent".

"I don't have the slightest doubt (about his credibility)," Saliba said as the producers put on a big screen "Alfred Sant and the CIA?" to the backdrop in the studio.

But Sant yesterday was

brusquely dismissive of Saliba's allegations.

"I have no time for this bullshit," he said when called at his private residence.

Asked whether he had read Saliba's memoirs, Sant said: "Absolutely not."

80-year-old Saliba is known to have been a close collaborator of the PN while he was heading the Foreign Service. He eventually fell out with former foreign minister Alex Sciberras Trigona.

Saliba recounted how a very high PN official had

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Where The Action Is!

Midweek's guide to partying – where it's at on Christmas and New Year's Eve

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Pilots' strike imminent unless discussions resume

MATTHEW VELLA

AIR Malta pilots will be deciding by secret ballot between Thursday and Friday whether they will scale up industrial actions with a suspension of service.

In its most vociferous threat to Air Malta management so far, the Airline Pilots Associa-

tion's (ALPA) president James Fenech said 55 pilots present for an extraordinary general meeting yesterday were unanimously backing strike action.

"Since we cannot take a proper vote during an EGM, because other pilots are flying, we will open a 24 hour ballot between Thursday and Friday," Captain James Fenech told MaltaToday yesterday.

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Air Malta seeks 'official carrier' status for Juventus

THE national airline is in discussions with Italian football team Juventus on a deal which would make Air Malta the official carrier for the football team, this newspaper has learnt.

High-level sources at Air Malta yesterday confirmed the airline was in discussions with Juventus over the deal.

Sources at the Juventus Vero Amore club, the team's local fans association, did not deny that discussions were taking

place between the club and the airline.

The airline previously had a similar agreement with Italian club Messina.

Italy's Serie A giants will be holding a training camp and play Valletta FC in a showcase friendly this coming January. After last year's visit by AC Milan, Juventus will be holding a training camp in Malta between 5 and 12 January before leaving Malta to face Catania in a Serie

A match on the 13 January. In the time spent here, Juventus will be playing a friendly match at the Ta' Qali national stadium against Valletta.

Juventus will arrive in Malta with its full squad, including Alex Del Piero, David Trezeguet, Giorgio Chiellini, Mauro Camoranesi, Pavel Nedved, Vincenzo Iaquinta and Gianluigi Buffon who will be on the island for the second time in a few months.

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