

November 7, 2011

Messrs.
Reporters Without Borders

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to you in connection with your article dated November 3, 2011, which informs about the civil action that my brother and I – of 27 and 29 years old, respectively – initiated in relation to the documentary film called “Awka Liwen.”

The purpose of this letter is to explain why we have initiated this claim, as well as to clarify various false statements made by Mr. Mariano Aiello that were addressed in your article.

“Awka Liwen” displays, according to the view of its authors, the history of the killings against the indigenous people in Argentina and the subsequent appropriation of their land by European descendants. In this film, Messrs. Bayer, Aiello and Pigna cast a series of accusations against the Martínez de Hoz family over matters of fact. First, the authors assert that our family financed the so-called “Desert Campaign” (*Campaña del Desierto*) through the acquisition of sovereign bonds issued by the Argentine Government in 1878. Second, the authors assert that, in consideration for having purchased the mentioned sovereign bonds, the Martínez de Hoz family received 2.5 million hectares of land. Last, for purposes of mockery, the authors show what they allege is an old film footage of members of our family.

We have not initiated a civil action against Messrs. Bayer, Aiello y Pigna for not sharing their account of the historical events pertaining to the “Desert Campaign.” Neither have we initiated this claim for ideological or political discrepancies with them. We have initiated a civil action against Messrs. Bayer, Aiello y Pigna because their accusations in “Awka Liwen” against our family are false, a complete historical fabrication.

First, no member of our family purchased sovereign bonds issued by the Argentine Government to finance the “Desert Campaign,” nor acquired land in Argentina through such land acquisition scheme. Second, none of the members of the Martínez de Hoz family ever acquired 2.5 million hectares of land – neither as a result of the “Desert Campaign” nor in any other way. Never throughout the history of Argentina (i.e., before, during or after the “Desert Campaign”), the Martínez de Hoz family acquired or owned 2.5 million hectares of land (not even an acreage equal to 1% of that mentioned by Bayer, Aiello and Pigna). Last, the persons that the authors show in the alleged old film footage, for purposes of mockery, are not members of our family. To sum up, the account of events with respect to our family that is displayed in “Awka Liwen” is, simply, a total historical fabrication.

This is the reason why we have initiated a civil action, where we explain and provide documentation (including from governmental public historical records) that proves that the authors’ accusations against our family in “Awka Liwen” are false. If the authors had acted earnestly and with professionalism, they would have easily detected the total lack of historical substance of such accusations.

In the meantime, since we filed our claim, the authors have engaged in dilatory litigation conduct, tried to victimize themselves in the media, and resorted to personal accusations against our family while deliberately misinforming the general public about the content and facts surrounding our civil action. Moreover, the authors have continued making public statements to the media that only confirm that their accusations against our family in “Awka Liwen” are a historical fabrication.

We do not want “Awka Liwen” to be censored. We have only asked that the false accusations against, and false images of, the Martínez de Hoz family be deleted from the film, and that the authors publicly recognize their mistake – in the same way that they have publicly spread their false accusations.

It is absolutely false that we have requested that the authors be imprisoned; this becomes evident from the fact that we have initiated a civil action, not a criminal action. It is also false that we are seeking to obtain some sort of economic gain out of this litigation; this, again, becomes evident from the fact that, in our initial court presentation, we donated any potential economic compensation which we may receive to a local charity project for single

mothers. In addition, it is false that we have requested one million Argentine pesos to the authors in damages; and it is also a fabrication that the intervening judges have a relationship with us or our family. Paradoxically, a few days ago, Justice Eugenio R. Zaffaroni, current member of the Argentine Supreme Court and also a judge during the latest military government in Argentina, expressed “admiration” for Osvaldo Bayer.

We have not engaged in this litigation only to defend our ancestors from the authors’ false accusations. In “Awka Liwen” and in many related interviews and articles, Bayer and Aiello have extended their false accusations against all our family, including the current generations; that is, also against us. This is why our civil action is not a threat or an attack against the authors, as purported by Messrs. Bayer and Aiello, but a defensive measure that we have, sadly, been forced to resort to, to try to avoid a totally false account of the mentioned historical events from spreading further.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to contact you and your readers, and share what is really going on with respect to this matter.

Sincerely,

José Martínez de Hoz (nieto)