

3.10 Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier of the Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding amendments to Option B to create greater parity of weight of vote for St. Helier in comparison to other parishes:

Does the Chairman accept that both of the amendments to Option B being put forward by myself and Deputy Green ensure much fairer, more equal representation in regard to parity of weight of vote for St. Helier in comparison to other Parishes, and further still that both more strongly protect the continued functioning of the so-called Troy rule?

Connétable A.S. Crowcroft of St. Helier (Chairman, Privileges and Procedures Committee):

When the Privileges and Procedures Committee concluded that it should lodge P.64/2013 it did so on the basis that by facilitating an early States debate on the outcome of the referendum the Committee would be doing its duty in accordance with previously related decisions of the States Assembly. The Committee's views regarding both amendments are to be found in the comments already presented to the States Assembly. P.64/2013 deliberately preserves the Troy rule. Proposed Article 5 would ensure that an Assembly of 42 would have no more than 18 in the Executive. Neither amendment undermines the Troy rule, although part 2 of both amendments increase the number of possible Ministers and Assistant Ministers.

3.10.1 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I thank the Chairman for that, although I have to say I find his logic quite hard to follow. Both Deputy Green's and my own amendment are driven both by logic and the principle of fairness. It is quite clear that P.64, trying to cut the Assembly to 42, has neither of those qualities. I thus have to push the Chairman a little further and ask him why did his Committee agree to bring something forward that will undermine the effectiveness of this Government and will make democracy, the deficit in this Island, even worse. Is that really something that he and his Committee should be doing?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

The questioner has restated his question and he rather forces me to restate my answer. These matters are very much at the heart of the debate on P.64/2013 and the amendments which will be taking a lot of the Assembly's time this week. I would refer the Deputy to the comments by Privileges and Procedures, which explain that we feel the calculation made by the Deputies is different from the calculation made by the Electoral Commission. We simply refer Members to those comments and they will have to take a view when we have the debate tomorrow.

3.10.2 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

Of course, it is just a short time ago that with the wonderful new technology we have the Chairman of P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) was tweeting out to his followers that anything other than going for Option A was gerrymandering. What has happened to him in the meantime? Why is he and his Committee now prepared to sell out democracy and the effectiveness of Government when they have the opportunity to do something, to stand up for something that could make things better?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

I am struggling to relate that supplementary to the main question. The Committee's views, including my views, are expressed in our comments on his amendments. What I tweeted during the campaign on the referendum, these are matters that I am sure will be addressed in the course of the debate. But I would simply ask the Deputy and other Members, indeed, to pay close attention to what the electorate were saying as a result of the referendum.

3.10.3 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

In the last statement from the Chairman, did he mean that we have to listen to the public, the 74 per cent who did not want either because it was such a complete and utter shambles?

The Connétable of St. Helier:

Again, these are matters that will be discussed tomorrow. I do not think there is any point in starting a debate today because we cannot really do it justice in question time.