

2.2 Deputy D.J.A. Wimberley of St. Mary of the Chief Minister regarding the suspension of the former Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police:

Can the Chief Minister explain why, during the time the suspension or disciplinary action against the Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police was being discussed and prepared behind the scenes, there was no formal attempt to resolve the issues between the Minister for Home Affairs, senior officers who had concerns - I did make clear in an email that I meant senior officials, not senior officers of the police; so I did make that clear in a subsequent email - and the former Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police?

Senator T.A. Le Sueur (The Chief Minister):

Although I was not directly involved with the offence referred to by the Deputy of St. Mary at that time, I am satisfied that initial attempts were made by the previous Minister for Home Affairs and senior officers to address concerns with the investigation into the historic child abuse inquiry with the previous Chief Officer of Police. The previous Chief Officer of Police was not prepared to enter into any formal constructive discussion regarding the ongoing investigation or any of the concerns raised by the Minister or senior officers.

2.2.1 The Deputy of St. Mary:

I would like, if not now then later, specific reference to where in the Napier Report there is any evidence of formal meetings with the former Chief Officer of Police by the people involved in his suspension to talk through to face him, if you like, with the concerns and elicit his response. In my reading of Napier, no such meeting or meetings took place. I would like the Chief Minister to tell the House where we can find any evidence that the former Chief Officer of Police was talked to at all in this way, in a proper measured way.

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I consider it may not have been in the Napier Report. The information was available within the records which were produced to Mr. Napier. I am quite happy to research those and give chapter and verse to the Deputy.

2.2.2 Deputy F.J. Hill of St. Martin:

The Napier Report has shown there is clear evidence of abuse of process by very senior civil servants and Ministers which led to the unfair suspension of the former Police Chief Officer. Over £1 million was spent to justify that suspension. Does the Chief Minister not think it appropriate to make a statement to explain what went wrong and what has been done about the process and indeed an apology be given to the former Police Chief Officer.

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I already indicated in answers last week that I have no intention of giving an apology to the former Police Chief Officer. £1 million was spent and the facts speak for themselves. The report has been produced and, as far as I am concerned, there is nothing further to add to it.

2.2.3 Deputy M.R. Higgins of St. Helier:

Does the Chief Minister not feel any regret for the way that he has handled this case? Had he or the Minister for Home Affairs at the time conducted a proper investigation

before suspending the Chief Officer, we could have saved the £1 million that was subsequently spent and saved some of the cuts that are coming in the near months.

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

I regret many things about the way the historic child abuse inquiry was conducted, in particular the activities of the Deputy Chief Officer of Police at that time. The fact we have had to spend significant sums of money is regrettable, but that is all that I have to say on the matter. I have no intention of doing anything further about it.

2.2.4 The Deputy of St. Mary:

The Napier Report on page 26 says, and I quote: “The confrontation with Mr. Power was seen coming by officials weeks in advance of 12th November and I do not know why the opportunity to head it off (or at least attempt to do so) was not taken.” In other words, Napier himself says that there was no attempt made to resolve this issue to improve the performance, if that is what was required, but at least to discuss this properly before moving on to disciplinary procedures or indeed suspension. I again, ask the Chief Minister to confirm to this House that no attempt to talk with the Chief Officer of Police was made and that that contradicts natural justice. He was suspended basically at the point of a gun.

Senator T.A. Le Sueur:

What Mr. Napier wrote was that he did not know of reasons why that opportunity, he believes, was not taken. The evidence is there, and I believe he could and should have known.

The Deputy Bailiff:

We now come to question 3, which Deputy Southern will ask of the Minister for Treasury and Resources.