

**PERSONAL STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT ON
24th MAY 2005**

Given that the announcement of my resignation from the Scrutiny process was made only briefly during my contribution to the Fiscal Strategy debate, I would like to clarify the reasons behind that decision.

Since entering the States, I have adopted the role of scrutineer, taking time to investigate matters whenever issues apparently in need of investigation were brought to my attention. I still perform that duty.

When Shadow Scrutiny Panels were formed I saw an opportunity to more efficiently harness that investigative work and therefore I put my name forward.

The Panel on which I served has worked extremely hard and, I believe, professionally. All work is done by Panel members, assisted only by one or two Scrutiny Officers. I would compare the work of a Scrutiny Panel with serving on four or five major Committees at one time.

However, that work is satisfying, as opposed to onerous, provided the reports produced are taken seriously and the evidence in them used to improve our quality of government. Sadly, in my view, this has not been the case.

The Panel I served on has had to put up with lack of co-operation, misleading information and other impediments to progress. Reports we have produced which Committees found inconvenient have been either ignored, or rubbished with erroneous accusations of bias and incompetence on the part of the Panel members and its technical advisors.

Whilst feeling insulted by such behaviour, nevertheless I, in company with my fellow Panel members, put this down to the fact that one or two Committees had yet to embrace scrutiny, and that matters would improve with time.

Unfortunately, events of recent months have made me believe the problem is more fundamental, and that scrutiny is a waste of the time and effort we put in. There is little point in spending hundreds, perhaps thousands, of hours collecting evidence and assembling it into reports if they are simply going to be ignored. The same applies if this Assembly is prepared to debate propositions before scrutiny reports are available, as has happened twice in the last month.

These are the issues I was referring to when I stated during the debate on the Fiscal Strategy that I had been considering my position on scrutiny. What finally persuaded me was the criticism of scrutiny by Senator Walker during his speech. I understood him to make three points -

Firstly, he criticised us for a five week delay between the lodging of the Fiscal Strategy proposition and the starting of our review of GST. In reality, the Panel had been under pressure to complete the Waste Strategy Report. Thereafter it had to reconstitute under a new Chairman, select new subjects from the dozens put forward according to their merit and probability of completing them before the end of this session, get those subjects cleared by the Chairmen's Committee, decide on terms of reference, choice of technical advisors and so forth. There was also an issue of officer shortage at this time, so any suggestion we could have started immediately was therefore inappropriate.

Secondly, he gave me the impression that the Assembly could not have its work delayed waiting for scrutiny. If this is so, we truly are wasting our time, because a Panel cannot produce a report in two or even four weeks between lodging and debate. I would suggest ten weeks a workable minimum and even that would depend on a Panel's current workload.

Thirdly, and the final straw as far as I was concerned, I gained the impression that scrutiny would only be tolerated by the Executive as long as it was benign.

If the work of scrutiny is going to be ignored or rubbished whenever its reports happen to be inconvenient to a Committee, if non-cooperation continues to be used as a tactic by Committees wishing to avoid the scrutiny process, if this Assembly is not prepared to wait for the evidence that scrutiny produces before making decisions

and if scrutiny is only going to be tolerated as long as it does not criticise the Executive, then I truly believe scrutiny is a waste of members' effort.

Unfortunately, all of the above are currently confirmed.

Despite averaging 70 hours a week on States' business I still have to prioritise my work. I do not consider spending a good proportion of that on a process that is essentially a waste of effort to be an appropriate use of my time. I therefore have had no choice but to resign from the scrutiny process.