

**STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND  
PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE ON 17th FEBRUARY 2004**

The States of Jersey in December 2002 entrusted me as President and appointed a transitional Committee, not entirely of my choosing, to take up the several organisational and policy challenges to enable two future departments to be readied for ministerial government as set out in P.70/2002.

We were aware that the scope of work represented by the combined portfolio of two previous committees was not only challenging but also demanded our total commitment together with considerable co-operation and support of the officers and staff as well as from States Member colleagues.

Whilst experiencing a difficult first six months we believe we made considerable progress setting out the general policy direction and moving towards the future organisational framework. By the end of the summer we had signalled several key achievements, notably the resolution of the most contentious Mont Orgueil planning application.

However, it was also during that period that a number of surprise developments came to light which, frankly, were not of our making.

My Committee inherited the responsibility for the public bus services and we have relied upon and worked with the documents and information with which we were provided. There are clearly some major issues which still have to be resolved, particularly in relation to the Public Service Bus contract. To this end we are grateful to the Policy and Resources Committee for agreeing to implement our decision and to lodge this morning the Projet establishing a public Committee of Inquiry into the matter as soon as possible.

There has been some criticism of what was portrayed as my reluctance to admit errors and apologise to this Assembly. I have apologised to the House and that apology was absolute in its sincerity. However, I wish to make it clear I have never knowingly misled the House and I am confident that the Committee of Inquiry will vindicate me in this. I am full of hope that any serious errors made and/or any deliberate mis-information provided by whomsoever will be exposed by this process. The truth must out; the truth will out.

As a Committee we have not shirked our responsibilities and we have endeavoured to deal with each of the many issues before us diligently and methodically. However, I accept that of the several hundred decisions required of us during our term of office we are bound to have made a few mistakes.

Since returning from the Christmas break, it has become very clear to us that, in the shadow of recent events, it is impossible for my Committee to properly undertake the duties expected of us by you our colleagues. Accordingly, I have given notice to the Bailiff, on behalf of the whole Committee, that we unanimously tender our resignation.

We also believe, with so many pressing issues to be addressed by the House, that it is in the best interest of good government that we should spare this Assembly the day or more of difficult and probably divisive debate that the proposed vote of no confidence would bring. It is my view that, in future, our time will be better spent together facing up to some of the critical challenges our Island presently must confront.

In conclusion, although we have tendered our resignation because we believe it to be in the best interests of the States of Jersey, we do so in the firm belief that we have conducted ourselves in a proper, decent and honourable manner, always having and putting the interests of our island community first, at heart and in mind.