

3.15 Deputy S. Pitman of H.M. Solicitor General regarding when H.M. Attorney General was first informed about Operation Blast

Would H.M. Solicitor General inform Members when, and how, the Attorney General was first informed about Operation Blast?

Mr. T.J. Le Cocq Q.C., H.M. Solicitor General:

I am not sure if the question has changed a little bit in form. I am answering the question as written and not the question as recently stated which appeared to be directed to me personally.

The Bailiff:

I think, as I understand it, you are answering the question on behalf of the Attorney General.

The Solicitor General:

The Attorney General is currently away from the Island appearing in the Privy Council and accordingly is unable to answer this question. He asked the Deputy to defer the question to the next sitting so that he could answer it but the Deputy has declined to do so. As the question is directed to the Attorney General personally and is about his state of knowledge, I cannot answer it for him. He has, however, copied to me an email that he sent to the Deputy as part of an exchange about whether or not the Deputy would agree to defer this question. In it, among other things, he said: "So let me be clear, neither the present Solicitor General nor I participated in any way in setting up of files by the police in Operation Blast. We were not aware of their existence or proposed existence before or during the time when they were set up and maintained. We were not consulted about them and during that time gave no permission or consent in relation to them and were not asked to do so. We were wholly unaware of them, in my case, until 4th April this year when the S.G. (Solicitor General) mentioned it to me." He also said this in his email that the former Solicitor General was out of the Island and that he had no reason to believe she knew anything about it either. I do not think I can assist the Assembly any more on the Attorney General's statement.

The Bailiff:

Yes, Deputy Le Claire.

3.15.1 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

Could I ask the Solicitor General when the Attorney General was first told of Operation Blast, in what manner was he told by the Solicitor General of the operation and what was the reason why the Attorney General was told at the time he was told?

The Solicitor General:

The question is directed to the Attorney General's state of knowledge. The answer is that he was told about it by me on 4th April. I am, however, not at liberty to go any further into the matter than that because obviously anything I know about the matter is subject to legal privilege and I cannot discuss that in these circumstances.

Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

I understand. Thank you.

The Bailiff:

I have seen other supplementary questions but may I just advise Members who are in the precinct that we will proceed to the ballot at 11.15 a.m. when the Question Time comes to an end and perhaps they would be kind enough to return to their seats if they wish to participate in the ballot. Deputy Tadier.

3.15.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Operation Blast, it would seem, should be very easy to resolve because it seems that nobody set the files up and nobody knows anything about them, so it should be an open and shut case. But the question I would ask if the Solicitor General is in a position to answer, is he aware if any socially or politically prominent non-States Members have also had files on them?

The Solicitor General:

I have no information about that. Even if I had information, I would not be at liberty to reveal it to the Assembly for the reason I have previously articulated: that of legal professional privilege.

3.15.3 Deputy S. Pitman:

If such files were set up in the interests of national security for the Island, who would authorise this?

The Solicitor General:

I am afraid I do not know the answer to that which is, after all, a hypothetical question. What I can say to the Assembly is that neither the Attorney General nor the Solicitor General have any authority in connection with the setting up of police files.