

2.2 Senator B.E. Shenton of the Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding an examination of the circumstances of the debate on P.144/2006 - “Committee of Inquiry: mobile telecommunications”:

The debate on P.144/2006 on 22nd November 2006 was described by one member as the worst debate he could remember during his 16 years in the States. Will the Committee agree to look into the circumstances of the debate to ascertain whether criticisms made at the end of the debate were justified and whether lessons can be learned for the future?

Connétable D.F. Gray of St. Clement (Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee):

Any proposition made by a Member that conforms to Standing Orders - and that is a matter for the Presiding Officer to decide - has to be debated. During the debate on P.144/2006, Deputy Duhamel asked, in accordance with Standing Order 79, that the matter be referred to a Scrutiny Panel. A debate on this proposition followed. It is mainly this debate that brought forward some criticism, although the significant time spent after the lunch adjournment debating whether or not to allow Deputy Ryan to withdraw the proposition was also, I understand, seen by some Members as a waste of time. I am aware that the Presiding Officer did try on a number of occasions to steer Members back to the subject of these debates, but the Chair found this a very difficult task. P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) is quite prepared to place any issue brought forward by a Member on its agenda but finds the request made by Senator Shenton would be outside its remit. Its role in this instance would be limited to making sure that the formal procedures of the States worked properly. Once a proposition has been accepted, then the conduct of the debate is in the hands of the Presiding Officer. P.P.C. would nevertheless like to disassociate itself from any criticism made at the end of the debate of the way it had been handled by the Presiding Officer and state that it feels that in the circumstances he handled the debate well.

2.2.1 Senator B.E. Shenton:

I am going to get a lot of support here, am I not? I do not believe that there has ever been any circumstances where debates have been analysed, either independently or by P.P.C. Would P.P.C. have any objection to the debate being reported and passed to P.P.C. by myself, looking at the debate and how it went?

The Connétable of St. Clement:

I am not certain what the P.P.C. is supposed to be doing, analysing the debate. I do not quite understand what analysing the debate means, Sir.

The Bailiff:

I think the question was whether the P.P.C. had any objection to Senator Shenton providing his own analysis of the debate and passing it to your Committee.

The Connétable of St. Clement:

None at all, Sir.