

2.7 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of the Chief Minister regarding the victims of historical abuse committed whilst in the States' care:

Will the Chief Minister apologise unreservedly to the victims of historical abuse committed while in the States care and reaffirm his commitment to support the police wholeheartedly in their pursuit of bringing the guilty to justice as soon as possible?

Senator F.H. Walker (The Chief Minister):

I have from the outset of the child abuse inquiry expressed my deepest sympathy and support for victims of child abuse and I do so again today. However, I understand that possible claims for compensation are being pursued and I am advised that in the public interest no further comment can be made at this stage. I can positively reaffirm my commitment and that of the Council of Ministers to support the police wholeheartedly in their pursuit of bringing those guilty to justice as soon as possible.

2.7.1 Senator S. Syvret:

The Chief Minister said he had received legal advice about this. Could he explain where that legal advice has come from?

Senator F.H. Walker:

I think that is very simple. The legal advice has come from the States legal advisers.

2.7.2 Senator S. Syvret:

To be clear that is the Law Officers' Department, is it?

Senator F.H. Walker:

Indeed so, Sir.

2.7.3 Senator S. Syvret:

So the prosecution service is advising the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers on how best to avoid possible compensation claims?

Senator F.H. Walker:

No, Sir, that is not the case. I have been advised by the law officers that no further comment can be made at this stage but the Council of Ministers will shortly be engaging their own legal advisers outside the States Law Officers' Department to advise us on how best to deal with any possible compensation claims.

2.7.4 Deputy G.P. Southern:

Does the Minister not accept that there has been a conflict of interest with the dual roles of the Law Officers' Department in this matter thus far?

Senator F.H. Walker:

No, Sir, I do not.

2.7.5 Deputy R.G. Le Hérisier:

Can the Chief Minister confirm, Sir, that the offering of an apology is totally separate from the issue of compensation? The 2 issues are not linked.

Senator F.H. Walker:

No, Sir, I wish that were the case but indeed it is not necessarily the case, and I have to take the advice I have been given.