

## **2.8 Deputy S. Power of the Assistant Minister for Home Affairs regarding the appropriateness of comments made by the Deputy Chief of Police at a press conference on 23rd February 2008:**

In view of the forensic opinions as to the nature of the alleged fragment of skull found at Haut de la Garenne, does the Assistant Minister still maintain the view that the comments made by the Deputy Chief of Police at a press conference on 23rd February were appropriate?

### **Deputy A.D. Lewis of St. John (Assistant Minister for Home Affairs):**

The Minister has asked the Chief Officer of the States of Jersey Police for a written report which will cover information conveyed to the media. The report has been prepared but as yet not been reviewed and signed-off by the Chief of Police. Once he has done so and I have had the opportunity to consider the report myself and taken any appropriate advice from the Law Officers, I will issue a statement. I acknowledge the need to expedite this matter to report back to the House on or before the next sitting.

### **2.8.1 Senator J.L. Perchard:**

The Assistant Minister specifically said that the Minister has asked for a report on the information that has been conveyed to the media. Will the report include information that has been provided to the Minister herself and to other States Members?

#### **The Deputy of St. John:**

Yes, I will.

### **2.8.2 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

Would the Assistant Minister tell us, given that he now has oversight, what are the precise checks and balances that exist in order to keep a major investigation on-track?

#### **The Deputy of St. John:**

I think what the Deputy is getting at here is accountability of the police and, yes, the police are accountable through normal procedures, through contractual procedures. The senior officers in the States of Jersey Police have contracts of employment which they have to abide by. There is also the Police Complaints Authority as well, and we also have an independent committee of individuals that are taking oversight of the investigation as well, which the Members will be aware of. We also have the A.C.P.O (Association of Chief Police Officers) having oversight of the investigation and they have recently cited the investigation as an excellent demonstration of best practice in policing investigations.

### **2.8.3 Deputy R.G. Le Hérissier:**

I wonder if the Assistant Minister could outline his precise role in this very impressive array of accountability methods he has just put to the House.

#### **The Deputy of St. John:**

The Chief of Police is also accountable to the Minister and in the absence of the Minister in this particular investigation he will be accountable to me.

### **2.8.4 The Deputy of St. Martin:**

Could I ask the Assistant Minister how frequently does he meet with the Deputy Chief Police Officer to ensure that there is an adequate reporting from the political point of view?

#### **The Deputy of St. John:**

I meet both with the Deputy Chief and the Chief Officer on a bi-weekly basis, which is scheduled. Quite often we also meet weekly, depending on the workload at the time, and - if the Deputy is particularly interested - I spent many hours with the Deputy Police Chief yesterday.

### **2.8.5 Senator S. Syvret:**

Could the Assistant Minister inform me if he is aware of any other democratic societies where the politicians responsible for child protection would be attacking and criticising the police investigation into child abuse?

#### **The Deputy of St. John:**

I, like the Senator, was disappointed in some of the comments that Senator Shenton has made but I can understand his frustrations and the reason why he may have made them, as have other Members, Sir.

#### **Senator B.E. Shenton:**

What comments have I made, please?

#### **The Deputy of St. John:**

It was well reported in the press, I am not going to go into details now. But I would urge all Members...

#### **Senator B.E. Shenton:**

I have not made any public comments apart to apologise to Mr. Harper for a leaked e-mail. I have made no other comments to the press.

#### **The Deputy of St. John:**

I would urge all Members to refrain making the types of comments that the Senator is alluding to. It does not help the investigation; it does not help the reputation of this Government; and it does not help the reputation of the Island. I would urge Members not to make the sort of comments that the Senator is suggesting.