

**2.8 Senator S. Syvret of the Minister for Education, Sport and Culture regarding the number of present or former Education, Sport and Culture Department employees known to be under investigation by the police in connection with possible child protection offences:**

I did understand that the Standing Order said unless it was absolutely necessary but, nevertheless, it is not my intention to name anybody. Will the Minister inform the Assembly of the number of present or former Education, Sport and Culture Department employees who are known by him to be under investigation by the police or who have been under such investigation in connection with possible child protection offences?

**Senator M.E. Vibert (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):**

I am not in a position to confirm or deny if any present or former E.S.C. (Education, Sport and Culture) employees either are or have been under investigation by the police as the police inquiry into possible child protection offences is currently in progress.

**2.8.1 Senator S. Syvret:**

A supplementary, Sir. The answer given by the Minister is completely inadequate. There is no reason whatsoever why he should not and could not state whether there was any quantity of E.S.C. employees under investigation currently or who have been under investigation. This is quite plainly a matter of very significant public interest and we need only look at the Social Services disasters in the United Kingdom to see just how important these issues are. There is simply no reason why the Minister will not give the figures. Will he give them?

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

No. As an employer, the States of Jersey as a matter of policy does not divulge publicly details of individual employees. Not only is this a matter of good practice. The States Employment Board has contractual obligations of duty of care and mutual trust and confidence to our employees. I am also informed - and I did check this out with the States of Jersey Police - that my answer is regarded as entirely proper and accurate by the States of Jersey Police as the investigation into possible child protection offences is ongoing.

**2.8.2 Senator S. Syvret:**

A further supplementary. Yes, I am not at all surprised that the new management of the police force should take that view. Does the Minister for E.S.C. not accept that as well as a duty of care, as he puts it, to States employees, the States has a vastly higher and more significant duty of care to the community we are here to represent and especially vulnerable members of that community such as children?

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

Yes, I do. I do believe the States has an ultimate duty of care to the community and in particular vulnerable people in the community which is why the States of Jersey police investigation should be allowed to continue without any political interference whatsoever.

**2.8.3 Deputy S. Power:**

Would the Minister agree with me that the naming of public officials on certain blogs on the Island is a form of cyber-stalking and that these officers are presumed innocent until found otherwise?

**Senator M.E. Vibert:**

I believe everybody should be innocent until found otherwise. I certainly disapprove in the strongest terms of the naming of people without an opportunity to reply on blogs. I regard it as the worst form of bullying [Approbation].

**Senator S. Syvret:**

Could I just say those who I have named on my blog are welcome to submit responses?

**The Bailiff:**

That is not a supplementary question, Senator.