

3.3 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire of St. Helier of the Minister for Home Affairs regarding the purpose of files kept on States Members:

Can I ask the Minister if he would inform Members of the precise purpose why files were kept on States Members and if it was merely for the purposes of administration in order that they would know who to call in the event of an issue, would the Minister state how much has the operation cost and why it was given an operational name?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand (The Minister for Home Affairs):

I think the essential part of the question which I understand from Deputy Le Claire is really a question as to whether the purpose of the files was purely to provide contact details. That does not appear to be so. I would have thought if you wanted contact details of a person you would not normally also have a full criminal check on them at the same time. In relation to the other aspects of the question, these are all matters which are currently under investigation and I am not going to speculate in relation to them until I see the result of the investigation.

3.3.1 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

A supplementary if I could, Sir? Given that the Minister has known about this since April, I appreciate he is allowing for the investigation to take its course. Surely from the oversight procedure he must at least have some inkling as to what the cost of this has been. That would give Members an inkling as to what has been going on because contrary to suggestions that have been made by some Members, I also find it remarkable. Would he not agree that this premise that they were doing it to keep a record of people's names is laughable because they could have gone to the front of the phonebook for that?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

Yes, I agree that to keep this for the purpose of keeping of names and contact addresses, that that suggestion is absolutely laughable. In relation to costing, I have slight difficulty in that, so far everybody who has spoken about this matter denies knowing about it. [Laughter] So it is difficult to work out costs on anything when everybody denies knowing about it.

3.3.2 Deputy P.J. Rondel of St. John:

Can the Minister confirm that the C.E.O. (Chief Executive Officer) of the States was fully aware of these files and, if so, will he be taking action to suspend any officers that may be ...

The Bailiff:

Deputy, I am going to disallow that question because it is a question that is going to be put in a few moments time.

The Deputy of St. John:

Cutting my legs off again, Sir.

The Connétable of Grouville:

[Telephone rings][Members: Oh!] I am relieved, Sir, it was the Deputy of St. Mary. I thought I was getting a reaction.

The Bailiff:

A customary fine to the Greffier, please, Deputy.

3.3.3 The Connétable of Grouville:

Since the one sure thing that is going to happen about these files is that eventually they will be leaked, would the Minister consider opening them up to the press and the public and letting us see exactly what is in there officially so that whatever action needs to be taken can be taken?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

I do not accept that the contents of these files will be leaked. They are being kept securely by the States of Jersey Police. It would be totally inappropriate to open matters up which could include very sensitive information resulting from information provided from the U.K. (United Kingdom) and other security services.

3.3.4 Deputy P.V.F. Le Claire:

I understand the Minister's difficulty in that nobody is admitting knowledge of these files. I would like to ask him if I could then how much has the inquiry cost so far into trying to find out who does not know about it?

Senator B.I. Le Marquand:

It has not cost anything so far because it is only just about to begin. I have had to go through various processes prior to moving towards an inquiry. There were difficult issues as to precisely what form the inquiry would make because there are a number of different aspects which need to be inquired into.