

4.5 Deputy T.M. Pitman of St. Helier of the Attorney General regarding the actions of H.M. Attorney General in relation to the prosecution and conviction of Mr. Claude Wateridge:

Given the recent successful prosecution and conviction of Mr. Claude Wateridge, relating to the historic abuse investigation, will the Attorney General please advise the Assembly whether he attempted to prevent charges being brought against Mr. Wateridge on the basis of insufficient evidence?

Mr. T.J. Le Cocq Q.C., H.M. Solicitor General (Rapporteur):

The Law Officers do not generally discuss individual prosecution decisions. There are sound policy reasons for this and neither the Attorney General nor I propose to depart from that policy unless it appears to us that there is a compelling reason to do so. The Attorney General is, in fact, currently away from the Island and this question is really directed toward him, as it refers to his actions at a time before I was in office. I have, however, discussed this with the Attorney General and in the light of the misinformation that has been generated in some quarters about the subject of this question, which touches on the competence and integrity of the Attorney General, he has asked me to advise the Assembly that he certainly did not seek to prevent charges being brought against Wateridge. Indeed, he was informed of the fact that charges had been brought while he was away from the Island on leave. He has asked me to confirm that he played no part in the charging decision itself. It is a matter of sadness to him that for some agenda or purposes of their own, some individuals have, without foundation, put forward the suggestion that the Attorney did act in the way the Deputy describes in his question.

4.5.1 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I thank the Solicitor General for his answer. Nevertheless, and I acknowledge the answer given by the Attorney General in a related matter on a written question of mine, but does the Solicitor General recognise the severe and damaging impact that such hugely different recollections of events are having on the victims of the historic abuse inquiry and has he any ideas on what we can do to overcome this?

The Solicitor General:

In terms of the answer, I do not think I can go further than that which I have already said on the Attorney General's behalf. This is not something that was in my direct knowledge. It is something that is within the direct knowledge of the Attorney General and he has passed on the answer to that through me. Consequently, I cannot, I think, comment on any contradiction between that answer and statements that might be made in any other place.

4.5.2 Senator S. Syvret:

I listened very carefully to the answer and the account of events that the Solicitor General has relayed to the Assembly, having spoken to the Attorney General. Can the Solicitor General then confidently inform the Assembly that, in fact, there would be no evidence to the contrary of the Attorney General's account of events such as, for example, emails or anything of that nature?

The Solicitor General:

I cannot, again, go beyond the question answered. I am aware of no such.