

4.14 Deputy M. Tadier of the Chairman of the Privileges and Procedures Committee regarding complaints made against Senator J.L. Perchard in R.66/2010:

Following the Privileges and Procedures Committee decision to uphold complaints made against Senator Perchard in R.66/2010, will the Chairman advise Members whether she is satisfied about what he told the Committee about whether his comments were specific to one individual or simply general comments, were consistent with the remarks he made on the radio, and if not does she consider that he misled the Committee and the public?

The Connétable of St. Mary (Chairman, Privileges and Procedures Committee):

As Deputy Tadier points out, the Committee investigated the complaints made against Senator Perchard and reported its findings to the States on 2nd June 2010. Any comment that I would wish to make in respect to the Committee's decision is contained within that report. The matter is now closed and it would be entirely inappropriate and unnecessary to debate the constancy of the Senator's remarks on the floor of this Assembly.

4.14.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

I disagree with the last statement of the Chairman. It is entirely appropriate given that this is a document which has been received in which there appears to be a blatant contradiction, and I will read what that contradiction is so I can ask my supplementary question. On the one hand on the radio and I quote, the Senator said after his unfortunate comments about too much time on your hands; that is a good one, Senator: "I was not talking about everybody that is unemployed or people on invalidity benefit, I was talking about X." We will leave the name out there but yet the Committee has noted that in his defence he said that it would be beneficial for many people who are unemployed or on benefits to find work and that he meant that comment generally and he stood by it. So there is an apparent contradiction, on the one hand saying that he was not talking generally he was only talking about one individual but yet when he comes to the Committee his defence is that he was talking in general terms and not attacking the individual. Interestingly, the Chairman has already noted this. How does the Chairman marry this contradiction, and again does this mean that the Senator has been misleading either the public or the Committee?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

It seems to me strange, as Deputy Tadier was on P.P.C. (Privileges and Procedures Committee) for some time that he does not realise that the report presented to the States represents a summary of the Committee's considerations and not a verbatim account of detailed deliberations. As I have said previously, the matter is now closed but I have re-read the report including the sections the Deputy mentioned and having re-read them I find nothing to suggest that the Committee was misled in any way, because also contained in that report is a note of the fact the Committee noted exactly the paragraphs that Deputy Tadier said, and also noted that Senator Perchard went on to say he had not been making a general comment about unemployed persons but his comments were directed specifically at one individual. Having noted that in the report I cannot understand how the Committee can have been misled in any way.

4.14.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Okay, so I am guessing from the answer that the Chairman is saying that the Senator did not mislead the Committee, rather he misled the public because it cannot be both

ways. If you have it on the one hand he says when confronted on the radio saying: “No, I did not mean the comment generally, I just meant it about Mr. X” but when he comes to P.P.C. he says: “No, I did not mean the comment about Mr. X, I meant it in general.” It cannot be both ways. Does the Chairman surely not see that, and if not perhaps ... well does the Chairman not see that?

The Connétable of St. Mary:

I can see that Deputy Tadier is picking and choosing comments he wishes to say from the report. The report must be taken as a whole. I would repeat that the Committee considered the complaint in accordance with Standing Orders, the report stands on its own merit and, as I said, I have re-read the report in order to prepare for this. I would suggest that Deputy Tadier might like to do the same. I do not see any substantiation of what his line of questioning detailed in the report.

[11:45]