

2.7 Deputy T.M. Pitman of the Chief Minister regarding the Historic Child Abuse inquiry terms of reference:

In view of concerns raised by a number of States Members and stakeholders, will the Chief Minister ensure that the issues of both the police handover of investigations and the actions of those in political power will be fully covered in the Historic Child Abuse Inquiry terms of reference?

Senator I.J. Gorst (The Chief Minister):

The Deputy is aware that I have received correspondence from a number of stakeholders, including himself, asking that the terms of reference be extended. I have confirmed to those stakeholders that I will consult with Verita and the Council of Ministers before making any decision.

2.7.1 Deputy T.M. Pitman:

I thank the Chief Minister for his answer. Could he give us some indication of when we are likely to get an answer because some of those stakeholders are deeply concerned, as I think the Chief Minister will fully acknowledge?

Senator I.J. Gorst:

It will indeed take some time. I will need to understand when Verita can respond to me and I will also probably need to request a special sitting of the Council of Ministers. However, I have indicated that should the answer be in the negative or should we not be able to meet all those requests, then I would be prepared to defer the debate so that those stakeholders could bring amendments.

2.7.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

Does the Chief Minister realise that the stakeholders and we States Members who have been actively seeking amendments do not want the debate to be deferred? We simply want the Chief Minister to sit down with us in the earliest possible course - I know he is busy - hopefully before Christmas though, so that we can agree whether the Chief Minister will accept these amendments and if not, we can put them in without delaying this very important debate which has been delayed too long already.

Senator I.J. Gorst:

It seems this morning I cannot quite get it right. The Plémont proposition, it seems that Members wish I had brought in the name of the Council of Ministers. Now that I have brought a proposition which I think is rightly brought in the name of the Council of Ministers, Members are wishing it was brought in my name so they could simply sit down with me and we could change the terms of reference. It is rightly brought in the Council of Ministers' name. It shows that the Council of Ministers are supportive of a Committee of Inquiry and as Members know, that is, I think, the right thing to do. Therefore, if there are to be any changes, it is the Council of Ministers which must consider them.

2.7.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

I feel that the Chief Minister is being disingenuous. No one is commenting on the fact that this proposition should not be brought by the Council of Ministers; that is understood. But the Chief Minister knows himself that in the past, whenever there have been talks on this, either formal or informal, it has always been conducted directly with him and his Chief Officer, never with the Council of Ministers. I do not see any reason for any departure from that, although I am happy to talk with the whole Council of Ministers if he invites that. Would the Chief Minister explain why he needs to go back to Verita when quite simply we are asking for amendments which Verita had already recommended for the most part to be in there? They have now been removed. There is no need to stall this by going back to Verita for their comments. It is a very simple

issue which the Chief Minister can do by sitting and talking to us or even email correspondence so that we can get this in before Christmas without delaying the debate any further. Will the Chief Minister agree to that reasonable request?

Senator I.J. Gorst:

I am always happy to meet but that caveat remains that it is a Council of Ministers proposition and therefore the Council of Ministers needs to agree to any changes to the terms of reference.

The Bailiff:

Deputy Pitman, do you wish the final question?

Deputy T.M. Pitman:

No, Sir. Deputy Tadier's was so long and involved and very, very elegant so I will leave it at that.