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4.3 DEPUTY P.D. MCLINTON OF THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE REGARDING THE FOUNDATION OF A SPECIALIST UNIVERSITY IN JERSEY FOCUSING ON AGRICULTURE:

I hope to light the Chamber up, as it were, for your attention with this question. Given that the Island has expertise in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, finance and the hospitality industry, among others, and following the recent Tera Allas review, which alluded to innovation and economic growth being closely linked to the existence of a university in situ, would the Minister give consideration to the foundation of a specialist university in Jersey focusing on the Island's aforementioned skills and if not, why not?

Deputy R.G. Bryans (The Minister for Education, Sport and Culture):

I too, like the Deputy, hope the Assembly lights up with this answer as much as the question. I think this already exists to a large extent in Jersey. The innovation report recognised that a lot of good practice is already happening in education in Jersey. We have what I call - and have mentioned it because the same question arose at the I.o.D. (Institute of Directors) debate - Campus Jersey, which comprises of Highlands College, the Jersey Business School and the Institute of Law already delivering on-Island degrees, along with a nursing area providing degrees, I think, to the last ... the last number was 18 nurses. University College Jersey is the new brand name for the higher education provision at Highlands College. It currently delivers specialist degrees in 9 disciplines focusing on developing the skills that the employers need. From the beginning these degrees have been designed in partnership with local employers to ensure the graduate subskills required by industry. This process is ongoing. The first degrees are: business and management, financial services, information technology, sport and management, childhood studies, social sciences, art and design, construction management, architectural technology. There are some MSc.s (Master of Science) in construction management and human resources, and a Masters in business administration.

4.3.1 Deputy P.D. McLinton:

If it looks like a university and sounds like a university have we not already got a university and if not, why not? Can we not expand it? At the recent excellent I.o.D. health and education debate the Director of Education said that a considerable number of our young people leave school and do not go to university because perhaps what we have over here is not for them. Therefore they miss out on a large chunk of their personal development and their potential. With the Minister's very own expression "leave no child behind" in mind, are we not in danger in certain areas of industries we hold dear to our heart in this Island leaving children behind?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

To some extent the Deputy is right. We are always looking at this particular question to see what provision we could do. In fact with the new head of Highlands that is his intention, is to increase the number of degree courses that we have. Members may not be aware we recently established ... I say "we recently established", private enterprise has recently established a farm school. So there are people understanding our needs and responding to them. In fact, I will be organising a meeting with current providers to see how we can progress wider provision. On that note, I have been instrumental in helping Jersey International Business School to include a new module on design thinking. So it is constantly under our attention but in the current economic climate I would say there is little prospect of a new separate university, but the debate about this continues.

4.3.2 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

Is the Minister and his department aware that yesterday the University of Gibraltar was opened in a territory which has only 30,000 people? If he is aware of that, does he believe that that could potentially provide a model for a fully-fledged university providing the full student experience to

help nurture personal development, as Deputy McLinton suggested? If he is not aware of that would he agree to look at the example that is being set by the University of Gibraltar and come back to the Assembly with his observations on it?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Thank you to the Deputy, because, no, I was not aware of that. I will have a look at it and I will come back to the Assembly.

4.3.3 Deputy M. Tadier:

Could the Minister state whether he works at all or closely with J.I.C.A.S. (Jersey International Centre for Advanced Studies) which only last year brought over esteemed speakers as diverse as John Redwood and video-linked with Noam Chomsky as part of the Branchage Fringe? If so, can he state whether that institution receives any funding and if not, why not?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

I am aware of J.I.C.A.S. and I support what they are trying to do. They do not receive funding from us. It is a private enterprise and I have no further comment.

4.3.4 Deputy L.M.C. Doublet:

Has the Minister considered any perhaps more creative or alternative models of providing university education in Jersey that might be more low cost, such as perhaps using video-streaming so that students can watch lectures online and maybe perhaps just providing the infrastructure and the tutoring here in Jersey for a lower cost model?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

That does provide me with the opportunity to mention one thing I missed, which is I do feel there is currently one gap missing in what we have to offer here on the Island, which would be a digital university. So I know it is possibly under or it is probably under Digital Jersey's remit to encourage what the Deputy has just described.

4.3.5 Deputy A.D. Lewis of St. Helier:

Deputy Mézec got in before I did on the Gibraltar question, which I was going to raise with the Minister. However I did meet with the Vice Chancellor of the Gibraltar University a few weeks ago and I think they would be very open to dialogue with Jersey to share ideas. I would like to know if the Minister is prepared to do that. Also has he looked at other small jurisdictions that have done similar? Malta is a very good model to look at as well. I wonder if the Minister would take it upon himself to look at small jurisdictions that have created successful universities and see if the model would work in Jersey because what it has done is help those economies significantly in growing as a result of growing local talent.

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Two things: first of all I would be very pleased to meet with the Gibraltar Minister. I have already been to Malta to have a look at that very small jurisdiction provision and was astounded to see that the provision was really based upon private enterprise. Particularly I was interested in looking at the University of I.T. (Information Technology) which was started by one individual who felt he was the person to run it so people with passion and creativity and innovation are the ones that are driving this. But I will take that on board.

4.3.6 Deputy P.D. McLinton:

Bearing in mind the amazing work that is already done over here, and I applaud everybody who is involved in the teaching of any degree course over here, and bearing in mind we have the foundations of a university here; Gibraltar can do it, Malta can do it. Will the Minister consider asking his department to look at the pros and cons, talk to all these people, of establishing the seed of a Jersey

university so that it can grow, let us know via a presentation what effects economically, educationally and socially this will have on the Island and its young people and make sure that we leave no child behind?

Deputy R.G. Bryans:

Part of the meeting yesterday with the senior management team was a discussion about providing all of the Assembly Members with a clear understanding of the kind of provision that we already provide here in Jersey and what we would be looking to do in the future. So I welcome his suggestion.

The Deputy Bailiff:

Before moving on to the next question I can announce the results of the ballot for the members of the Bailiff's Consultative Panel. The number of votes cast for each candidate was as follows: Deputy Martin 35 votes; Deputy of Grouville 32 votes; the Connétable of St. Lawrence 31 votes, Senator Farnham 25 votes, Senator Ozouf 24 votes, Deputy Mézec 22 votes. Accordingly Deputy Martin, the Deputy of Grouville, the Connétable of St. Lawrence, Senator Farnham and Senator Ozouf are appointed to the panel. **[Approbation]**