

2.11 The Deputy of St. Martin of the Deputy Chief Minister regarding the advice and training given to States employees on the Human Rights (Jersey) Law 2000: February 2nd 2010

Will the Chief Minister advise Members what advice and training, if any, is given to States employees and newly-appointed States employees, in particular, on the Human Rights (Jersey) Law 2000; what the current budget for the promotion of Jersey human rights obligation is; and whether there are any plans to increase the funding for that activity?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf (Deputy Chief Minister - rapporteur):

It feels like the hot seat, Sir. The Deputy of St. Martin asked a similar question in February 2009 to which information was given demonstrating the significant resources that were expended on staff training when the Human Rights Law was introduced. I have asked for a copy of that answer to be distributed for Member's information. A booklet and video was produced as training aides and ongoing management training is provided which addresses issues of fairness in dealing with the staff and the public sector. While there is no specific budget for training for the Human Rights Law, the principles of the law and how it is applied in different roles are, and should be, embedded in policy and procedures and training throughout the States of Jersey. Those policies and procedures include matters specifically in relation to the Human Rights Law.

The Deputy of St. Martin:

I did not get the answer to the question I posed. I want to know really what budget ... would the Minister inform Members what budget has been allowed for and is there likely to be an increased budget for training?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I know the Deputy cares a great deal about human rights and what I would say to him is that it is almost encouraging that there is not a specific budget for human rights, education and training. Just as the Minister for Planning and Environment tells us that Environment should be at the heart of everything we do, so human rights should be at the heart of everything that the public sector do and should have a wide-ranging understanding. Certainly, the Council of Ministers was briefed by the Attorney General - his predecessor in fact - in relation to human rights. There has been a workshop which was also put on by the former Attorney General. I think that human rights knowledge and awareness is much greater than it was a number of years ago and should be at the heart of everything that we do.

2.11.1 Deputy M. Tadier:

I almost did not blink there to hear that the Minister for Treasury and Resources say that human rights is so important that we should not have funding for it, because presumably he will acknowledge that it is such a specialist area that it does need a specialist funding stream as well. Is that not the case?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I did not say that there should not be a specific funding. I said that it should be at the heart of a lot of the department administrative functions that they carry out. Whether it is in relation to Home Affairs, in relation to Health, in relation to Housing, *et cetera*. Human rights cannot be simply put into one single box, it is at the heart of many

decisions within public administration and to bring out a budget for it, in an identified sense, would be inappropriate and almost sideline it.

2.11.2 Deputy M. Tadier:

I would simply suggest that having a central body that would look specifically at human rights, which other departments could draw on, would be a benefit and I would ask the Minister if he agrees with that and to consider that.

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

Human rights is the responsibility - or should be - of every department working group, every States department and every public sector employee. So it is much wider than just simply having one budget with one person who exercises it. It is like what I say about financial management, it should be something that everybody is responsible for and human rights is the same.

2.11.3 The Deputy of St. Martin:

I think it is very helpful that the Minister has circulated the question that was asked last time because Members can see how little has been done from my question of last year. Could I ask the Minister then; a human rights working group was established in 2000 for the purpose of making everyone aware of it but it was dissolved in 2002. I would have thought that working party was probably a set of willing volunteers. Would the Minister not consider about re-establishing a working group, maybe from a cross-section, maybe States Members, or indeed States employees, so there would be some central body in line with what Deputy Tadier was talking about? Would he reconsider establishing that working group?

Senator P.F.C. Ozouf:

I am happy to take that up with the Chief Minister on his return. I would say to the Deputy that I think that a great deal has been done since 2000 when the working group clearly had a job of work to raise the basic understanding of human rights. The human rights seminar that the Attorney General carried out last year is an example of widespread understanding and a deeper understanding and a raising of the level of debate on human rights issues. Perhaps it is also something that Scrutiny could look at if they deem that this is something that should require resources from Scrutiny.