

L-Atti tal-Inkjesta datata 19 ta' Novembru 2019, rigward skont it-Termini ta' Referenza ta' l-Inkjesta Pubblika dwar l-Assassinju ta' Daphne Caruana Galizia.

Seduta mizmuma llum it-Tnejn 9 ta' Marzu 2020, fis-2:30 p.m. fit-Tieni Sular, Awla 20, il-Qorti.

Xhud **Corinne Vella** ri-prodotta, bil-lingwa Ingliza u bil-gurament taghha tghid :

Dr Therese Comodini Cachia :

... just explain what the dossier is about.

Judge A Lofaro :

Is it about the next witness?

The Witness :

Its about the next witness.

Chairman Judge M Mallia :

What is it exactly that you are filing there?

The Witness :

This is a document which I prepared as in the previous occasion relating to the witness used speaking today Reuben Sciberras. It's basically information from the public domain which is accessible to everybody. It lists information about where he has worked within the government system. Some of his public posts relating to Daphne; some of his public post relating to politics. And some notes which I made about areas he may be able to comment on, because he given that he worked as a journalist as the ... in an interview host on ONE TV and on radio. He also work as communications coordinator at the Ministry of Tourism; he was ..

Judge A Lofaro :

Still till today? Till today?

The Witness :

On TV and radio?

Judge A Lofaro :

Yes.

The Witness :

It was fairly recent; I don't have the exact dates; he should be able to confirm that himself because this is sort of thing people in and out of quite frequently. But his position as communications coordinator within the Ministry of Tourism, the Ministry of Social Dialog Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties. He was then Head of Secretariat at the Office of Prime Minister's, currently Head of Secretariat of the Minister of Tourism. So there all are positions in which he has a lot of contact in the media; he also came from the media himself. And his position in the Minister for Civil Liberties is particularly relevant because that is the Ministry that dealt with gender issues and one would presume Civil Liberties would also cover free expression. I haven't found any evidence that the Ministry actually did take any action to safeguard free expression, generally nor particularly in Daphne's case. I am not sure whether that is relevant today, but he may have information to hand that might be relevant.

The political post I thought relevant because the early election in 2017 was one of the running teams of Daphne's writing. She often raised the question why was the election held early; we should be asking a question it came up frequently; she had some post specifically on the subject, but it was a recurrent team.

Judge A Lofaro :

Did he comment about that?

The Witness :

He didn't comment about that, but the official reason for the early election is that the turbulent or disturbance that Daphne caused with her own reporting. The particular post that cause such disturbance was ostensibly the one mentioning Michelle Muscat's name on a declaration of trust at Pilatus Bank. That was on the 20th of April. On the 1st of April a campaign the election was announced and a campaign was lounged fully equipped with all the PR collateral online and offline. Given that the publication on the 20th of April was ostensibly unexpected in the report about the declarations of trust, you are talking about a government scrambling to make sense of the situation and then suddenly deciding a snap election is solution; and then gathering the resources together to actually organize a political campaign that launches on the 1st of May. People can do wonderful things with communications especially when you've got electronic media to deal with, but it's very unlikely that all of that could have been organized in 10 days in the turbulence. There is other

references that suggest that the early election had already been planned; but that perhaps is then outside when she ... the main. What I am coming to is this; he had 3 posts on the 1st of May on facebook; bearing the electoral campaign slogan 'L-Aqwa Zmien', and they are in the standard format of what we is now familiar; which is this.

They came into his position on the day the election was announced. Of courses these things can be done very quickly, but they might had been awareness beforehand that an election was planned anyway. He can't answer for the entire government..

Judge A Lofaro :

No.

The Witness :

But he may be able to answer of his own posts. And there was another campaign which also implied an election was due, it was called 4 years of firsts. It was hashed tag. He also had some posts on that subject. That was in March 2017. It seemed a bit unusual at the time given all that was happening here. Malta had to hold the counsel presidency of the European Counsel at that time. To actually have a fully-fledged campaign marking 4 years; but when you put it into context it look like a lead up to an election. Reuben Sciberras might be able to throw some lights on that.

Din hija s-sustanza tax-xhieda ta' **Corinne Vella** dettata minnha stess fil-prezenza ta' l-istess xhud.

Niddikjara li traskrivejt bl-ahjar hila tieghi x-xhieda ta' l-istess xhud.

Saviour Scicluna

Traskrittur