

**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 illum it-Erbgha 26 ta' Frar 2020, fis-2:00 p.m. fit-Tieni Sular, Awla 20, il-Qorti.**

***Judge Michael Mallia :***

**Petra Caruana Dingli** wife of Gordon, daughter of the late Tancred and Jutta nee` Zeidler, born and residing in Sliema states on oath in the English language.

***Chairman Imhallel M Mallia :***

So you were one of Daphne Caruana Galizia's friends. Can you describe the experience you shared with her which relate a public reaction to her style of writing and whatever?

***The Witness :***

We were friends for 25 - 30 years, and met regularly, she was a journalist rather at that time. She was always in the public eye; and over the last few years before she was killed definitely the public reaction to her and also her response her mood about that her certainly changed and had become much more tense. That's what you mean the last ..

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

Could you describe how you took this impression, I know it was not the impression, it was a fact, that she had become more tense. What would have caused this? Give the Board a few examples if you can.....; what of you know yourself obviously not..

***The Witness :***

Yes. Well, we used to meet regularly, we used to go out in public places regularly over many years. So we used to meet for coffees, for meals and so on, without any particular incident. Over the last years the last few years I mean I can say exactly how many before she was killed definitely when we went anywhere in public together there was a level of tension. She was recognized, she was observed and it did hamper in the sense her movements quite a bit and there was this awareness that she was in the public eye. People

recognize her so there was an issue always around that. So she couldn't really go around, completely unobserved but and obviously this last constrained then the way you interact with people and anything else. So we would go around and everything ... we would go to places; and also in the last years I mean the tension had become even worse by 2015 - 16 most definitely, and even I, when I went out with her we were photographed. The photographs ended up in the media. There was .. I was drawn into one of that as well into blogs and so on, social media, just simply by virtue of being her friend and going out with her around. So everyone around her as well was also a target I think most definitely because of the connection and not inverting myself, but I mean in terms of having being her friend that became an issue.

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

For the benefit of the Board; You yourself have a regular column in the media; at the time were you writing as well?

***The Witness :***

Of this incidence of these photographs?

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

Yes.

***The Witness :***

Yes I was writing. At that time I had the weekly column in the Sunday Times. I continued to write now so I was also.. it wasn't the first time that I myself had appeared in the media; and also in terms of know, there are always critics and one is relatively used to ... was used to be criticize. But I think by then I am talking about 2016 the attacks had changed because I think.. , and she felt herself when your adversary if you like your critic is your equal another journalist for example, another news paper journalist or other people that you can identify, the level of intimidation is one thing. When your adversary is no longer your equal but is then the government because then as also was in testimony last week there was a blog which was started and run from the hearth of government you can no longer gaged the shape and power and size of your adversary and of course that is much more intimidating, and she was able to continue her work. She wasn't intimidated to the point that she stop writing. She felt.., she continued, she was very driven with her work. But you cannot, but feel that type of pressure obviously I mean anybody would. So she did and everyone else did to who was around her.

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

Your reference to testimony of last week I take is the testimony given by Honourable Glenn Bedingfield, am I correct?

***The Witness :***

Yes. That was obviously that was a blog, one of the matters used to attack her in social media and else where, in the media in general; and in her view I mean it was Glenn Bedingfield but in her views and this she wrote it as well it was quite clearly a group of people and instigated and around the Prime Minister. So that was for her the adversary was there; I mean and the critics rather were; that was the critic. Not just one individual.

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

Can you give any example specifically of any appearances in the Honourable Glenn Bedingfield's Blog that you know about? Perhaps where you were involved as well.

***The Witness :***

Yes, well I was..., the first time I appeared on blog was in May 2016. We had gone out to lunch and there were couple.

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

'We' being yourself and Daphne ...

***The Witness :***

Daphne and I; we used to go regularly together and very often on our own. And we used to have lunch or have a coffee or what have you. We were in a restaurant in Valletta and there were 2 people on another table, 2 men who clearly were photographing us and filming and so on; and actually another guest at the restaurant had alerted us to this; and this send it up on the blog. And that photo then was repeatedly featured in several blogs over about a year. So it kept on coming back. Of course then there were other..., then I became an object of interest also because was part of the circle and continued to feature and happened also to other friends. So of course that creates a level of discomfort in meeting in public and so on.

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

Did Daphne ever express any sort of. I don't know, concern writing with you to you directly? I am sure she did

***The Witness :***

Concern about being a ..

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

About the sort of activity the sort of behaviour.

***The Witness :***

Well it's.., she was very aware of it. She wrote about it a number of times also, so she didn't like; and like I said the.. what I think upset her the most was not that she was being criticized or that she was featuring also in a negative way in social media or in the media because in a way she had been..this had been happening for a long time. But at this stage as I said before the adversary had changed; I mean this before there were blogs and things like that generally anonymous; but now it was in the open; so the fact that it was based also at the office of the Prime Minister was something which wasn't even being hidden. It was there, it was the aid of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was basically endorsing it by...to continue so that is in itself a threat that it is there. So she knew it was coming in a sense from that.

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

Without arithmetical certainty, approximately how often would you meet for this sort of lunch or coffee or ...

***The Witness :***

We used to meet regularly, we used to meet over many years; and say we started meeting we became friends when I was around 20 and she was a couple of years older and so over many many years. In the last years we used to meet for sort of one on one coffee chat, you know; so may be once every month or 6 weeks, that sort of thing, quite regularly; it depend what ..

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

And this atmosphere of .. how shall I put it being spied on, being pointed out in public, is this something you felt as well? I mean did you realize ...

***The Witness :***

Well once you start to feature then yes. I mean I myself wasn't then featured anywhere else. But obviously in her case yes, and then being something which is originating if you like within that environment of the office of the Prime minister obviously the whole.., its a whole machinery a whole government and the sort of supporters political supporters, and you know; as I say you can no longer gage the size, the shape or the power as well of your adversary in the press; its very different if another journalist is criticizing you because that is one journalist and another. But this was something completely different than; and that became much more public then of the last few years.

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

And unless the Board have any further questions

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

You would agree with me that Daphne was a very successful journalist, no?

***The Witness :***

Yes. She had a big ...

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

... do you agree with me that she was a contravention person?..

***The Witness :***

Yes.

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

Therefore there are persons who would pay her and there were persons who would ... her. Therefore being pointed out as a person nothing unusual. It could happen to me; I mean people know people don't know me. Would I be correct to say that the moment in time when you started .. rather she .... was when this scandal of Panama Papers came up?

***The Witness :***

I would say that I would personally notice her becoming more.

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

Worried?

***The Witness :***

Perhaps the atmosphere had changed. And there was more pressure on her. Two things which go inside it; on the one hand the story is that she was handling around 2015 - 16 became bigger. I think their significance was riskier, was bigger, and so there was that. And at the same time simultaneously the attacks on her were becoming more personally and also it was much more clear where they were originating from. So this was ..

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

The person who were.. you got the impression that you were being sort do hounded or whatever by persons in authority .....

***The Witness :***

Yes I have her own statements on this if you want me to read out anything. There are couple of shorts... which she makes herself on this. I mean that she is...

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

...the days of those. Just read them out.

***The Witness :***

Shall I?

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

Yes.

***The Witness :***

Where there is for example in .. this was around the same time; so this is May 2016, she. This was around the same time in fact when we had these photographs in the restaurant at that; and she..this is note .. she wrote in the Independent and when she wrote in the Independent the.. a bit different. So she says, I am just read some extracts which says this is.. about the blog specifically. She said Glenn Bedingfield is not a journalist, or any body who makes his living in the media. I am going to quote extracts here not the whole thing. And she mentions that he is in a position of trust and in the office of the Prime Minister in Joseph Muscat's private secretariat where he has been a communication's aid for the last 3 years. When he set-up a website which he uses to her as insult, .. and intimidate critics of the government he serves and other such "enemies of the state and the people", you should have been left in no doubt that he did it in consultation and conspiracy with the Prime Minister himself. It would have been impossible otherwise. Aid to the Prime Minister cannot take unilateral decisions of that nature. It would be madness as mad as being a company employee and setting up a website to be rude about the company's customers. So take it as read that Muscat is in on this; that he was onboard with Glenn Bedingfield's website from the GetGo and that he will even have suggested it himself. Glenn Bedingfield's website is the Prime Minister's own project. This is have you...; then she gives an example if you like ..

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

Your conclusions. What about the other one? That was the first; you had 2 you extracts you said

***The Witness :***

It's in the same article. She gives an example here. She said Bedingfield criticize a judge the other day; he was advised to do it because the Judge in question is a respectable woman with no black marks anywhere in her private professional or public life. His remarks went down very badly and provoked an angry statement by the chamber of advocates and another one by the opposition leader. Bedingfield and his internet roles tried to make out that the chamber has employed two weights and two measures because when I criticized a magistrate on my website the chamber did not condemn me. I am a journalist which means that drawing public attention to these matters is actually my duty and my job. But Glenn Bedingfield is an aid to the Prime Minister, so anything he says is taken to come from the Prime Minister's office, with the authority and the blessing of the Prime Minister himself, and that is the crux of the matter. And it she goes on basically to describe how.. I mean this was her view of course, so when I discussed ..

***Dr Andrew Borg Cardona :***

..

***The Witness :***

Yes of course. when I discussed anything of this nature with her this is the kind of discussion or this is the kind of opinion which I got from her also in person.

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

Did you discuss any material she eventually published in her blog?

***The Witness :***

Not really. No she didn't discuss anything like that. I mean she was ..she handled that hassle; if I can only add to that, that she worked very much on her own and she even though the criticism of..., or let say this opposition and all this in the press came from groups of people; she herself was working very much on her own. And she..

***Imhallel J Said Pullicino :***

She were not.....

***The Witness :***

No not at all; I mean even when she was rounded with her friends she didn't share any of that, no.

**Chairman Imhallef M Mallia :**

When was the last time you saw her before she was killed?

**The Witness :**

Probably about a month to 6 weeks before, and it was a Monday and we were due to meet on Friday.

**Imhallef A Lofaro :**

Do you mean the Friday after she was killed..?

**The Witness :**

Ehe, the following Friday or Saturday yes

**Chairman Imhallef M Mallia :**

...did ever express you her fear of for her safety or for her life?

**The Witness :**

She obviously had been threatened before. Then she had arson at home and all this kind of issues that she faced; with her dogs and other things. She somehow just carried on and lived with that. I mean she knew that there was this; but she didn't ...

**Chairman Imhallef M Mallia :**

But she did express this fear to you?

**The Witness :**

Not fear of being physically harmed. She did mention or she was of course as I mentioned before the fact that she was so under pressure all the time was something which made her uncomfortable of course. I mean it would to anyone as you go around and have this kind of pressure around you.

**Chairman Imhallef M Mallia :**

Did she ever mention the warrants of seizure that had been filed against her?

**The Witness :**

Sorry, the..?

**Chairman Imhallef M Mallia :**

The warrants of seizure and.

**The Witness :**

Yes and of course this was also very public knowledge

***Chairman Imhalef M Mallia :***

And or her money was seizure and ...

***The Witness :***

Yes we were all aware of this and of course it was something which hampered her activities quite a bit; yes; But she mentioned it but no in the sense that she added any other information, the issue was of course quite public about herself on her own in her writings do so.

Din hija s-sustanza tax-xhieda ta' **Petra Caruana Dingli** 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