



INTEGRITY COMMISSION

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Media Statement from the Chairman of the Integrity Commission

July 16, 2021 – The following is a Statement from the Chairman of the Integrity Commission, the Hon. Mr. Justice (Ret'd) Seymour Panton, OJ, CD.

“The Integrity Commission has taken note of an article headed “Witch-hunt” in one of today’s newspapers. It refers to the fact that the Commission’s Director of Information and Complaints has sent a communication to some public officials requesting verification of their recent statutory declarations.

The article quotes an anonymous individual as saying that it was a ‘witch-hunt’, and states that at least eight permanent secretaries received such communications. Both statements are false.

The Commission wishes to remind parliamentarians, public officials and the public at large that it operates within the strict bounds of the Integrity Commission Act which was passed by our parliamentarians in 2017 and put into force in 2018.

That law seeks “to promote and enhance standards of ethical conduct for parliamentarians, public officials and other persons”.

Section 32 of the Act compels the Director of Information and Complaints to:

- (a) Receive, record and examine all statutory declarations; and
- (b) Make enquiries as he considers necessary so as to certify or determine the accuracy of those declarations.

The Director of Information and Complaints has no choice in the matter. It is his duty.

The declarants to whom letters were sent were selected at random. Some have responded thanking the Commission for giving them the opportunity to correct their declarations. The Commission appreciates this, and urges all persons covered by the legislation to co-operate. There is no witch-hunt. The Commission is merely carrying out its mandate.

Seymour Panton”

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