

Newspaper allegations on taxing the rich 'are wrong'

ALLEGATIONS that Jersey is 'actively helping' the super-rich avoid paying tax have been dismissed by Chief Minister Frank Walker.

He has dismissed a story in yesterday's Observer as a deliberate misinterpretation and slated the paper for its anti-Jersey bias - but said there would be little point in asking for a retraction.

Sunday's story centred on e-mails about trust reform and quoted Jersey's 'Treasury Minister' Paul de Gruchy - actually a civil servant working with international finance director Richard Harris - saying the tax burden would be borne by the moderately wealthy, but not wealthy enough to move their assets around for long enough.

Richard Murphy of the Tax Justice Network and

By Harry McRandle

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Liberal Democrat Treasury spokesman Vince Cable both called on the UK to take action against Jersey in the article, written by Observer journalist Nick Mathiason.

'What the Observer have done is deliberately misinterpreted the evidence they have got in front of them,' said Senator Walker who added that the paper had obtained the e-mail after a civil servant in his department accidentally sent it to the wrong address.

'What the e-mail was all about was not actually discussing how people could avoid paying tax, it was about closing loopholes - not opening them.

'We will talk this morning about asking for a retraction, but I doubt very much that there is any point.'

IN BRIEF

Scrutiny panel

THE Social Affairs Scrutiny Panel will be hearing tomorrow from the Attorney General, William Ballhache, and the Magistrate, Ian Le Marquand, on the role of Centeniers in the Magistrate Court. The panel are reviewing whether Centeniers should continue to bring cases before the Magistrate's Court.

Flying visit

A GROUP is coming to the Island next weekend to celebrate a very special anniversary - 50 years since they joined the RAF. 26 ex-Servicemen and wives will arrive at the Monterey Hotel on Friday for a reunion 50 years after joining up together in January 1956 at RAF Credenhill in Hereford.

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