

My intervention during the Statement on the Police National Computer, 18 January 2021

Sir John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con): I thank the Minister, the Home Secretary and the police leadership around the country for the very professional way in which they have responded to a most unfortunate error, an error that none of them wanted or made personally. Will he give us a little bit more encouragement, however, because is it not the case that there are now many good ways to retrieve data that has been wrongly deleted? Might we be looking at a remedy for this in a few weeks' time, when the computer experts have finished their job?

The Minister for Crime and Policing (Mr Kit Malthouse): My right hon. Friend is absolutely right that the initial assessment was some optimism about the ability to recover this data, not least because it is held in a number of areas. We will not have the full picture until we get to the end of this week, once we have analysed the report and, of course, looked at the data that we should have deleted but have not because of this error. However, he is quite right that we should be optimistic about that and recognise that all is not lost. There are other ways that this data can be cross-checked, in particular as part of a police investigation. We are working with our policing partners to ensure that they make full use of that, so that they can proceed as usual with their investigations.