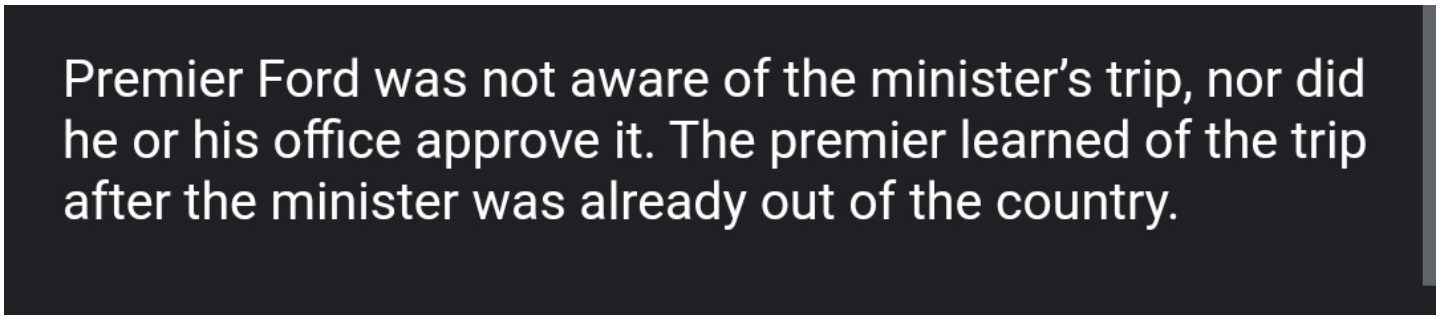
Twitter Thread by Scott Reid



Scott Reid
@_scottreid

In moving forward, the Ford government faces 3.5 problems. First, this PO statement means the Premier knew Phillips was in St. Barts at some point between Dec. 13 and Dec. 29. On what date? And when did PO know? Because ministerial travel is tracked/approved by PO/PMO #onpoli



More fundamentally, on the date that the Premier learned Phillips was out of the country - whenever it was - why wasn't Phillips ordered home immediately? Why was the Premier "disappointed" only after the public learned the news - Instead of when he learned it? #onpoli

These Qs are the most serious threat to Phillips because they raise the possibility that his interest might begin to conflict directly with the Premier's - and that usually spells your Waterloo. Ford will be reluctant to sack but he will if he must to make it all go away #onpoli

Second, those holiday social media posts by Phillips. They smack of an open attempt to leave the false impression Phillips was home when he obviously was not. Sure, you tape messages and sked posts in advance. But these are damning and have to be accounted for #onpoli

Which won't be easy. The, "we all make sacrifices" message - posted from a white sand paradise - is dead awful. Seems deliberate, deceptive and hypocritical. No way around that other to acknowledge it, own it and eat a full plate of shit. (Tip:DO NOT blame staff) #onpoli

Third, there's the "St. Barts" thing. It might seem like a detail but it's a big, quiet, implicit problem. The signal that specific destination communicates - the luxury, the expense, the out-of-all-imaginable-reach-for-most-people-of-it is very hard politics. #onpoli

Maybe that's unfair - if he can afford it what the hey. But, for a populist govt that peddles a "hey folks", lunchbucket brand of Conservatism it's just deadly. The next time someone around Ford moans about the elites and downtowners, St. Barts will be thrown right back #onpoli

In other words, it's as off-brand as it gets for this govt. And that's a problem for Phillips because it stirs resentment among his colleagues. Which is his "half" problem that's left lingering: caucus. They will hate this. Most of them hate defending the lockdown already #onpoli

Now they have to defend Phillips and St. Barts? They're not going to like that one damn bit. Chances are, some already resented his success: his easy entry into politics and broad influence over Ford. This will be like dropping a hornet's nest on top of all that. Way bad #onpoli

The takeaway is that Phillips will survive IF Ford is willing to spill all this external and internal political capital on him. But it's not going to be easy going and the effort required will stir more resentment. Phillips may live on but he'll be badly damaged. Badly. #onpoli