

Confidential and Subject to Revision

354

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

13 October 2003

and, of course, that independent contractor was given the contract by the previous government, which is yet another of its disastrous privatisations.

#24

CHILD ABUSE

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): Has the Premier asked the Catholic Archbishop to release the results of the inquiry into sexual abuse of children at St Ann's Special School and, if not, why not?

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I think that I have already publicly addressed this matter. The abuse of a child is among the most grotesque of crimes, and it is absolutely abhorrent to me and, I am sure, every member of this house. Children, and in particular children with disabilities, are highly vulnerable and deserve to be safe in the company of the adults who carry the responsibility for them. The abuse of children by adults inside or outside the family circle is a betrayal of that sacred trust. Obviously, I am aware from media reports of the Catholic Church's offer of \$2.1 million in payment to former St Ann's Special School students.

As members know, I met with parents who had a child at St Ann's. They talked with me in a frank and heartfelt way about what had happened to their child, and that was a journey that lasted more than 12 years. Members would be aware that the Catholic Church is currently conducting an inquiry, headed by Brian Hayes QC, into the processes the church followed in handling the allegations associated with St Ann's Special School. I have spoken to the Archbishop offering to table the report in this parliament. I have also written to the Archbishop repeating that same offer.

LICENSING FEES

Mr MEIER (Goyder): Will the Minister for Consumer Affairs intervene to give relief to small businesses being charged unexpected increases in their business licence renewal fees this year? Businesses in my electorate have contacted me regarding large unannounced increases in licensing fees. One electrical business in my electorate has had its licence fee increased from \$386.75 last year to \$928 this year. I repeat: from \$386.75 to \$928.

Mr Brokenshire: Anti small business!

The SPEAKER: The member for Mawson was not part of the member for Goyder's question. The Minister for Consumer Affairs.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Consumer Affairs): The same question was asked in substance by the Leader of the Opposition during the last sitting week. A reply has been prepared and is winging its way to him. One of the reasons for the increase is that the previous government offered a discount for, let us say, a wife of a husband who was a tradesman to be a partner. So, the licence rate for the wife was substantially discounted. We have ended that discount, which—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Well, we have told people. The notice of the change has been included in the licence renewal applications sent out to licensed tradesmen. We have told the relevant people of the increase. We have hidden nothing.

KAPUNDA HOMES

Mr VENNING (Schubert): My question is to the Minister for Health. Why has the government delayed for more than 12 months the commencement of the extension to Kapunda Homes when the project is already fully funded from local sources? The federal government has agreed to licence six full-time high care beds at the Kapunda Aged Home. Kapunda Homes has raised the money to fund the building project itself. No state government funding is involved, yet the government refused to allow the project to commence and the delay is now over 12 months.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): The Department of Human Services is processing the project, which includes six new high care nursing home beds, new lounge and dining facilities, new laundry and stores and some further minor works, such as improvements to the day surgery areas. The works requested total—

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I will get to it. The works requested total over \$1 million. I understand that the planning had been concluded by the Kapunda Hospital by July 2003, which then required government approval. I also acknowledge that the money required for this development has been raised by the local community, as well as through the careful management of behests by the board. This is a great effort, and should be encouraged and supported. However, there are prudential requirements—as was the case under the previous government—when any public agency, such as Kapunda Hospital, wishes to expend any funds.

I can say to the honourable member that I have been informed that the licences approved by the commonwealth government have been extended from January 2004 to January 2005. So, there is no fear of losing those licences.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Does the member for Schubert wish to ask a supplementary question? The member for Stuart.

BURRA SWIMMING POOL

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services advise the house when her department will finalise arrangements with the District Council of Goyder, based at Burra, in relation to the swimming pool which is on the school site? An article in the Burra newspaper (which circulates each week) reporting a council meeting states:

Council is frustrated by the lack of action by the Department of Education, Training and Employment in the finalisation of a joint-use agreement between DETE and the council regarding the operation and management of the Burra pool and the subsequent transfer of the pool site to the council. This has been ongoing and should have been resolved soon after the swimming pool was built in 1993. Matters came to a head at a September council meeting when it was resolved that tiling work at the pool will not be undertaken until the council has ownership of the pool.

The article is entitled 'Doubt over Pool Opening'. It is my understanding, minister (and, I am sorry, I have the flu), that the swimming pool at the school will not open this year until the arrangements with your department are finalised. The council has advised me that this saga is longer than *Blue Hills* and that Sir Humphrey has distinguished himself in relation to making sure that the council does not get it.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister.