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MINISTERIAL BRIEF

- 1) The Salvation Army's Proposal for a Family Group Home at Redcliffe.
- 2) The operation of the former Salvation Army facilities in the South East Region.

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7. I refer to proposals that have been made by Brigadier J Beasy of the Salvation Army for a Family Group Home at Redcliffe.

There has been considerable communication on this issue previously which has centered on the fact that Brigadier Beasy has maintained he has information which supports the need for a Family Group Home at Redcliffe. The Resource and Development Section has recommended other areas of the metropolitan area where a priority has been established, such as Mount Gravatt, Inala and Woodridge.

Discussions have occurred between Resource and Development Unit and the Supervising Child Care Officer, Redcliffe with a view to undertaking a Needs Study in Redcliffe Peninsula. As well as a Needs Analysis, it is also considered necessary to undertake a Resource Analysis. This is appropriate in view of the fact that the Nundah Office, which services suburbs which adjoin those covered by the Redcliffe Office, has within its jurisdiction a total of five (5) Residential Care facilities in the form of four (4) Family Group Homes and One (1) boys hostel. Similarly Family Group Homes are situated in the areas covered by North Central Office and Wynnum Office.

At this stage, it is not possible to give Brigadier Beasy a clear indication that the Department of Children's Services could fully utilize a Family Group Home in the Redcliffe area. As it has already been indicated to Brigadier Beasy the current need lies more in the area for facilities and services to teenagers.

Due to the man power shortage in Resource and Development, it has not been possible to commence the Need Analysis and Resource Analysis in the Redcliffe area until February 1981. These Analyses should be completed by May 1981 at which time it will be possible to predict the necessity of facilities and of what type in the Redcliffe area.

2. Endeavour Training Farm, Riverview

Endeavour Training Farm closed on the 12 January 1977. At that time there was 6 children in residence, five (5) boys were transferred to Alkira and one (1) boy was transferred to Hilldale Village, Mulgowie.

Endeavour Training Farm was situated at Riverview near Ipswich. It consisted of a number of very old buildings which were sadly dilapidated and in most cases beyond repair. The accommodation for boys was dormitory style and the boys were cared for by a house master. There was a school provided in a demountable temporary building on the site.

History during the 70's:

During the early 1970's Riverview accommodated approximately 50 boys who had been committed to care for anti social and/or delinquent behaviour. Major Vic Bennett was the Superintendent during this time until 1973. In 1973 it was decided that the buildings at Riverview were too dilapidated and the Salvation Army purchased a property at Mulgowie which cost \$65,000. This Department's contribution to that purchase was \$49,815.00. In 1975/76 \$148,159.00 was spent at Mulgowie.

The next Superintendent of Riverview was Major Wilson who was there from 1974 to 1975. It was from approximately 1974 onwards, mainly because there was a school on site, that older lads who were of dull intelligence were transferred to Endeavour Training Farm. Some of these children were admitted from the area offices, but the majority were referred by

201

Wilson Youth Hospital.

The next Superintendent was Captain Jim Clark who was at Riverview from 1975 to 1976. The staff at Riverview with Captain Clark was Captain Eszy and Envoi Lloyd. Captain Eszy was a very quick tempered, aggressive man and Envoi Lloyd, who had the ability to develop a rapport with children, was a reformed alcoholic. During the time of Captain Clark as Superintendent, the Department's relationship with Riverview deteriorated. There were allegations of physical abuse of the boys that were contrary to the regulations. The number of boys placed at Riverview were approximately 30 in 1975 and they decreased to approximately 15 in 1976.

The Salvation Army went ahead with erecting some buildings at Mulgowie although by this time it was known that the Department was not in favour of the project. Boys were transferred from Endeavour to Mulgowie without reference to the Department and this issue became contentious.

On examination of the files, there is considerable correspondence on requests for money from Captain Clark to the Department. The requests for money were for outings for the boys, equipment, cost of building counselling rooms, furniture, clothes and other associated expenses. The MLI returns also at that time were inconsistent as children in this age group were in receipt of Social Security Benefit and should not have been included in statistical returns. There was some conflict between the Department and Captain Clark on this issue.

The School at Endeavour Training Farm:

For a considerable number of years Mr Ken Craven was the teacher employed by the Department of Education for the school at the Endeavour Training Farm. This Department received several complaints from Mr Craven. The complaints were mainly about -

- a) The non provision of appropriate sporting, recreational and other equipment by the Salvation Army to the school so that it could operate an appropriate programme.
- b) The state of dress of the children when they came to school.
- c) The fact that some days some children would not come to school because they were needed to work on the farm. The inference being that the farm work was more important than school. There was considerable conflict between the Education Department and the Salvation Army over the school and eventually the Education Department transferred Mr Craven to Goodna and closed the school at Endeavour Training Farm. The arrangement was then that the children were transported from Endeavour Training Farm to Goodna School.

When Endeavour Training Farm eventually closed and the majority of children were moved to Alkira, Brigadier Beasy at that time wished for the children still to be transported to Goodna by the Education Department. However these arrangements were not continued.

When Endeavour Training Farm closed in 1977, it had been decided not to proceed with the venture at Mulgowie. The Salvation Army could not obtain staff for Endeavour Training Farm and the numbers of children were low. Also by that time, the school had been withdrawn and educational facilities were now offered at Goodna. It therefore became feasible from the Salvation Army's point of view and the Department's point of view in 1977 to abandon the idea of the need for the facility, consequently the children were transferred to Alkira.

Kalimna Vocational Training Centre for Girls

Kalimna, similar to Mount Maria and Holycross operated a laundry in which children in care were placed. This laundry supplemented the income of the institution.

During the 1970's the age of girls placed changed. Previously girls had been 14½, 15 and 16 years when admitted. In the 1970's girls of 12½, 13 and 14 years were admitted and these were school age children requiring educational facilities. It is observed from the file that it was the non availability of girls to work in the laundry that commenced the serious financial difficulties of Kalimna. These financial difficulties increased during these years, to the extent that in 1976 in particular, Kalimna was in debt and did not have the resources to employ staff to operate the laundry.

Programme at Kalimna:

There are numerous reports on file mainly from Miss C J Cooper who was intimately involved with all the major girls facilities in the metropolitan area. To summarise these reports her comments cover the following main issues.

- 1) Length of stay. There is a minimum time period for length of stay of at least six (6) months which was inflexible and rigid.
- 2) Severe restrictions on girls contact with families. Contact with family was allowed on certain days of the week for certain times on a fortnightly basis. Home leave was allocated after a period of time at Kalimna.

Associated with length of stay, was the "Bows" system which was a progressive system, related to the number of months a child had spent in Kalimna. It was also arbitrarily distributed on good behaviour. Girls progressed from green bows to blue bows to gold bows.

- 3) Use of detention rooms. Girls were placed in solitary confinement for disruptive behaviour, refusing to obey staff or absconding, and the period of solitary confinement could last as long as one week. There were other issues related to the day to day organisation and management of Kalimna which were contentious, these were issues like the practice of maintaining silence, lack of privacy, the rigid and compulsory daily routine.
- 4) Lack of community development and/or involvement by girls at Kalimna.

199

The School at Kalimna:

Similarly with Endeavour Training Farm, Kalimna provided a school. The teacher at this school was Mrs Grant who was the only teacher provided for sometime and then for the last twelve months or so Mrs Grant received the assistance of another teacher.

Similarly with Endeavour Training Farm, the problems with the school centred with the differences between the Salvation Army's methods of handling the children and the teachers, for example the teachers would consider that a classroom situation was being managed and was containable, staff of the Salvation Army would consider that the same situation was unmanageable and the children disruptive, and the Salvation Army staff would intervene. There were complaints from the Education Department of lack of provisions of requisites to enhance the school programme. Also there were complaints from the Education Department of the inability of staff to take children out of the confines of Kalimna into the community, for any social development or social awareness programme.

The conflict between the school and the Salvation Army came to crisis point with various public statements being made to the press and as a result of this the school was withdrawn from Kalimna and eventually the facility was closed. Kalimna closed on 31 October 1977.

Prior to the closure of Kalimna, there was a meeting held between Ms Quinnell, A/Principal Child Care Officer, Residential Care, Ms C J Cooper and the Director in September 1977. As a result of that meeting a letter was received from the Territorial Commander in Sydney and from Brigadier Geddes which reported differently on what had transpired at the meeting to what was accepted by Departmental staff. In conjunction with that meeting the Salvation Army submitted quite a comprehensive application to the Department for special funding for the programme to keep Kalimna functioning. (Wages \$55,954; Operating Costs plus Special Tuition etc. \$102,712; they stated their income as \$40,364 which gave a deficit of \$62,358.) This amount the Department was asked to fund on the grounds that Kalimna had special needs.

Alkira Boys Home, Indoeroopilly

In 1974 Alkira had three cottages in operation. The cottages were staffed by two houseparents and a live in student housemaster who was not in receipt of wages. There was approximately 63 children resident in Alkira at that time.

Similarly with the other institutions this number was reduced during the 1970's and Alkira functioned with approximately 20 to 30 boys, then when the change in Maintenance to Licensed Institutions was introduced, Alkira was funded for 26 beds. Major Ces Hall became Superintendent of Alkira in 1976. It was from 1976 until 1979 mainly through the efforts of Major Hall that the service at Alkira changed.

In the latter stages Alkira was able to offer a service to the more severely disturbed male child in the Department's care and this was done with some degree of effectiveness.

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However there was a change in Superintendent in 1980 and as is always the case when this occurs, the stability of the institution was seriously at risk.

During 1980 there were approximately ten (10) boys in Alkira with a maximum of six (6) resident at any one time. The offending and absconding rate was particularly high.

After discussions with Captain Wilson, it was considered that he had the ability to intellectually understand the problems of Alkira and what was needed to make the facility functional and stable, however he demonstrated a poor ability to put this into effect. On occasions he did state that he was not interested in children's work and preferred to be in old people's work.

Schooling:

There was never a school at Alkira. The children resident always attended schools placed in the community. Alkira closed on 15 August 1980.

Financial Arrangements - Alkira :

Although Alkira only offered a service to a minimum of ten (10) children in 1980 bed funding was paid for 26 beds until the 25 August 1980. In addition to this subsidy on the entrance road to Alkira was paid. The amount of subsidy paid to date is \$7,305.42. There is still an amount of \$248.08 to be paid.

Summary

The factors that become obvious from looking at the closure of Endeavour Training Farm, Kalliana and Alkira are -

- 1) The inability of the Salvation Army to change programme to meet the needs of children available for placement.
- 2) The inability of the Salvation Army to provide adequate staff to implement a changed programme.
- 3) The inability of the Salvation Army to change its financial management in accordance with financial changes occurring at various times.

Although problems with the Education Department provided the catalyst in the closure of two institutions, I am of the opinion that this was not the cause for the closure of the institutions. It is my opinion that problems with the Education Department or any other government Department in a joint venture, is a systems issue, not related to organisational management of an institution. This has not been properly evaluated with Endeavour Training Farm, Kalliana, nor Alkira.

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