



Speech by

Mr L. SPRINGBORG

MEMBER FOR WARWICK

Hansard 9 June 1999

NAMING OF PAEDOPHILES

Mr SPRINGBORG (Warwick—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.13 a.m.): It is with much regret that I must inform the House of the Beattie Government's failure—and more particularly the failure of the Attorney-General—to uphold the laws of this State in relation to repeat child sex offenders until the Government is forced to act as a result of Opposition or community outrage.

I note from a report in this morning's Courier-Mail that a convicted child sex offender, who allegedly failed to comply with a court order to inform police of his address after being released from Lotus Glen in March, was not charged until yesterday. It is also now apparent that the Attorney-General sat on his hands until Monday before deciding to provide written authorisation to proceed with a prosecution against the offender.

I think it is vital for this House to note that the Attorney-General took no action on this issue—no action whatsoever—until I sent a letter to him last Friday, 4 June, demanding to know what action he had taken in relation to this offender. I also sent a copy of that letter to the Premier on Friday. I table the letter.

It is quite clear that the Attorney-General did not take any action until Monday. In other words, he did not take any action until the Opposition demanded to know what he had done. He had obviously done nothing and was forced into action only once the Opposition had raised the issue last Friday. Such incompetent mishandling by the Attorney-General of the law, which he is responsible for upholding, is appalling. His constant attempts to put political agendas before justice have undermined the independence of the position of Attorney-General.

Yesterday, we heard the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police trying to claim that there are deficiencies in the current reporting mechanisms under the law for repeat child sex offenders. The only deficiency is their own mishandling of the law. As always, the Attorney-General must again be forced into action by the Opposition.
