

9. Statement by the Chief Minister regarding the historic child abuse investigation

9.1. Senator F.H. Walker (The Chief Minister):

Members will be aware that 3 people have now been arrested and charged in connection with the ongoing police investigation into historic child abuse. I am sure Members will understand that it is of the utmost importance that these prosecutions, and any others that may follow, should proceed smoothly with all the support we can offer and without any speculation or unwise comment which could jeopardise the judicial process, seriously let down the alleged victims, or prejudice the fair trial of those against whom complaints have been made. In keeping with what I said in February, it is essential that nothing should undermine the fairness of the judicial process in the interests of both the complainants and those charged. For that reason, regardless of any concerns individuals may have, it is vitally important to the outcome of the judicial process that all States Members remain silent on and refrain from interfering in the police investigation. In circumstances such as these there is a clear and obvious need for thorough and exhaustive investigation which we, as the Island's political representatives, have a duty to support. We also have a duty to support all those who may have been victims of abuse and to ensure fair trials. Ultimately, when the judicial process has run its course, the Committee of Inquiry, which has already been announced, will investigate all aspects of the management of the investigation and all other related matters.