



Adelaide Advertiser
 Saturday 30/4/2011
 Page: 46
 Section: General News
 Region: Adelaide
 Circulation: 239,319
 Type: Not available
 Size: 450.21 sq.cms.
 Published: MTWTFS-

Brief: CANDETTI
 Page 1 of 1



KEY FIGURE: Premier Mike Rann will be in the spotlight in Parliament on Tuesday making a statement.

Picture: BRENTON EDWARDS

DANIEL WILLS

POLITICAL REPORTER
 PREMIER Mike Rann's pledge to make a major statement in Parliament on the child pornography scandal engulfing Labor bought the party precious time as it seeks to fix a political catastrophe.
 It is unclear what the Premier will say on Tuesday, and even if Parliament allows significant protection for comments on the matter.
 This week's foreshadowing of a statement delivered a plausible excuse for Mr Rann and his ministers to deflect questions for a short time.
 That is time they needed to develop a strategy for negating the most damaging political crisis of Labor's time in power.
 Since Tuesday, Labor MPs have been able to reasonably argue no

comment is necessary pending Mr Rann's statement. Once the statement is given, they then can argue the issue has been adequately addressed, on the record, in the House.
 While that will not stop public obsession with the issue, the move has given the Premier a slim chance of shifting attention to other topics Labor would rather discuss.
 The huge level of interest in this criminal case has been a political headache for Labor.
 This week's opening of the State Aquatic Centre at Marion, a good news story years in the making, became white noise as public attention turned on the charges with laser-like intensity.
 The Government hopes the start of construction on the new Royal Adelaide Hospital, Adelaide Oval and

other infrastructure projects will turn around fortunes.
 There is a risk, however, the political dividend will be squandered as the chance to sell the message is drowned out by a court case that likely will take months to resolve.
 The presiding members of both Houses yesterday said they were seeking advice on how to deal with discussion of the charges when Parliament resumes and what is permitted by privilege.
The Advertiser understands prevailing opinion is if the charged MP is named, by the Premier or anyone else, limits still will apply to reporting it.
 While the name can and would likely be published in Hansard, newspapers and broadcasters could face punishment for repeating it.

It also is probable MPs will be warned off making any statement that leads to identifying the accused when sitting begins.
 When the shock of the charges is set aside, there are hugely important public policy implications.
 If the MP does not return to Parliament, that affects legislative votes, electoral representation and factional matters including leadership.
 These are issues that deserve addressing at the first opportunity.
 Expectations are Mr Rann will use Tuesday's speech to express abhorrence at the charges and announce the MP is requesting extended leave.
 If that forecast is accurate will be seen, but there is nothing stopping those statements being made today, outside Parliament.