

**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT
SCHOOLS**

PRESS RELEASE 846

STATE AID IS BAD FOR RELIGION:

PRIESTS PAID JOBKEEPER THEN ASKED TO DONATE IT BACK TO CHURCH.

INTRODUCTION

DOGS have always opposed entanglement of church and State alongside State Aid to religious schools. They argue that it is bad for both Church and State. In the DOGS 1981 High Court case, the church argued that their schools were not religious but educational institutions. The Loss of religious liberty and the consequent entanglement of church with the state since that date, has now come to fruition. The Church in Australia is asset rich but income poor as parishioners leave the pews.

State Aid is bad for religion. The churches were struggling financially with loss of parishioners before the plague hit the Australian economy. But when the pews were emptied, by COVID-19 restrictions, [the church hierarchy demanded payment, not just for their empty schools, but also for their priests!](#)

When confronted with compensation cases for Priests who were sexual predators, the Church claimed they were employed by God, not the Church. But, with jobkeeper millions in the offing, it is a different story.

While large section of the Australian workforce, most particularly casual workers; international students; backpackers; artists; musicians and cleaners have been forced to live off their savings, priests have been given jobkeeper payments.

To add insult to injury, the Catholic priests themselves have been asked by the Church to donate almost half of the payment back to the organisation!

This situation has promoted considerable comment on the ABC and Twitter but no-one has remarked on a very simple but dangerous fact.

Priests and ministers are being paid directly by the State, as if they are employees of a Church which can demand money for its employees.

This is a logical extension of the Chaplaincy in State schools program and sets a very very dangerous precedent indeed.

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855 ON THE AM DIAL: 12.00 NOON SATURDAYS
<http://www.3cr.org.au/dogs>