

PRESS RELEASE 597#

VICTORIA THE 'PRIVATE EDUCATION' STATE RUN BY DLP LABOR GOVERNMENT

The Public Education lobby are starting to wake up and in some of their arguments they are sounding surprisingly like the DOGS.

In a 50 word letter to The Age, 7 May 2015, one correspondent suggested that the Government should not put "Victoria: The Education State" on car registration plates, but rather 'Victoria the Private Education State.

In the last week, some public school supporters have been prepared to blow the whistle on what has REALLY happened to the DLP. It appeared to fade away. Not so. Santamaria's children from the Democratic Labor Party of the 1950s have offspring – Santamaria's grandchildren in the current Labor – and Coalition Parties. The influence of erstwhile members of the DLP and their fellow travellers is obvious at the highest levels of the Federal Government. But Victorians are starting to wake up to the influence of Santamaria's progeny in the Victorian Labor Government.

The DOGS could have told people about this influence decades ago. But every time it was mentioned, the 'sectarian' catch cry was raised. Not anymore! In an article entitled *Labor's own in dark on private school deal*, in the Age of May 3, Royce Millar and Ben Schneiders wrote the following

The Labor government's contentious guarantee of special funding to private schools blindsided the experts selected by the party to shape its education policy.

Leaked minutes of the March meeting of Labor's education policy committee reveal internal frustration over the surprise legislation that guaranteed Catholic and independent schools 25 per cent of the state government funding given to public schools. Critics of the guarantee say it is at odds with the principles of the Gonski model, which seeks to make school funding needs based and blind to the public or private status of schools. The guarantee was promised to the Catholic Education Office just days before the November election.

It has fuelled concern within the wider labour and public education movements about the influence of the Catholic Education Office and the conservative shop assistants union (SDA).

"The influence of the SDA and other Catholic interests in the ALP, including the education minister, meant that the ALP was very receptive to the demands of the Catholic Education Office for more advantageous funding arrangements before the election," said Trevor Cobbold, spokesman for state schools lobby Save Our Schools.

Education Minister James Merlino is the most senior of the state Labor MPs linked to the Catholic-led SDA, Australian Labor's largest union affiliate. The leaked minutes reveal Mr

Merlino being questioned, with one committee member "amazed" his committee had not been consulted about the guarantee.

So, too, does the committee member describe the guarantee as "contrary to what we [the ALP] are trying to achieve [in education]".

See <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/labors-own-in-dark-on-private-school-deal-20150502-1myf8e.html>

Also see

<http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/comment-education-state-looking-for-excuses-20150428-1mv0u3.html>

DOGS note that they have been tracking the influence of Santamaria's predecessors and progeny in both political parties for the last half century – and, in Queensland since 1899. Educationists with the well-being of disadvantaged children in mind should by now understand that the religious school lobby has never been interested in disadvantaged children. Nor have religious administrators ever been genuine about the implementation of any Needs policy. For religious interests, 'Needs' are very quickly transmuted into 'Greeds.'

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