

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

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HOW WILL GONSKI VIEW THE RESIDUALISATION OF THE POOR IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

In 1969 when State Aid to sectarian schools first poured from the Federal Treasury, DOGS predicted that the public systems of Australia could become a 'residualised' systems for the poor and disadvantaged.

They were not wrong. Others are starting to wake up to the national danger.

Richard Teese, in a submission to the Gonski Committee September 2011 available at <http://www.aeufederal.org.au/Publications/2012/RTeesereport2012.pdf> concluded that although

Using NAPLAN data that 'after adjustment for intakes, public schools are as successful as private schools, 'yet 'despite decades of funding and enrolment growth, there are very few private or Catholic schools across Australia that enrol

predominantly children from lowest SES backgrounds.

Yet

There is a pattern of residualization in poorer communities and an intensification of the stress experienced in public schools in more socially mixed areas.

Teese talks in academic, anaesthetised prose. Others are more direct.

The President of the Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals Association was more direct. In *The Age* of 30 January 2012 (<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/class-envy-belongs-to-middle-ages-20120129-1qnwe.htm>) he took a longer term view – backwards.

Over the past year there has been a lively debate about education funding in this country. Sadly, responses to the continuing federal government-initiated review of education funding, headed by David Gonski, have brought out the greed, envy and social climbing that was so rampant in the Middle Ages.

and

There is no sustained action in response to the shameful fact that a growing number of

Australian children are in an increasingly residualised system because of the way schools are funded. I wonder how we differ from the Middle Ages, when the rich and the church maintained privileged positions on the back of the poor and of the aspirant middle class - the shopkeepers who worked hard to try to get accepted into the rarefied atmosphere and opportunities of the well-to-do.

His article drew three strong letters of support the next day, entitled

1. *Elite will Never Give up Privileges,*
2. *Majority Pay to Support Society's Wealthier Tiers and*
3. *Funding is Political*

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/letters/elite-will-never-give-up-privileges-20120130-1qpn5.html>

DOGS wonder whether Gonski can bite the bullet, put the sectarian schools back where they belong in the funding stakes, and place Australia back in the international race with a strong public system

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