

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 468

AT LAST:

SOMEONE BESIDE THE DOGS PREPARED TO

QUESTION CATHOLIC EDUCATION FIGURES

DOGS welcome the temerity of Trevor Cobbold of *Save Our Schools Canberra* and

- **congratulate him on the publication of his research on the over-funding of all high SES Catholic schools in Australia,**
- **exposure of outrageous lack of accountability for billions of taxpayer funds and**
- **exposure of Catholic education authority misleading claims that funds from wealthy schools are re-distributed to disadvantaged Catholic schools**

Since 1969 DOGS have been attempting to expose the blatant use of the 'Needs' policy by Catholic Education authorities. In their quest to expand the denominational systems of education at the expense of the public systems, the Catholic authorities kept 'showpiece poor parish schools' and diverted primary funds for disadvantaged schools into an expansion of the secondary sector. DOGS placed advertisements in the newspapers in their attempt to expose the roting of the ALP's 'Needs' policy.

For a history of DOGS attempts read our Press Releases:

Press Release 423 at www.adogs.info/pr423.htm;

Press Release 417 at www.adogs.info/pr417.htm;

Press Release 246 at www.adogs.info/pr246.htm,

Press Release 256 at www.adogs.info/pr256.htm

Press Release 270 at www.adogs.info/pr270.htm.

The Schools Commission, which was long on rhetoric and short on accountability, DOGS submissions. When the Teachers' representative Van Davey exposed the gross inequities of the funding system in a 1984 Dissenting report, the cat was out of the bag and the School Commission days were numbered.

The cat had to be put back in the bag. The unholy alliance between the various religious systems at the expense of the public one was kept at all costs. As Gonski has discovered, the majority of Australian children in public schools paid the cost.

Finally, in 2012, **SOS** have woken up to the latest "NEEDS" or "SES" games being played by Catholic Education authorities- with the assistance of both the Howard and Gillard federal governments..

In their Press Releases of April 5 and April 6 at

<http://www.saveourschools.com.au/media-releases/media-release-report-says-wealthy-catholic-schools-are-over-funded>

and

<http://www.saveourschools.com.au/funding/high-ses-catholic-schools-are-over-funded> SOS announces the publication of a research paper by SOS that

- shows that virtually all high income Catholic combined and secondary schools in Australia are over-funded compared to what they are entitled to according to their socio-economic capacity. SOS National Convenor, Trevor Cobbold, said that the report challenges claims by Catholic education authorities that they re-distribute funds from high income to disadvantaged Catholic schools.
- The report shows that these claims are misleading and untrue in many cases when actual Federal funding figures on My School are analysed.
- Mr. Cobbold said that Catholic education authorities should be more transparent about how they distribute Federal block grants to their schools. He said that a 2009 National Audit Office report and the Gonski report on school funding both criticised the lack of transparency on how school systems distribute taxpayer funds to their member schools.
- He said: "*Catholic education authorities should come clean about their funding formulae. It is not good enough that they get billions of dollars in taxpayer funds and not have to account for how they distribute this funding to member schools.*"

“The Federal Government should adopt the recommendation of the Gonski report that school systems should disclose how they allocate taxpayer funds to member schools. The recommendation should be written into school funding legislation.”

- Mr. Cobbold also said that the *“Federal Government has to decide what to do about over-funding of private schools now that it has the Goski report on school funding.*

The funding maintained arrangements were strongly criticised by the Gonski report. It estimated over-funding for private schools in 2010 at \$615 million, with \$492 million paid to Catholic systems and \$123 million to Independent schools. It recommended that all private schools on the same SES score should be funded at the same rate to ensure fairness and integrity in school funding.

The massive over-funding is a barrier to reducing the large achievement gap between rich and poor identified in the Gonski report. It compounds a large resource advantage for high SES schools and it denies much-needed funds to disadvantaged government and private schools.

The Government should divert this over-funding to better support disadvantaged students and schools. The \$615 million a year in over-funding would be a good initial down-payment on the Gonski report’s recommendation for a \$5 billion funding increase for disadvantaged government and private schools.”

Unlike DOGS the SAVE OUR SCHOOLS organization considers that it is possible to fund private religious schools and have a ‘Needs’ policy.

DOGS have always contended that you cannot fund a privately owned and controlled education system with selective access and hope to have either a well- educated citizenry or accountability for expenditure public money.

The behavior of the religious education systems, and most particularly the Catholic education system in the last half century proves the point.

SOS are looking at the facts and starting to wake up .

LISTEN TO

THE DOGS RADIO PROGRAM

3CR

855 ON THE AM DIAL

12.00 NOON SATURDAYS