

# AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 494#

## HOW THE CHURCH PRACTICES

### POSITIVE DISCRIMINATION

14 November 2012

The Government and the Press have finally taken up the issue of sexual abuse of children by members of religious organisations, and in particular the protection of rogue clerics by the Catholic hierarchy.

The victims of child sexual abuse and their supporters are to be congratulated on the establishment of the Royal Commission. It has been a long hard road for them and the journey is not yet finished. Taxpayers should be particularly wary. In the Republic of Ireland the taxpayers paid the compensation bill of the Church because they had subsidised the Catholic system of schools and children's homes!

But there is still considerable reluctance to recognise the methods by which the Church has corrupted our democratic state with its three arms of government, as well as our public education system.

It has been able to do this because, with billions of dollars of subsidisation, the Church has been able to place members of the faithful in key positions at key periods of time.

There is nothing new or unusual about this. It is just the logic of the way what Inglis Clark called an *imperium in imperio* - a State within a State- works. When he placed Section 116 in his draft Australian Constitution it was exactly what he tried to warn against.

It is becoming blatantly obvious how old boy networks of religious schools have worked to place influential church members in positions of power. Tony Abbott, Joe Hockey, and Barnaby Joyce are obvious examples. And Julia Gillard, a public school graduate, is the exception rather than the rule in the federal Labor Party.

At the State level the public system is burdened with Martin Dixon, a former Catholic Education Office bureaucrat, - and the alarming thing is that this fact is hardly a matter for comment, even when he refuses to establish public secondary schools in developing areas.

DOGS provide an example of a career structure of a very able 'old girl' of the church who now holds a key position in relation to the indirect subsidisation of religion in Australia, namely the exemption from taxation of religious business and other enterprises.

This is the Susan Pascoe the interim Commissioner of The Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission which is due to open its doors in December 2012.

The Commission will take over from the Australian Securities Investments Commission and the Australian Taxation Office as the regulator of registered charities. It will also eventually take over from various state-based agencies that are currently responsible for regulating other non-profits.

And who is Susan Pascoe? The following biography is of particular interest in relation to her involvement with both public and Catholic education:

Ms Pascoe has been closely involved in state, national and international efforts to improve the quality and equity of school education.

Susan Pascoe has been a full-time Commissioner with the Victorian State Services Authority, with responsibility for Regulatory Reform, since September 2006. She was formerly the Chief Executive of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and the Director of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Before this, she was the Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority....

Susan has been a member of several Australian delegations to the OECD and UNESCO, and led Australia's delegation to the UN World Education Forum in Senegal in 2001. She was the Chair of the Australian National Commission for UNESCO and a Director of the Senate of the Australian Catholic University. Susan is the past President and Fellow of the Australian College of Educators, Fellow of the Australian Institute of Public Administration, the Australian Institute of Management and the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

The Government can legislate to establish Commissions. But the key questions always are:

- What are their terms of reference and
- What is the background of the key personnel?

***THE DOGS RADIO PROGRAM***

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***855 ON THE AM DIAL***

***12.00 NOON SATURDAYS***