

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 504#

MULTINATIONAL FOR PROFIT CORPORATIONS TO PROVIDE PUBLIC EDUCATION ?

7 February 2013

Since 1964 diversion of billions of dollars of public funding from the public to the private education sector has undermined public education.

Since the 1990s -with

- private/public partnerships;
- shared facilities;
- independent public schools;
- and refusal to build new public schools in developing areas

attempts are being made to privatise public education. Australian parents are expected to mortgage their children's future in a 'user-pays' economic system in which 'choice' - with 'no choice' for the poor - reigns supreme.

BUT

In 2013 conservative Australian governments are going one step further.

They are considering blatant profiteering in the primary and secondary as well as the tertiary sector of education.

Katherine Feeney brisbanetimes.com.au urban affairs reporter and blogger reported on 28 January 2013 that the Queensland Newman Government's Education Minister John-Paul Langbroek is considering the introduction of for-profit primary and high schools. He sees the outsourcing of the educational opportunities of a nation's children this as a logical extension of the principle of 'choice.'

The promoters of the principle of 'choice', - the religious leaders, their bureaucrats and the administrators of their so-called charitable multi-national corporations are largely responsible for the parlous plight of public education in this country. At least for-profit multinational are honest about their objectives.

DOGS have always said that if you give one inch on the principle of sole funding of a public education system then you will undermine and bring that system down. They are sorry to have been proved correct.

The following is an excerpt from Katherine Feeney's article at

<http://www.baysidebulletin.com.au/story/1264477/newman-government-open-to-for-profit-schools/>

Katherine Feeney



Katherine Feeney, photo from Brisbane Times

Queensland could one day see Ahead of a big reform year marked by the introduction of the Newman government's *Independent Government Schools*, has left the door open to even greater change.

Leaning on the need to open more schools around the state, Mr Langbroek said innovation was required within the education system to cope with "a rapidly changing world".

He said for-profit schools, charter schools and other models were innovations the government might seriously consider.

"We're in favour of choice – we haven't had any approaches by any for-profit groups yet, but we have certainly looked at [them]," he said.

"In opposition I certainly considered charter schools experienced in England and America, and we're open to suggestions that we will consider.

"Our mind as a government is open to alternative methods of providing education in a rapidly changing world."

The question of for-profit schooling in Australia was raised last week by reports two major global education companies were looking to expand into the domestic market.

But the issue has been on the cards in Queensland for some time; in 2004 ABC Learning billionaire Eddie Groves sought to establish the country's first for-profit school at Springfield.

*However, Mr Groves proposed the school would be run a not-for-profit company, *Independent Colleges of Australia*, which had its own board and would collect the fees.*

To be eligible for federal government funding, schools have to be registered by state governments and must operate on a not-for-profit basis.

Currently, Queensland's non-state schools accreditation act makes does not allow any state funding to go to a school that might be for profit.

But Mr Langbroek said the door was open to change.

"I'm not saying now, as the minister, 'right, OK, it's open slather'," he said.

"But our mind as a government is open to alternative methods of providing education in a rapidly changing world."

The state's new independent public schools stand testament to that mood for innovation, with 26 Queensland state schools transitioning to the new system this academic year.

Granted more autonomy to recruit teachers, manage resources and alter curriculum, the schools are like a bridge between the state and independent systems.

They receive a one-off grant of \$50,000 to assist with the change, and an extra \$50,000 in funding each year for administrative purposes.

Read more: <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/newman-government-open-to-forprofit-schools-20130129-2dhcr.html#ixzz2K5gc4I68>

For a comment on Independent Public Schools see the Save Our Schools website at <http://www.saveourschools.com.au/choice-and-competition/independent-public-schools-are-no-panacea-for-school-improvement> .

THE DOGS RADIO PROGRAM

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12.00 NOON SATURDAYS