

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 539#

WHY DO MARKET IDEOLOGUES PROP UP FAILED EDUCATION INDUSTRIES?

The Jesuit educated troika of the Australian Government, Abbott, Pyne and Hockey are attempting to prove their credentials as committed market ideologues . They are reluctant or flatly refuse to prop up failing industries in the car and manufacturing sector.

So why do they throw billions of dollars at a failed denominational system of education? Historically and in the current generation this system has failed to educate the nation's children. Its very rationale is to turn children away while wasting taxpayers' money on luxurious , duplicate facilities for elite or religious minorities?

Luke Mansillo from *The Guardian* 28 January 2014 in an article entitled *Private Schools do not deserve a Cent from our Public Funds* at http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/28/private-schools-do-not-deserve-a-cent-from-our-public-funds?CMP=ema_792 makes two fundamental points:

1. 'Private' enterprise is not and never can be a 'public' one.
2. Those who choose 'public' education should not be expected to subsidise those who 'opt out'.

We can all agree that education is a collective want in every western democracy, and one that provides material benefits. In Australia, Britain and most of the developed world, education is provided through government schools. And as the collective want of education provision is provided for through these public schools, there is no need for governments to provide precious public resources to those who opt out.

He concludes that : It is time for governments to put the people's money in the people's schools, not in hungry elite private school systems using public funds to build a tennis court or state of the art facilities.

DOGS agrees. Congratulations Luke AND Congratulations to *The Guardian* for printing his article. Excerpts and some of the comments follow:

Private schools do not deserve a cent from our public funds

New numbers show that Australian government schools are being ripped off. If parents choose to opt out of a public service, they should not expect the government to help them do it



- - [Luke Mansillo](#)
 -
 - [theguardian.com](#), Tuesday 28 January 2014 13.45 AEST



Tony Abbott and his wife Maggie visiting a Catholic School in Sydney. Photograph: AAP/Paul Miller

The Productivity Commission released a [new report](#) showing that over the past five years, independent and Catholic schools have been receiving greater increases in government funding per student than public schools. Private schools received real increases of 3.4% per year between 2007 and 2012, while government schools received increases of just 2.4% per year.

The way our schools are funded is a matter of political philosophy – and it's curious that any Coalition government would not seek to stop this increase. We can all agree that education is a collective want in every western democracy, and one that provides material benefits. In Australia, Britain and most of the developed world, education is provided through government schools. And as the collective want of education provision is provided for

through these public schools, there is no need for governments to provide precious public resources to those who opt out.

To take a child out of a government school, for whatever reason, is a private choice which ought not to be funded. Any government with a liberal bent would not throw money at private endeavours – be it private education, private businesses asking for subsidy, private foundations or similar. After all, the word private itself means to have no public role. It is strange, then, that the trend shows no sign of slowing down.

Governments pay \$15,768 on average per public school student and \$8,546 per private school student, yet private schools [get \\$1.2m a year more funding](#) from all sources than public schools. In the process of accruing these extra monies, private schools are draining government schools of much needed public resources. Meanwhile, Australia's public schools are [sinks of disadvantage](#). Government schools teach the great majority of poor, disabled (76.6%) and Indigenous (84.7%) students, as well as those who do not speak English as a first language. However, in spite of the additional costs and burdens associated with teaching disadvantaged students, cost increases are under inflation (unlike private schools), and the results for the average student are as good as their private rivals.

Interestingly, a [University of Queensland study of NAPLAN results](#) recently debunked conventional wisdom that having a child in a private school leads to better academic results. Furthermore, there is a disadvantage in sending a child to a private school [if they go on to university](#), as more drop out in their first year. The pattern is [repeated overseas](#) – students in Britain who get BBB grades and attend government comprehensive schools outperform students from private schools with A level grades on all measures.

In spite of this, governments continue to shove money into the private education sector, presumably to keep the well-to-do-swing-voter happy. It is time for governments to put the people's money in the people's schools, not in hungry elite private school systems using public funds to build a tennis court or state of the art facilities.

Australians should be proud to have a free public school system which often does a better job than private schools. We can't stand by and allow decay to grow as Christopher Pyne drags his [curriculum reform red herring](#) across the body politick.

Australia has a problem in education funding, something which was made abundantly clear for some time – something which [Gonski attempted to ameliorate](#). Government schools are ripped off. This needs to be corrected, and no cent of public money should end up in the private school system – especially when it can do so much more good for both pupils and society in a government school.

Comments:

Luke has a clear understanding of the word , 'private' . Private 'choice people' can choose to do whatever they like , including educating themselves in private , without my private wallet .

[Anomander64](#)

[28 January 2014 9:51pm](#)

I'm just bought myself a gorgeous v12 supercar, which uses 1 litre of petrol every 10 kms.

Yeah I know the government provides me with public transport near my home, but I like cars for the convenience.

Yeah I know I could buy a smaller, more fuel-efficient car, but I get so many admiring and envious looks from other road users, it's worth the extra cost.

Yeah, I know I could buy cheaper car, but this car will retain it's resale value better than one of those mass produced metal boxes, so it's my right to make that choice.

But... because it costs me so much to pay for my petrol, I demand the public should subsidise me 50% of the cost.

Sure, choosing the car was my choice, and yes I did have other options available to me, but look at the prestige I gain from owning a car like this?

Admittedly, it only really benefits me and nobody else, but it's still my choice. Therefore, everyone should help me pay for it, because I'm special and I deserve the best!

Sound familiar? Public subsidies for private schooling works exactly like this

29 January 2014 10.27 am

So , Who said the State Aid debate was dead?

Congratulations Luke ! Billions of dollars later, we are finding out what our forefathers discovered in 1844. The object and the result of the private or religious system is to educate the few at the expense of the many. So, since it is now an 'industry' which does not do the job - namely educate ALL the children - why prop it up? It failed in 1844 , it failed in 1963, so why are we still propping it up, billions and billions of dollars later?

The churches are wealthy institutions. If they can't pay for their own systems, why should we?

And by the way, the UK has always funded private schools, and has always had a class system. Pity we can't do our own Australian thing any more.

As a very satisfied public school parent and grandparent, I am always fascinated at the rationalisations of selfish, self-centred private school parents who are really just telling me that my children are not good enough to mix with theirs - and I can pay for their peculiar private privileges. What happened to the concept of the public good? I thought I paid taxes for public, services with public accountability and access - not private services for aspirational, insecure parents.

Meanwhile, there is a question whether many parents will even have a public school choice in outlying suburbs. So, back to 1844. And whose responsibility is that in a liberal democracy?