

AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

PRESS RELEASE 634#

Turnbull Abandons Gonski “Needs” Policy

DOGS have been here Before.

For the DOGS, the abandonment of a Gonski voucher system masquerading as a ‘Needs’ policy by the Turnbull/Birmingham government is no surprise. With memories of the 1973 Schools Commission fiasco, DOGS have a sense of déjà vu.

The private sectarian sector have never given up their own privileges for the less advantaged. Their objectives are and always have been : Power, wealth, and children of the wealthy – in that order. Meanwhile, religious educators and their wealthy clients only pay minimal tax.

The only way to contain their greed is to give State Aid to State schools only.

But finally, this generation of public school supporters are waking up. *Save Our Schools* president Trevor Cobbold revealed, through analysis of the MySchool statistics, that Resource-rich schools receive more than \$2 billion in Commonwealth government funding a year, equivalent to nearly one third of the final two years of the Gonski funding deal. His analysis of the latest figures on the MySchool website shows 1115 private schools in Australia are receiving more income per student than the average state school, through school fees, parent donations and government funding.

The private school interest can no longer cry ‘poor’ . Instead, their representatives refer to those who send their children to State schools in salubrious suburbs.

The Coalition appears confident that sectarian interests and market ideologies are more politically important than public school supporters.

But It looks like the 2016 election is going to be a Public Education Election!

See <http://www.theage.com.au/victoria/private-schools-benefit-from-more-than-2-billion-in-government-funding-20151230-glwups.html>;

<http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/simon-birmingham-dont-expect-schools-election-cash-splash-20151227-glvlpj>;

<http://www.theage.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/turnbull-schools-plan-sneaky-mean-tricky-andrews-government-20151229-glw8gj.html#ixzz3vlyLdLfm>

Why DOGS have a sense of déjà vu

Trevor Cobbold and public school interests should by now have realised that there never WAS and never WILL be a workable Needs policy. The only answer to inequities is to stop funding those who promote inequality, namely private, religious systems of education. They would do better to take on the sectarian interests and take a No State Aid position like the DOGS.

The iniquitous ‘Needs’ policy was introduced by the Labor Party for the 1972 election to gain the Catholic vote and as a sop to humanitarian State School interests. They were confronted by ‘poor’ parish schools starved of Church Aid for political purposes, derelict State schools, and wealthy Protestant schools – that had to be bought off.

The Karmel Committee recommendations, like the Gonski program, were **never** implemented. The wealthy had to be paid off before any crumbs came through to the poor, especially those in public schools. Before the Schools Commission you could identify the exact amounts of State Aid received by Church schools. With the MySchool website we are now returning a wee bit to this position. SO Trevor Cobbold can crunch a few numbers again. After 1978, with sectarian domination of the Commission and then the Federal Education Department, this became much more difficult. Hundreds of millions were paid directly to the Catholic Education bureaucracies and they diverted money according to their own priorities - new schools and secondary education. Now, they are diverting into TAFE and university education. DOGS identified some of their schemes. The Victorian DOGS called them Bottom of the Schoolyard schemes and tried to expose them in a number of paid Advertisements in The Age and other newspapers.¹ Accountability was minimal.

DOGS exposed the gross inequalities in State Aid funding from the beginning. They staged protests outside the ‘Schools with the Pools’ in New South Wales. See *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28,29,30 January 1972; *The Australian*, 31 January 1972; D. Aitken, ‘The Great Pool Push fails, but DOGS well in Political Swim’, *National Times*, 7-12 February 1972; *Education*, 15 March 1972.

In Victoria Ray Nilsen from the DOGS exposed the rorting of the system by the sectarian sector in numerous paid Advertisements. DOGS members had to pay for these Advertisements because the sectarian interest had influence with the editor of the Age.

List of DOGS paid Advertisements: *The Age*: 12 November 1970; 27 November, 1972, 4; 16 May 1973, 10; 12 July 1973, 14; 12 December 1975, 12; 23 June 1977, 16; 2 December 1977; 5 December, 1977, 12; 3 May 1984, 18; 28 November 1984, 20; 1 May 1985; 30 August 1988, 22-23; 2 March 1998, 11; April 26, 2005; 27 March 2006; *The Herald*: 1 December 1972, 11; 11

December 1975, 38; *The Australian* : 10 December 1975, 5;19 July 1985, 7; *Canberra Times*: 18 December 1980; 4 November 1983,11; 6 April 1984, 9. Advertisements since this time did not deal with the Schools Commission.

DOGS REPEAT:

THE ONLY WAY TO CONTAIN THE GREED OF THE PRIVATE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL INTEREST IS TO GIVE STATE AID TO STATE SCHOOLS ONLY

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