

21 January 2001

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives
Standing Committee on
Employment, Education and Workplace Relations
R1 116
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: INQUIRY INTO THE EDUCATION OF BOYS

Opening Remarks

I commend the Government for this initiative for there is no greater responsibility than the education of our children. I have little doubt that regardless of socio-economic standings the one thing that parents and educators have in common is the capacity to give a child a good start in life - that means being good role models and providing a good education in an environment where the child can reach his/her potential. As a society we need to address how we go about this to reap the benefits and/or the social consequences of our endeavours.

While I mention numerous matters that I believe have effect to the issues, the focus of my submission is:

- Role models - the diminishing number of male teachers and why - fear of litigation and climate of fear.
- The treatment of male teachers (male role models) in Qld and the consequences therein on the education of boys.
- Feminisation of the education system - from lecturers, to teachers through to the male students.

To support my submission I attach a number of newspaper articles, present two cases in some detail and refer briefly to other cases.

I have devoted much of my life to providing my sons and young boys (and girls) the opportunities to reach their potential in my capacity as a football coach/manager, president of school swimming club, numerous school and kindergarten committees.

Role models have played an influence in my life and I draw on my personal experiences, discussions with teachers as well as research over the past 4 years (mainly in Qld primary schools).

I believe that as a society by virtue of the lack of male role models in primary schools and home we are unwittingly creating and cultivating fertile conditions for the social and cultural environment affecting the education of boys and hence creating the social problem to which you refer.

Preamble

I doubt that many of us ever take the time to ponder over how we became the person that we are or who shaped our personality or why some are highly motivated and while others in despair commit suicide, turn to crime or drugs and never reach their potential. Is it genetic? Environmental? Or perhaps a combination of many things? There is no one answer.

But there is one thing that has been universally accepted since the beginning of time ie that role models, good or bad, play an important part in our personal development from the moment of birth. The effect of any imbalance of male and female (role models) in any species is well documented. There is enough evidence to suggest that the origins of literacy and social problems can be traced to the Primary School. But it would be drawing a long bow to suggest that male role models alone is the answer.

The same common denominators that emerge in many social problems is the lack of education, poor parenting and lack of (good) role models/leadership. Of course there are certainly differing opinions on who/which gender is the appropriate role model. Those that believe that the (good) male role model is an essential part of education include:

1. Association of Independent Schools of Queensland ('A Class Act' Inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession - Page 122 submission) and 2. Courier Mail Editorials 14/2/1999 and 14/9/2000 and 3. Education Minister, Qld, (Courier Mail 28/8/2000 and 18/11/1998) - **Appendix A**. Also refer other unsolicited letters and articles (attached).

Whenever there is a debate on whether boys need male role models to do well at school the 'opponents' draw attention to female teachers being equally as good role models for boys or that men are not necessarily because of their biological make up, automatically good role models.

Association of Independent Schools of Qld (reference A Class Act) comments that 'there should be some encouragement towards males taking up primary teaching, and junior primary school teaching, otherwise it will have some fairly significant effects on society'. The quantum leap is made in the report to the barriers for women or that somehow it (having more male role models) would be interpreted that women teachers are less valuable than their male colleagues.

The groups who oppose more male teachers/ male role models in primary school include:

- The Queensland Teachers Union (refer submission to the A Class Act - inquiry into the Status of the Teaching Profession and article in Courier Mail 28/8/00) that claims that women can be just as effective role models for men.
- Association of Women Educators, ACT Branch page 123 the Class Act (Appendix A).

One has to ask why these groups oppose male teachers or conversely why they discourage males from entering the profession and see every move as a threat to women.

Ironically the Queensland Teachers Union calls for quotas for women in industry and politics. Yet no one is suggesting there should be quotas for men in teaching - the issue is one of male role models and one of not discouraging young men from joining the profession. My submission in fact shows that men are being driven out of the profession by feminists who do not see a place for men in primary school teaching and who will do anything to get rid of these male teachers. In one instance the QTU refused to represent a male teacher in a disputation on equity grounds but, in the same disputation, it represented the female teachers who supported a rogue female principal.

I also refer to The Australian Education Union (AEU), that represents both males and females, summary of its submission to your inquiry in its magazine Summer 2000 (**Appendix B**). Like the QTU and Association of Women in Educators, ACT, the AEU presents its submission as if any review on education of boys is a threat to girls or that it's a battlefield for boys vs girls. It is nothing of the sort. **I see this inquiry as an opportunity for a better society for both men and women.**

It is difficult to see how these vested interest groups can objectively be part of solution - they are in reality part of the problem. It is as if to address the past inequalities against girls/women they have to somehow destroy anything that's masculine. **The evidence seems to suggest that elements within these vested interest groups are about feminising boys and destroying male teachers - not about equality.**

The reality is that these groups along with the other feminist groups have hijacked education for the past 28 years and now it's time to address any imbalance. The consequences of this feminisation 'experiment' are self evident - it hasn't worked.

I believe the issues in brief listed below include: (I hasten to add that the issues may also have an influence on girls.)

The Issues

- **(inadequate) parenting, dysfunctional families and breakdown of family unit.**

There is an old saying that says show me the boy of seven and I'll show you the man because many believe that our traits, habits and characters are formed by the time we are seven. Our home and early school influences hence are vital.

The notion that boys don't need a male role model is hurting young boys. At a recent suicide convention in Canberra you couldn't help but be moved by a young aboriginal youth from Cape York who emotionally stated that lack of (good) male role models, loss of traditional male roles /jobs and a feeling of not being needed or contributing is driving young aboriginal boys to drugs and suicide. This young man was interviewed on 7.30 Report and told it as it is. He was supported by the mothers who subsequently introduced a 'buddy' (role model) system that they believe is reducing the suicide and other problems. The late Judge McGuire (head of the children's court in Qld) spoke extensively and publicly that family disintegration and neglect is

at the root of the problem for children - and it especially impacts on young boys. I spoke to the late Judge who provided statistics that over 80% of all children before his court were males - most offences were drug related.

I understand that diet has an impact on young children, especially young boys. It is tragic that we have numerous kids going to school without breakfast and maybe their last meal the night before was no more than a take away burger, fries and a soft drink.

It is difficult to discuss the dysfunctional families, lack of (male) role models and not mention

- **the use of Ritlin as a means of 'sedation' of young boys 'diagnosed with ADD or ADHD.**

I say young boys because research indicates that there is a higher number of young boys who are diagnosed. I have been unable to acquire recent studies done in Canada which I believe suggest that the 'experiment has left these boys demoralised, suicidal and drug addicted'. I have spoken to teachers who suggest that in some cases the problem appears to include a lack of parental discipline, broken homes and (parents) inability to cope. It is as interesting as it is sad that the words 'controls boys' is often associated with the use of ADD/ADHD drugs. Even female (primary) teachers are heard to say they can't control boys and they should be on Ritlin or in a class with a male teacher. This can result in a disproportionate number of 'problem' boys in one classroom - which affects the whole class. It is reported that in some Qld schools up to 10 % of students (mainly young boys) line up for medication.

- **discipline, violence and drugs in schools**

I refer to article 'DRUG SHAME - Kids who queue to be sedated' Sunday Mail 22/2/1998 (Appendix C). As stated in the article once we queued up for milk, in the 1990's our primary schoolers line up for drugs to control behavioural problems. I quote from the principal of a Brisbane school (Sunday Mail 22/2/98) "It's a big part of school life and has a big impact on the behaviour management of the school." She, the principal, said up to 40 to 60 primary school children line up for medication each day at morning tea and lunchtime.

I am also told by teachers that the consultation process that 'replaced' the cane is also flawed. Methods of disciplining children especially young boys needs an urgent review if we are to seriously overcome the social ramifications thereof.

We also need to be proactive in drug education and preventing drugs from being distributed at school. There is a perception that drug pushers and violent children have more rights than the victims. We need to get 'fair dinkum' about drugs.

I also refer to an 'interesting' article (Courier Mail 1 November 1997) - 'A clear-cut case of disobedience' - on discipline in schools.

- **diminishing number of male teachers impacts on 'traditional' boys sports eg Rugby league, soccer and hence behaviours.**

In some cases lack of male teachers means no coaches which means that these sports are not offered because there is no one prepared to take them on. One comment conveyed to me was that a female teacher would not take on the job because she didn't want to be on the bus with

boys after a match because they smell - they can play softball like the girls. Common complaints are that interschool sport was abolished thus depriving children of mixing with other school cultures. Many parents are outraged at removal of interschool sport but are helpless to do anything about it. It has been suggested that it is because interschool sport was traditional a male thing and the boys can stay at school and play less aggressive sports.

I understand that work place health and safety restricts boys 'natural' instincts to play physically at lunchbreaks. Sports such as Red rover and football are considered too rough with the end result being that the boys end up fighting and/or are disruptive after the break. In other words they are restricted from 'using up' that energy and as indicated above the boys can be sedated with drugs akin to speed (albeit diagnosed) to settle them down. Add to this that in the Qld summer the students are often returning to a hot 40 degree room or demountable, it is hardly an appropriate learning environment.

At a co-ed school recently the only girl in the football team was awarded the best sportsperson for the year award not because she was the best but because she played in a traditional male sport. You can guess what this did for the morale of the young boys.

A recent survey revealed that Queensland children have the lowest sport participation rate in the nation. While an Australian Bureau of Statistics report into the cultural and leisure activities of children also found that "youngsters living with both parents were more likely to get involved in sport than those from sole parent families."

I also understand that the promotion system in primary schools is weighted 'against' teachers participation in sport as it has no bearing on promotions. This particularly effects male teachers who 'traditionally' participate in coaching of these 'male' sports and in sports administration.

- **Attempts to 'feminise' male teachers who are unable to exhibit 'male' qualities.**

The primary school system sees male teachers who raise their voices or are firm as being aggressive but 'similar firm' stance by their female colleagues is seen as assertive. Schools with female principals are more likely to reprimand and counsel male teachers with a view to having the male teachers exert more feminine approaches. Please also refer Courier Mail articles dated 12/1/1997 and 22/12/2000 (**Appendix D**), re the feminist lecturing at teachers college and why male trainees are turning away from teaching.

- **feminism and how the teaching methods impact on boys.**

Some of current crop of male teachers especially over 40's, feel that there is little they can do about the feminisation of the system and are just biding their time to get out of the system. Please refer to the article in The Australian 19/1/01 'Uphill battle to recruit male role models' which states that male students already studying teaching are being warned off the predominately feminised profession by those working in the field.

The issues include:

- Imbalance of the curriculum towards girls to address past education practices to reflect equal opportunities and such issues.

- Lack of tolerance by many infant female teachers to 'typical' boy traits. Girls are seen to be girls when they tease and 'bitch' but boys need to be punished or need to be controlled (often with drugs eg Ritlin) if they bully.
- Emotional bullying by girls is tolerated but boys aggression is challenged and 'corrected.' Discipline and respect has been replaced with counselling and reflection. Young boys are fed a constant diet of the need to find their feminine side and told what they can't do while girls are told that you can do anything. There is a feeling that white heterosexual males are now at the bottom of the evolutionary scale.
- Feminist material and some teachers (and lecturers) encourage young girls to believe that all men are potential sex fiends and can harm them physically and mentally. This view is taught to student teachers at college (refer Courier Mail articles 12/1/97 and 22/12/00 - Appendix D) and then taught to young girls at school.
- Very few male teachers in lower grades. I broach the reasons herein under fear of litigation and 'policies' to 'manage male teachers out'.
- Women officers in Education Qld and Teachers Union to represent and support females but there is no male equivalent.

I was told that if nagging by a female teacher frustrates boys, that's too bad - the female teacher's approach is not questioned. However if a male uses a firm tone then he must be yelling at children and he needs to be counselled and change. Incidentally this appears to be more prevalent in schools who now have female principals. Some men 'fear' the replacement of male principals with female principals with little experience and who they believe are on a 'mission'.

- **Special needs priorities have shifted away from boys with reading difficulties.**

The perception from the teachers and parents with whom I speak is that the remedial dollar has shifted to other special needs students. Those that fall behind keep falling further behind because they don't get the assistance. For the reasons outlined herein eg feminisation of boys, boys are falling behind in the basics - reading, writing. **Not having to reach a standard in primary school before progressing to higher grade is also a major concern.**

I understand many high school teachers are concerned at the number of students who enter high school with inadequate reading and writing skills. High schools are directing resources to remedial basic reading and writing - many I understand are boys. It is an absolute joke that parents in my neighbourhood were going to the local high school to help the grade 8 kids (mainly boys) to read and write because the primary school system failed them.

I draw attention to that 40% of prisoners can't read or write and most are males.

I believe that Primary and High schools should forge a closer relationship for educational and better resource management.

There is also a view that funds are 'redirected' or found for political point scoring rather than resource remedial reading etc eg -In the past the Qld Government assisted high schools to build assembly halls and primary schools to construct swimming pools. This arrangement was 'cost effective' which ensured that the high school allowed the primary school to use the hall and the community benefited. In more recent times local members have promised primary schools their

own assembly halls and money is 'found' to appease voters.

In one area of Brisbane these changes in policy have resulted in 3 primary schools and 3 high schools with assembly halls but 4 of those schools having no swimming pools and the students have to regularly go to a nearby public pool. Also there is a tendency for schools to do their own thing which is not always in the best interest of the students or the community.

- **cronyism/feminism that exists**

As mentioned above, feminist teaching impacts on the educational need of boys. Some of the male teachers are just frustrated, feel engulfed by and are powerless against the feminisation of boys, attempts to feminise the male teachers and the teaching profession in general and stance taken by Education Qld (and many in the Teachers Union).

Many feel that principal positions will go to a younger feminist who will pursue the feminist line and rid the system of male teachers (see case studies 1 and 2 below). There are some horrendous stories out there about how the promotion system is on the nose and favours younger feminists.

As mentioned above I understand that the promotion system in primary schools is weighted 'against' teachers participation in sport as it has no bearing on promotions. This particularly affects male teachers who 'traditionally' participate in the coaching of these 'male' sports and in sports administration.

- **Internal discipline/grievance system (Qld)**

In Qld we have a system whereby **the (male) teachers are presumed guilty of any accusation and have to prove their innocence.** The system wears down the (male) teachers physically, mentally and financially. The internal investigation system has been described at best as costly, bureaucratic and inept and at worst corrupt. The system is likened to a kangaroo court whereby the outcome is often predetermined and witnesses are called selectively to support the outcome they want.

The investigators are even hand picked and briefed on the desired outcome. Bureaucrats are even prepared to lie, breach its own discipline/grievance process, deny natural justice, intimidate and resort to blackmail to achieve its objective. In one instance the agency lied to the chairman of the appeals tribunal to allow a third party in the hearing on false pretences. No wonder male teachers are diminishing.

In one instance a male teacher was charged and disciplined but was denied natural justice in that he was not interviewed (but allowed to submit a written defence). In the process the male teacher is allowed a personal representation only at the appeal which allows both parties to bring a friend. The teacher is not allowed legal representation but there is a view that the department will seek Crown law advice during intermittent breaks- the male teacher does not have that luxury. Hardly a just system.

- **Lack of accountability**

The Freedom of Information system is considered seriously flawed.

- **Social teachings/social engineering**

Education Qld policy of allowing schools to run their own agenda is an issue eg the way it subtly introduces explicit sexual material and distances itself following the public outrage by 'blaming some committee' or suggesting that each school decides on book-buying. Reference is made to The Sunday Mail 5/12/1999 (**Appendix E**) in which a book 'Secret Girls' stuff was made available in primary school libraries.

Reference is also made to the article in Courier Mail 10/6/2000 (**Appendix F**) 'Class revolution'. It suggests that the Queensland Educ. Dept is indoctrinating our children with left-wing values. The syllabus 'bloods' Year One and Two students in the war against sexism, being told to study "perceptions of gender roles in various settings", "equality of opportunity" and "stereotypes related to work roles." The article suggests that the Qld Government has launched the most radical attempt in Australia to indoctrinate children in key left wing values. To quote the author, "This relentless pushing of faddish peace and environment waffle is nothing short of a disgrace."

- **Mens fear of litigation - treatment of male teachers**

Male teachers fear is from students, other teachers (female principals) and there is compelling evidence that many accusations are false and vexatious yet little if anything is done to the perpetrators of these false allegations. In fact the evidence suggests that in Qld there is a culture of cover up and in effect the system protects the perpetrators. The argument that the Government doesn't want to deter genuine complaints is wearing thin when you see the litany of broken and shattered victims as a consequence of false complaints. This climate of fear is not only a detracting factor in entering the teaching profession but also why male teachers are leaving. I refer to **A Class Act page 123 line 14 which suggests that such matters of false allegations should be addressed. It is about time something is done to rectify this injustice.**

In 1996/97 CJC report it highlights that someone who falsely accused a CJC officer of sexual allegation was charged and convicted - so why not in the teaching or other professions? I understand that in United Kingdom laws are being enacted making false accusations a criminal offence.

The attached newspaper clippings and case studies below will give an indication that the fear is real. In fact in one case a female principal, who admitted to having no notes, in fact made up the serious allegations, interfered with an enquiry by threatening another male teacher and more but was fully assisted by the Government/Crown Law and protected by the bureaucrats while the victim a male teacher had to spend his life savings to defend himself.

I refer to page 175 of A Class Act (Senate Committee inquiry 1998) under the heading "Mens' fear of litigation. While a broad range of factors contribute to young people's decisions to opt for careers outside teaching, the fear of litigation especially in relation to does appear to be a factor in deterring young men from entering the profession at the primary level.

It is difficult to disentangle fear of litigation from more general attitudinal issues and impossible to obtain objective data on their impact on career decisions. Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence suggests that it does influence such decisions."

With due respect to the Senate committee I suggest that the evidence is out there - the articles that I attach and the people that I have spoken to are testament to that. Even the ex Minister of Education Qld, and others, is in print as saying that men are treated differently to women (refer Sunday Mail article 6/8/2000). It is not a level playing field and male teachers are living in fear.

I refer you to the article Sunday Mail 26/1/1997 in which it highlights the disproportionate % of complaints against male teachers and the comments by the then President of the Teachers Union that there is a culture of complaints that are often without foundation and mostly are against men. I mention that the government had no statistical data when the journalist first requested them but later collated the data. I do not detail a third case because I do not want to bring further grief to that male teacher and his family. The case highlights these issues and how an innocent male teacher is now a labourer although his two female accusers, who later admitted to the false accusations in court, walked scott free.

The lack of support for male teachers in these situations is frightening. The Dept of Education refers to each case put before it as an isolated case. The news of each 'isolated' case (and there are many) spreads like wild fire and creates new fear in the hearts of every male teacher.

- **Standing of teachers in the community**

This is a real issue that particularly effects male teachers and how they are portrayed to the public. The handling of the protracted pay dispute in Qld did little to raise the profile of teachers. There is a view that the government and QTU are too busy with social engineering, self promotion, feminisation of boys and politicking to address the real issues and make the tough decisions.

The recent CJC enquiry involving the ex President of the QTU and ex Director of Education (re allegations that the director 'gave' the ex QTU president a senior government job) didn't help much - especially when the ex director takes a senior job with the Victorian Government which under present Qld legislation may preclude the CJC from pursuing the matter.

There is mixed emotions about the QTU but the one thing that many agree on is that the QTU is often seen as politically biased and feminist. I refer you to a letter to the editor Courier Mail 30/3/1997 - re The Teachers Union self interest.

Final comment on issues

This list is by no means exhaustive or order of import thereof. There has been much written about these issues so you appreciate that my comments have been brief. In short there is a feeling out there that the pendulum may have swung too far towards girls. It is as if there is a war against boys.

Even consider the article by AEU Summer 2000(attached) which summarised its submission to you. The provocative headlines are 'What about the boys?' The article that follows indicates that there is some battle of the sexes.

I attach

A Copies of small sample of articles from various newspapers relating to the issues herein. For ease of reference I have listed the material chronologically with a cover sheet headed Reference Material.

A. Case Study 1- Sunday Mail article 9/2/1997 '**Male teacher's Sex claim nightmare - CJC inquiry sparked by spurned principal**', and editorial 9/2/1997. Below is a summary of case study 1.

C Appendix A to E referred to herein.

I now summarise case study 1 and provide a brief summary of case study 2 which highlight the climate of fear that exists in Qld that is deterring male teachers from entering the teaching profession and why they are leaving, and how feminisation is effecting the education of boys.

Case 1

Please refer the article in the Sunday Mail 9/2/1997 marked case 1. You will notice numerous common denominators between case 1 and case 2. I highlight some of the issues:

- Female principal tells a teacher that there was no place in primary school for male teachers - they (males) were only good for one thing - sex. This was not the first male teacher that the principal had approached with this proposition.
- The male teacher faced retribution because he stood up to the principal - other male teachers subjected to the same treatment by the female principal would not come forward for fear of retribution. One was transferred bush and is terrified of retribution.
- The principal claimed that parents complained about the teacher but in fact the principal had solicited complaints from parents and/or fabricated evidence.
- The female principal fabricated evidence that the male teacher was with young children and implied that he was a paedophile and she (principal) lodged an official complaint.
- The teacher was not interviewed to present his version of events (A complaint that I hear all too often) and found out about the investigation through third parties.

You will notice in the article that the then Education Minister said that the teachers can take action through the courts. The bottom line is that the female principal was supported (and seen to be rewarded - by promotion) through this ordeal which left the young male teacher disillusioned, shattered and in poor health.

The young male teacher was not supported by his employer. However the principal who was on her first posting as a principal was subsequently promoted and later changed her name.

Case 2

This case also involved a female principal on her first posting. The victim was also a young male teacher. This teacher after having fabricated allegations against him decided to exercise his right to appeal through the internal appeals process to not only clear his name but to prove that the principal had fabricated evidence and lied. The young male teacher suffered relentless

persecution for his stance but persevered despite losing his life savings and his health.

- The teacher had been taunted for some time by at least one female teacher that he needed to be feminised and that he was too conservative. There had been some jealousy over a number of issues including the male teacher taking on various male sporting coaching roles.
- On taking up her new position the new female principal stated publicly that she knew people in high places and that she would be there for a short time before being promoted up. She skirted of queue jumping with respect to works on school buildings.

To get right to the chase the male teacher was subjected to numerous fabricated allegations which included:

- parent complaints (like the case above it later turned out that the principal solicited the complaints or made them up).
- a serious criminal offence which later was revealed that the principal was either compliant to or involved in the offence being investigated by the police. The allegations were proved to be mischievous and false. The department refused to investigate the female principal's action - instead supported her.
- Allegations of stealing money after a sporting carnival (complaint was initiated by the principal). Much of the work was done in the male teacher's own time. The incident involved a sports representation selection carnival where money was collected for oranges, registration fees etc. The surplus funds (a few dollars) were held over until the next meeting and then handed in with the receipts. This is normal practice in any sport.

In the subsequent investigation the principal threatened a witness (a male teacher from another school who immediately reported the principal's behaviour). The principal was later found guilty by the Public Service Tribunal of serious offences relating to the incident. The male teacher was found innocent. Not happy with the outcome the female principal's superior, punished the male teacher anyway (some months later - at his new school) by issuing a written directive that the male teacher would never hold another managerial position. The director was made retract the punishment in writing after an appeal by the male teacher. However verbally the executive told the teacher that he would not receive promotion. The female principal also made sure the male teacher's nomination for a position on the district committee for the following year was 'lost'. Again on complaint from the male teacher the principal admitted in writing to an "administration error." Again the perpetrator was supported but not the male teacher.

- One of the serious complaints that upset the young male teacher was the implication, well I quote "..... I also observed 2 male students in the swimming enclosure watching you swim. Both students advised me (the female principal) that you had instructed them to accompany you" This was sick and later proved to be made up. This is also identical to the modus operandi used by the female teacher in case 1 above. The male teacher subsequently lodged his own complaint against the principal.

The person assigned to investigate the male teacher's complaint interviewed the students at the school in the presence of their parents. The investigator marched the students and parents past the female principal so she could intimidate them. The parents later said that they felt the investigator was looking for dirt on the male teacher rather than the truth. The truth is that the

male teacher was minding his own business when the kids went to 'tittle-tat' on something that happened in the playground. After interviewing the children, the investigator (subsequently promoted to a very senior bureaucrat position), drove away from the school in the same car as the female principal (the person he was supposed to have been investigating).

At a complaint hearing (initiated by the male teacher) the investigator admitted to poor judgement and the principal after leaving the room and (perhaps obtaining legal advice - at a hearing where the male teacher was not allowed legal representation) said that she recalled that her car had broken down.

The principal later stated that she was only trying to help the young teacher so he wouldn't get into trouble. She could offer no reason why she chose to lodge her complaint in writing to the male teacher and reported it to the 'authorities' and why she waited until after the male teacher was found innocent (and it was found that she had lied - despite the bias of the investigator) to say that she was trying to help the teacher. The end result is that the principal was not reprimanded.

- Having been unable to get rid of the male teacher with the more serious allegations the male teacher was disciplined internally some months later and found guilty of insubordination. Ironically it wasn't until the male teacher lodged his complaint against the principal that he was disciplined. The ordeal was dragged out for almost 1 year. The male teacher was refused an interview to defend himself and was told by the union to 'cop it sweet'. The teacher successfully appealed the decision in which the true facts were revealed and that the principal had lied. I understand that few, if any, teachers bother to appeal an insubordination charge because the chance of winning is zero.
- In the hearings against the principal initiated by the male teacher the tribunals handed down no fewer than 13 adverse findings against the female principal/agency/director including:
 1. Concern by the tribunal as to the relentless pursuit of the male teacher with the full extent of due process while the female principal was restricted to a private counselling session.
 2. The heavy handed manner in which the male teacher was removed from his classroom in full view of his colleagues, parents and students and then placed in 'confinement' (yes solitary confinement) for 3 days in another suburb in a room with no ventilation. The male teacher was in effect deprived of his liberty for 3 days and had to hire a lawyer to have him released. The female principal refused to provide substantiation of any allegations and she later admitted at a hearing that she had no notes, no proof - nothing.

The end result was similar to case 1. The female principal was later promoted and selected for a committee of excellence while the male teacher was left without his life savings and in poor health, traumatised, and disillusioned. Incidentally another male teacher at the same school I understand was subjected to pressure that resulted in his resigning.

This is only the tip of the iceberg but I think you get the gist of it.

Other matters of interests that may deter male teachers from entering the profession

The sad outcome was that the senior director of education in charge of case 2 who had been found by a public service tribunal to have lied and breached regulations to persecute a male

teacher, was subsequently appointed as the senior bureaucrat to head a sex enquiry hot line where people were encouraged to ring in and make complaints. Concerns were raised that "there has to be a clear message that making false and groundless accusations carries a consequence" - refer Courier Mail 6/4/1999 - 'School hotline open to Abuse'. This senior director who was 'under a cloud', and renowned for being uncompromising in his pursuit of young male teachers, I understand made recommendations to changes to legislation namely,

1. the recording and maintaining of all allegations against a teacher and the outcome of any investigation
2. misconduct hearings into teachers will proceed even if they resign before the matter is finalised.

With respect to 1. This would be a further deterrent for young male teachers to stay or enter the profession. Surely if someone is found innocent, especially after having false allegations and fabricated evidence against them then he/she should have the slate wiped clean.

With respect to 2. Why should this only apply to teachers? I believe that at present public servants cannot be pursued once they leave and I understand over 400 have escaped this 'provision' in the CJC Act including perhaps 2 senior directors in the past 12 months.

I raise these issues as further evidence of the climate of fear confronting young teachers (especially males) in this state.

Other Remarks

The persecution of these young male teachers in Qld is real and if the Qld Government is to employ both male and female teachers it should treat both fairly. The environment in which these male teachers teach our children is disturbing.

I am not suggesting that the bureaucracy wake up and say who will we persecute today. Although there are those in the system and other groups who have such a hatred of men that might do just that. If these self interest groups/people want to contribute to change that's fine - otherwise they can contribute by allowing those with a more broader and social conscience and perspective to proceed without being impeded.

Unfortunately when confronted with the option to make a difference to the aspirations of young Queenslanders or to protect an endemic culture of cover up and those who abuse their power, in Qld the Government is found wanting and often chooses the later and spends taxpayers money to defend a tired 'corrupt' system that is driving our male teachers out of the profession. **This is the ultimate betrayal to the young students who are the real victims - the young boys who are deprived of role models.**

You will see in the reference material that senior educators and government speak of wanting to recruit more male teachers and that people that make false accusations will be punished. That is the public stance but the reality is quite the opposite. The spoken work and reality are often different. Making false allegations is becoming all too prevalent and too easy. There is no deterrent. Quite simply those who make malicious allegations against teachers, even if they are

other teachers should be prosecuted not rewarded. It will take courage but it can be achieved.

I appreciate that these are State matters but they are relevant in that they impact on the teaching of young boys and the issues relevant to this inquiry.

Then maybe these situations are not restricted to Qld. In a trip to Tasmania I met a young man who was doing renovations to a bed and breakfast accommodation. The young man turned out to be an ex teacher who got out of the system because of persecution by a female principal. I have spoken to people from overseas who tell of similar situations.

NSW has already had one suicide of an innocent young male teacher (again so not to cause the family further grief, I have not provided names, places etc.). The NSW police who investigated the circumstances surrounding the death state, "xxxx was a naive, caring teacher who became a victim of an uncaring system."

At the inquest the NSW senior deputy coroner found major flaws in the bureaucratic procedures (similar to Qld). The deputy coroner called for reform of the way the Dept investigates allegations of a sexual nature and how it looks after its employees.

Final Comments and summary

It is one thing to 'correct' the imbalances and lack of opportunities afforded to females in the past but it is another to create a climate of fear and adopt policies and laws that are nothing short of social engineering which effect young boys and is diminishing the number of male primary school teachers - thus reducing the number of male role models which is fundamentally important to young boys.

I refer to a survey, Courier Mail 2/8/1997 in which Qld women stated that they were fed up with extreme feminists and they should 'back off'. **Further more we see vested interest groups that are committed to destroying anything masculine or family oriented. I would hope that men learn to respect women - not be locked in some battle of the sexes that is socially destructive and manifests itself in violence, drugs and suicide.**

As parents, managers, civic leaders and educators we often underestimate the powerful influence we have over children. Discipline is often thrown out the window with some parents and educators abdicating their responsibilities. I appreciate that there is no single solution to drugs, suicide and crime that is engulfing our society. But I believe that the geneses for these behaviours start in these early years. Our kids are fed a constant diet of violence, corruption and deceit. And our boys are being denied male role models with socially dangerous consequences.

I would say that trust of Governments and of big business is at a low ebb for various reasons including the daily revelations of rorting and excesses. Simply the community also needs good role models - but this is outside the scope of this inquiry. But the bottom line is that many people are hurting out there and feel marginalised - they feel that no one is listening to the silent majority. These people, like me, want to be heard - we want to contribute.

It saddens me that I see kids grow up without the influence of a male role model at home or at primary school and do not see a male/ male teacher until high school. Add up the social problems which includes poor parenting, education, downsizing of business, broken families, erosion of values and at best we are **creating a lethal cocktail that is the breeding ground for the most vulnerable - the young.** Enough is enough.

I submit that the issues I raise impact on boys' education and the way they view society and the system that at times lets them down. As a community we need to reconsider our approach to rearing boys. We need proper parenting and proactive education policies to create a learning environment which promotes an environment that churns out children equipped with every opportunity to reach their potential.

I mention that the male teachers to whom I refer in the 2 case studies have suffered bouts of poor health induced by their ordeal and do not want to be publicly identified for fear of further retribution. For this reason I ask that my name be excluded from your report to avoid the risk of these teachers being identified.

I have spoken to the two male teachers in cases 1 and 2 and they are also prepared to give evidence 'in camera'.

In conclusion I pay tribute to the many dedicated teachers, educators, parents and community volunteers who are excellent role models and make a significant contribution to our society. With their support and the commitment of your committee there is still plenty of time to make a difference. But our efforts need to be co-ordinated.

I thank you for the opportunity to contribute. I would be pleased to elaborate on any matters relating to these issues.

CASE STUDY 1

09.02.97

Sunday Mail

Male Teacher Sex Claim
Nightmare - CJC Inquiry
Sparked By Spurned
Principal

09.02.97

Sunday Mail

Teachers and Bureaucrats

Sunday Mail

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1997

Teachers and bureaucrats

THE ordeal suffered by a male primary teacher who claims he was harassed and victimised by a female principal reinforces beliefs that the culture of secrecy allows the growth of agenda-driven groups within the Queensland Education Department. We make no comment about the rights and wrongs of the matter, although it should be pointed out that the man was exonerated by a CJC investigation and he received a written apology from the department. The man claimed that the principal involved told him there was no place in schools for male teachers. Some weeks ago The Sunday Mail warned about the increasing imbalance in the ratio of male/female teachers in our schools, particularly primary schools. Fear of accusations of paedophilia was one factor. Another was an agenda pushed by a small group in the education bureaucracy that there was no place for men in primary schools, although there is no doubt that the vast majority of female and male teachers work happily and effectively together. The appalling aspect of the case reported today is that the male teacher involved was unaware for months that he was under investigation. The principal's official complaint to the department questioned his teaching style and approach to discipline and implicitly suggested he was a paedophile. The male teacher says the department referred the case to the CJC and the investigation lasted more than a year. Parents were interviewed but not the teacher concerned. He found out about the investigation by accident, from a person who had been interviewed about the allegations. The case is but one of a number where the Education Department has appeared to have been tardy in extending justice to innocent teachers. Queensland Teachers' Union president Ian Mackie says that the system of handling complaints against teachers is bureaucratic and often takes months to resolve. The secrecy involved is symptomatic of the department's general attitude, most obvious in its refusal to allow publication of schools' OP results so that parents can discover which are the best for their children. It is a natural wish for parents who want to ensure that their children receive the best education to prepare them for a place in the diminishing work force. For too long bizarre academic theories and educational politics have muddied the workings of our schools to the detriment of our children. It is time the education bureaucrats devoted their energies to the job of helping children to a secure future rather than engaging in educational politics.

CASE STUDY
1

Male teacher's

① S. MAIL 9-2-97

CJC inquiry sparked by spurned principal



Chris Griffith

A MALE primary schoolteacher said he had been harassed for sex and victimised by a female principal who had told him there was no place in schools for male teachers.

The man said the principal had initiated a complaint which led to a prolonged CJC investigation against him which later exonerated him. He said he had received a written apology from the Education Department.

The man requested his name be withheld because he was still teaching in Queensland government schools.

He later moved schools and the woman had been promoted to principal of a much larger primary school.

Last week the man contacted us following reports in The Sunday Mail about the decline in the number of male teachers, who increasingly face accusations of paedophilia, especially at primary school level.

He had taught successfully for about 10 years without major incident until he began working under the

Union helps men in vexatious complaints cases

QUEENSLAND Teachers' Union president Ian Mackie, right, said only a small percentage of complaints against teachers were substantiated.

"We have a number of male teachers who have been subjected to vexatious complaints and we are in a position to support them and we do," he said.

"It's our view that teachers generally, and male teachers specifically, are subjected to unreasonable allegations on frequent occasions."

He said those making unfounded

and malicious allegations against teachers should be prosecuted "whether they be students, parents, or other teachers".

He said complaints against teachers to the Education Department often took months to resolve.

The current system for handling complaints against teachers was bureaucratic, and rarely resulted in outcomes satisfactory to either party.

"But we're not in the process of protecting paedophiles or anyone who preys on students."



woman principal in a Brisbane primary school staffed by one other male and 13 other female teachers.

He said the school was the woman's first posting as principal. His problems had begun after the female principal twice made sexual advances to him.

"I have witnesses who would testify in court she made strong sexual advances to me."

He said he then was subjected to "endless complaints that stretched over months".

"The only way to describe it would be victimisation, like yelling at me in front of my class.

"And she would endlessly say: 'A parent has rung up and complained about this or that'. She'd say parents had come in and complained in her office. that you had done this.

"It wasn't till a long time later that I found out all of that had been fabricated. In the end I had the courage to go to these parents and ask them. These people had never actually rung (the principal)."

He said the principal continually complained about his teaching style and inconsistencies in approach to discipline.

"I couldn't do anything right in her eyes.

She had told me she had male staff on before and there was no place for men in primary school teaching. That was exactly what she had said to me."

He said matters came to a head when the principal lodged an official complaint with the department.

"It said I was over-familiar with the children. That was revenge for me not accepting her advances."

He said the complaint implicitly suggested he was a paedophile. "That's what we worked out to be the basis of it. But it wasn't said directly at all."

He said he was unaware for months of the complaint and the department's decision to refer it to the CJC. He said the investigation went for over a year.

"I found out quite by accident, in a conversation with somebody who had been interviewed. The person had assumed the investigation had finished because the CJC had approached them long beforehand.

"They said how did it go? What was the end result?"

"And I said: 'What do you mean?' I had no idea what was going on.

sex claim nightmare

②

S. MAIL 9-2-97

"You've got no control when you don't know what the allegation is. It's like a nightmare, there's nothing you can do. I was physically sick for weeks and weeks.

"I used up a lot of sick leave, but I forced to keep myself going because I knew I'd done nothing wrong.

"And I went to see a psychologist because I thought I was going off my head. I had become so incredibly paranoid. I was scared of everything. In fact, there was one time when a police car came up the street with its lights flashing, and I was petrified thinking they're coming to get me. I got to the point I was so paranoid I didn't trust anybody, even though I knew I had done nothing wrong."

He said the remaining staff had been "incredibly supportive" throughout his ordeal.

He said the CJC had interviewed about 10 parents, but at no stage was he interviewed.

He later discovered about five male teachers "who'd been

Minister warns of workplace problems

EDUCATION Minister Bob Quinn, right, said the case was "the exception rather than the rule".

"Despite this experience, there are many hundreds of male teachers happily going about their work and are highly appreciated because of it."

But he warned prospective male teachers to be aware of workplace problems in schools "which are no different to other workplaces".

He said teachers could take action in the courts to redress vexatious and frivolous complaints against them.

"There is no question there is a place for men in primary, secondary, and preschool," he said.



there previously had been through a similar experience".

He said the school's new principal eventually told him he had been exonerated.

"He was almost like a father figure. He said that after seeing my teaching and my interaction with the kids, he was absolutely convinced there was no basis to it. I also got a letter (from the department) that amounted to an apology.

"They assured me that the matter was finished, and they

made it completely clear. I only got that because I insisted that was what I wanted."

He said the woman had been promoted to a considerably larger school while the investigation had been under way.

"When the case was finished. I had the opportunity to see the allegations. There was nothing specific of any details of wrongdoing whatsoever. The claims were solely hers.

"She knew how involved the investigation would become,

she knew nothing wrong had been done, but she wanted to see me suffer."

He said he once wanted to be a teacher for all his working life.

"I was quite happy with it. In fact I had thoroughly enjoyed it for 10 years.

"And during the investigation I kept going because I knew I had done nothing wrong.

"But now I realise how corrupt the whole system is. It all seems incredibly corrupt that such injustice can happen.

"Now I'm in it for the next couple of years and that will be it."

He said he was not a misogynist. He enjoyed working with female teachers who he said overwhelmingly supported their male colleagues.

"They enjoy having males on staff, particularly in the upper grades.

"And the kids always look forward to having a male teacher."

He said both the male and female teachers had resented this principal's actions.

But he warned that male teachers should "never, ever, aggravate a female principal or somebody female in a senior position".

"These women can say anything about anyone and it is now obvious the department will sit up and the CJC will become involved."

He said that in teaching "men are very much the victim now, very very much".

"I know that from experience, from going

System designed to reduce delays

The CJC's Chief Complaints Officer Michael Barnes said the commission had investigated only 15 allegations of the 1243 complaints made against teachers since 1990.

"The department handles all complaints of a minor nature and reports to the CJC on a monthly basis.

"This system ensures there is no delay in clearing up the allegations while ensuring that repeat offenders and those of a serious misconduct come to our attention."

He said teacher-related complaints investigated by the CJC were three assault matters involving bodily injury caused to students, four allegations of sexual misconduct, and eight allegations of misappropriation or some other form of dishonest conduct.

"The CJC is well aware of the personal stress that can result for teachers if an allegation is made against them.

"However, the CJC only becomes involved in the more serious matters, such as assaults which have resulted in injuries to students, or theft, and there have only been a handful of these cases since 1990."

He said the complaints system had been modified to make sure they could be finalised as quickly as possible.

through all this. Women can do and say anything. I think part of it is these women want to climb the ladder, but they're fearful of men so they can put the men down early in their careers so that

they're not threatening them from a higher position later on."

He would never recommend teaching to men. "I would talk them out of it. There is no way I would ever recommend it."

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