

11 7 March 2005

Mr. LUKI HARTSUYKER, M.P.
Hon. Member for COOPER

INQUIRY INTO TEACHER EDUCATION
Reference: - Page 32. Coffs Coast Advocate - Feb. 26, 2005

Dear Mr. Hartsuyker;

I read with interest of the
"Inquiry into Teacher Education" which you have been
asked to chair.

For many years and on numerous occasions
I have asked a number of teachers, - "When doing
your teacher training, how much tuition did you
receive on Methods of Teaching and the art of
imparting your knowledge" ? - In the
main, the answer was NONE.

My reason for asking was - as a former
President of a public school P.T.C. Association, I
"sat in" on some teaching sessions and was
appalled when listening to the manner in which teachers
presented their subject matter. Many were
obviously not fully prepared, had little idea
of the use of teaching aids and even the most
simple rules of Question Technique were not
used or understood. - Eg: -

Teacher to a class of 24: - John, what is
2 times 2. ?

The question should be put: — "What is 2 times 2 — pause — John?"

In the first example only John has to think. (The other 23 say "Gee I'm glad it's not me.")

The above mentioned "areas of failure" are very minor in the overall scheme.

Quite a number of years ago, as a Regular Army Warrant Officer, I spent considerable time teaching "Methods of Instruction/Teaching". Each course of instruction was of 2-3 weeks duration and covered many facets, among them being: — "What to teach", how to divide subject teaching time (revision, must know, should know, could know), blackboard preparation prior to class, question technique (to determine if the pupils have understood etc.), reward + "punishment", ability to understand that every pupil is "different" and may respond in different ways to the teachers approach — and above all and most importantly remembering the maxim — "Doing and thinking" is best, "Seeing and hearing" is next best and "Hearing alone" is practically useless. I have hardly scratched the surface of what I believe to be an important subject. The examples mentioned above are very few of what is necessary to be made known.

The art of imparting knowledge does not come naturally. — It must be taught and I respectfully suggest it must be included in every Teacher Training Programme.

I further suggest that specialist training teams be established to undertake the tasks of instructing teachers and trainee teachers how to teach.

The same basic principles of teaching apply now as they did yesterday. Many of these were contained in Australian Army Publications "Methods of Instruction" and "Good Instruction" now superseded by "Instructors Handbook".

I may be able to obtain a copy of the latter and if thought worthwhile I would be quite prepared to discuss its content with any member of your team with the object of combining suitable subject matter with every other available information pertaining to the art of imparting knowledge.

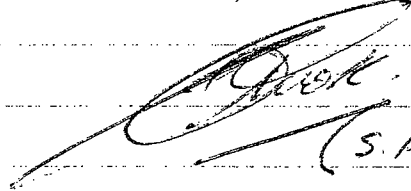
The total information gained would be particularly suitable for inclusion in a "Teachers Handbook" for distribution to all trainee teachers on completion of a Special Instruction Course.

Sorry about the pen & paper letter.
Afraid the 81+ year fingers dont handle the
machine keys, and my writing is terrible !!

Hope the foregoing is of some use
even if only to "fix the pot"

Crook-look with the Inquiry.

Sincerely & With Best Regards.


(S.F. (STAN) CROOK.)