

OPPOSITION PRESS RELEASE - EDUCATION GROUPS

**285. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the Minister for Education and Training:**

Is the minister aware of an opposition press release issued on 3 May titled, according to my note, "Premier's Chastising of Education Groups Inappropriate"?

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH replied:**

Yes, I have it. I thank the member for that very thought-provoking question. I did see a copy of this press statement by Hon Peter Collier, which was released while I was overseas. In it he defends the group People Lobbying Against Teaching Outcomes, by describing adverse comments made by the Premier as being ignorant and obnoxious. I find this absolutely astounding. If the honourable member wants examples of ignorant and obnoxious contributions to the education debate in this state, he could start by having a look at PLATO. I have seen this public web site and I am amazed by the ignorant and obnoxious responses to individuals who go to the PLATO web site and express anything other than wholehearted support for the complete removal of the outcomes focus from the whole K-12 system of education in this state. For example, there was a series of postings recently initiated by one of the PLATO founders. The PLATO founders were attacking an individual who wrote a pro-outcomes letter to *The West Australian*. The individual was vilified in a number of ways, and was finally compared to being a Nazi. In defence of the vilified individual, another PLATO member posted something that was supposed to calm everybody down. According to my note, the member said -

If we expect people to listen to our points of view, then we need to let them have their say without being labelled. My own parents suffered under the NAZI regime in Europe, and quite frankly, I find the analogy in rather poor taste.

The defence then drew a very vicious, personal and racist attack. If members want to see examples of vicious, personal racist attacks, they should go to the PLATO web site. The response, according to my note, was -

Ilse, you are an obviously opologetically sycophant for the criminals who are pushing the OBE barrel to line their own pockets. Really I think that the Nazis had the right idea. It is a pity they didn't get to your parents before you were conceived. If you want to add stupid comments like yours to a website, go and put them on the ETA website where you are sure to earn brownie points. . . . You really are a pathetic peice of trash that somehow escaped the final solution!

**Hon Kim Chance:** Is this from a teacher?

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** This was from a teacher. There are plenty of comments like this. Members should go to the PLATO web site. Apparently this is what happens on the PLATO web site day in, day out. Every time that there is a contrary view to its own extreme position, this is what happens. Although the media may see this as a reasonable voice on education matters, I do not, and I suggest that reading a sample of the postings on the PLATO web site would give any open-minded person a view that is in line with the Premier's. Because the PLATO web site is full of this stuff, I ask members whether we should take direction on educational leadership and matters from people who hold these views? I ask you, Mr President, is this the voice of reason? Hon Peter Collier might want to support these people, but I have to tell members -

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** That's ridiculous; he doesn't. You've got one extremist who has rejected something.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** Read the press release. Hon Peter Collier might want to support these people; I do not.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** Are you attributing those remarks to him?

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** No; absolutely not!

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** That's exactly what you are inferring.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order, members! The Minister for Education and Training is completing her answer.

**Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH:** I am. The final point I make, Mr President, is that as Minister for Education and Training, I worry that these people are teaching our children.