



Te Ope Whakaora

Public Sphere

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News & Updates from The Salvation Army Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit | February 2013

I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, quality, and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centred men have torn down, other-centred men can build up. Reverend Dr Martin Luther King Jr.

EDITORIAL

While many have been enjoying another long hot summer with a good book or some beach-going, spare a thought for those who have curtailed their holiday activities to work on submissions for the Government's Education Amendment Act. The Bill, if passed, will introduce partnership schools into our education system, mirroring similar approaches in the United States where private sector investors have set up schools in low-decile areas in an effort to jump start achievement. While the Unit commends an attempt to address education inequality, we also have some concern around the proposed framework: schools would be run by a private Ministry of Education-approved sponsor, they would not have to hire registered teachers, teach to the national curriculum, or run a Board of Trustees; and there is little structure specified around the soliciting of students (which has the potential, as in the USA, to leave local public schools vulnerable while their best students are 'cherry-picked').

The cynical amongst us would also question why the Government chose late January as a time to hear feedback on the Bill, while most Kiwis are still in holiday mode. The attempt to hustle through legislation that will impact the children most struggling in our current education system is somewhat frightening, and the lack of detail in the Bill itself reflects this hasty approach. Testing what is essentially an ideological experiment without proven results on the children who will direct the future of our nation is unacceptable. Promoting an approach which could negatively affect local schools and communities is objectionable. Undermining our registered teachers and

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national curriculum by allowing partnership schools to disregard them is intolerable. And creating a new system without addressing the social inequalities contributing to our current problems is negligent.

The Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit has formulated a submission on the Bill (which can be viewed on our website) and we would hope that other organisations have also chosen to speak out on this legislation. We cannot allow education policy to be treated lightly, and we cannot entertain a 'holiday' mentality with public policy—tuning out on issues that affect our young people and the New Zealand we are shaping.

Sarah Dillon
SPPU Intern

PUBLICATIONS

Submissions

As outlined in our editorial, the Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit are about to present a submission on the Education Amendment Bill. We have chosen to oppose this Bill on the grounds that the proposed partnership school system does not effectively address the inequalities contributing to lack of educational achievement. We would also like to see existing schools supported and strengthened, rather than an experimental system reform. A copy of this submission is available [on our website](#).

The Unit has also recently completed submissions on the on the Public Finance Amendment Bill and the Family Court Proceedings Reform which are also available for viewing at our website. If you would like to provide feedback on any of the submissions please email ronji_tanielu@nzf.salvationarmy.org.

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The State of the Nation

This year's State of the Nation report is entitled 'She'll Be Right', playing on one of our great Kiwi mantras, to emphasise the action and vision required to ensure that New Zealand will, in fact, 'be right'. The report was launched 13-15 February in venues in Auckland, Wellington, Hamilton, Christchurch and Dunedin. A panel discussion with various Members of Parliament was a special feature of the Wellington and Dunedin report launch events, and resulted in some great discussion. See the report on [our website](#) and watch video of the launch event, including the MPs panel debate, on [YouTube](#). If you would like any more information on the report, please email justin_latif@nzf.salvationarmy.org.



UNIT NEWS

Prevent People Trafficking Conference

The Unit's social justice advocate Chris Frazer is working alongside the United States Embassy and ECPAT Child

PREVENT PEOPLE TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE 2013



Alert as The Salvation Army's representative in the jointly organised Prevent People Trafficking Conference to be held 11-12 April 2013. The conference organisers are excited to announce internationally renowned experts Anne T Gallagher and Matt Friedman as the keynote speakers for the event. This conference will be action-focused and concentrate on the next steps necessary to prevent labour trafficking and exploitation occurring in New Zealand, in a Pacific context.

Visit www.salvationarmy.org.nz/PPTConf to read more about the highly regarded speakers and to register for the conference.

Just Action Volunteers

As Just Action conference preparation carries on in full swing, we are excited to have a number of registrations already and over 150 fans on our [Facebook page](#). We are also looking for volunteers from different areas of the country to help us with promotions over the phone. If you are interested in helping us spread the word about this inspirational and challenging event, and have a couple (or a few) hours available in a week, please contact justin_latif@nzf.salvationarmy.org



Go to www.salvationarmy.org.nz/justaction. If you haven't already, take advantage of the earlybird pricing and sign up for Just Action 2013.

Auckland Gambling Venue Policy Change

We have been supporting our Oasis Problem Gambling Service and other problem gambling organisations in their campaign for a sinking-lid policy for pokie machine venues, and a cap-policy for TAB venues, in Auckland. The Auckland Council is holding a public consultation process open from now until 28 February. We urge as many Aucklanders as possible to make a submission to the Council to help reduce the damaging effects of problem gambling. For more information visit: www.nomorepokies.org.nz

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