



LATE CITY

# The Courier-Mail

Friday March 12, 2004

\$1.00 includes GST



• Rugby league • Rugby union • Australian rules

## Main Game

YOUR NEW-LOOK 16-PAGE EXPERT FOOTBALL GUIDE

PLUS 16-PAGE SPORT LIFTOUT



# Cash tied to schools shake-up

Dennis Atkins  
NATIONAL POLITICAL EDITOR

### MAIN POINTS

- \$31.3 billion in Commonwealth funding for Australian schools from 2005-08, a record increase of \$8 billion.
- Queensland schools to receive \$6 billion over the four years, an increase of \$1.7 billion.
- Schools and state governments must meet a range of performance measures in order to get the money.
- Disadvantaged students, including those with disabilities, targeted in a new \$2 billion literacy, numeracy and special learning needs program.
- School reports to use plainer language.
- Uniform national school starting age to be in place by 2010.
- Children to be protected from bullying.
- Government to release discussion paper on all aspects of schooling.

### INSIDE

Costello rules out leadership challenge: **Page 2**

Education shakeup: **Pages 4, 5**  
Leahy's view, Place & time: **Page 16**

### PARTY GAMES

In the past two weeks, the Government has been spending money like there is only one tomorrow: polling day  
— Dennis Atkins, **Page 4**

THE Howard Government yesterday continued to spend its way towards the election, announcing it would increase funding for schools by 25 per cent to a record \$31.3 billion over the next four years.

The parent-friendly package includes a promise to raise standards and provide better report cards in plain English.

The education package, the latest in a series of pre-Budget spending in key areas, was unveiled as Treasurer Peter Costello finally ruled out any challenge to Prime Minister John Howard.

In two days the Government has thrown billions of dollars at health and education as it attempts to turn around its slide in the polls and arrest Labor's resurgence under new leader Mark Latham.

Queensland's share of the funding package is \$6 billion, an increase of \$1.7 billion, according to federal Education Minister Brendan Nelson.

While the basic increase for schools simply matches indexation, the Government has increased overall funding with \$4 billion to cover capital works, literacy and numeracy programs, money for special schools, remote schools and language teaching.

Mr Howard said the funding was, for the first time, conditional on agreement to a series of benchmarks for educational basics and guarantees to report in plain English to parents.

As well, schools will have to spell out to parents such things as absentee rates, the options open to school leavers and the professional qualifications held by teachers.

The Government also will conduct the first national survey of parents, asking them what they want from schools and how the system serves their children's needs.

The package represents a bold national approach to education shaped around the Government's philosophy of choice.

But it was condemned by the Opposition, Labor state governments and education unions as offering nothing new and further tilting Commonwealth funding towards private schools.

Mr Howard claimed the package was "an even-handed approach".

"And we look forward to debates on this issue in the months ahead," he said.

"We are for choice."

"We're very proud of what we have done for government schools, we're very proud of the burgeoning of new independent schools, and we're very proud of what we have done particularly for the under-resourced schools within the Catholic education system," he said.

The Government plans to use the results of its parents survey — due to be completed by the end of next month — for further education announcements before the election.

"We'll be seeking to engage the parents of schoolchildren in a discussion about the sort of material they want to receive from their schools, the sort of contact, the sort of communication, their input

in relation to professional development for teachers," Mr Howard said.

Mr Howard and Dr Nelson would not say what would happen if the states and territories refused to accept the conditions.

"I'm sure in the end (the states) will come to the party, because they are reasonable conditions and what's more the parents of children at state schools want this information," Mr Howard said.

"The problem is that the teacher unions don't like this and once again they are standing in the way of progress."

At the same time, Dr Nelson backed higher pay for teachers if it was tied to performance.

"It is a prescription for mediocrity when the most disengaged, disillusioned and detached and jaded teacher, who is in a minority of the teaching profession, that turns up late, goes home early and doesn't care too much about what goes on in between is paid exactly the same as the teacher who gets in early, cares about our children and is on the phone to parents at night," Dr Nelson said.

# Terrorists commit massacre in Madrid



RAIL carnage... police inspect a train carriage torn apart by one massive explosion.

Picture: Sergio Perez



SURVIVORS... a man covers his bleeding wounds.

"I saw legs and arms. I won't forget this ever. I've seen horror." Ambulance driver

HORRIFIC peak-hour train bombings in Spain killed at least 173 people and injured more than 600 yesterday.

The four blasts, only days ahead of Sunday's Spanish general election, devastated three Madrid train stations almost simultaneously.

They were immediately labelled the deadliest attack ever by the Basque separatist group ETA.

"This is a massacre," government spokesman Eduardo Zaplana said.

The leader of the banned Basque separatist party Batasuna denied ETA was behind the blasts and blamed "the Arab resistance".

But Spanish officials said the explosives were the type often used by ETA. And Interior Minister Angel Acebes said: "It is absolutely clear that the terrorist organisation ETA was seeking an attack with wide repercussions. Any attempt to divert attention from those responsible for the attack is intolerable."

The bombs exploded around 7.30am (4.40pm Queensland time) in a commuter train arriving at Atocha station, a bustling hub for both subway and long-distance trains in the Spanish capital.

Blasts also rocked trains on platforms at two stations on

Eugenia station, about 10km southeast of Atocha.

"There was one carriage totally blown apart," Sanchez said. "People were scattered all over the platforms. I saw legs and arms. I won't forget this ever. I've seen horror."

Shards of metal were scattered in the Atocha station at the spot where an explosion ripped a train in two.

"I saw many things explode in the air," said Juan Fernandez, 50, a civil servant who was on the platform.

"People started to scream and run, some bumping into each other and as we ran there was another explosion. I saw people with blood pouring from them, people on the ground," Fernandez said.

Outrage over blasts, **Page 19**

# Former minister irons out old mates

Tony Koch

A FORMER National Party minister has blasted many of her old colleagues in a book about her life in the Queensland Parliament.

Di McCauley reveals in her bombshell book *Diving Off The Ironing Board* that she fears for the future of the National Party and refuses to vote for the man who now holds her old seat of Callide, Deputy Opposition Leader Jeff Seeney. She also alleges former premier Rob Borbidge's legal adviser advised her to hide the fact she mis-



TELL-all... McCauley.

Party member since 1975, Mrs McCauley spent 12 years in Parliament from 1986 to 1998 as the Member for Callide.

She was minister for local

government and planning from 1996 to her retirement in 1998.

The book will be launched next week by Deputy Premier Terry Mackenroth.

Mrs McCauley accused another NP parliamentary speaker, Lin Powell, of "an unprecedented act of bastardry" in July 1989 when he resigned and "created uproar in Parliament".

And she said male MPs had a fixation for discussing their libidos when they were away from their wives, quoting fellow National MP Judy Gamin who said: "I'm so sick of old fellas talking about

their old fellas." She wrote that former premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen lost her respect when he once threatened he had the power to ring her local newspaper editor and tell him she was a "useless MP".

She also wrote that NP minister Leisha Harvey "seemed unable to cope from the beginning in the difficult portfolio of Health".

She also wrote: "It will be a long time before the National Party comes out of the wilderness, if ever, because they are finally reaping what was sown a long time ago."

Continued **Page 8**

**LOWEST AIRFARES GUARANTEED**  
EVEN FROM THE INTERNET

**P&O CRUISES - SAVE UP TO 25%**

**SOUL SOOTHER CRUISE FROM \$588\***

INCLUDES 2 nights cruising from Brisbane the Pacific aboard P&O's Pacific Sky, all onboard main meals and entertainment.

**PACIFIC PASTICHE FROM \$1399\***

INCLUDES 8 nights cruising from Brisbane aboard P&O's Pacific Sky to 4 Pacific ports, all onboard main meals and entertainment

**SUMMER SPARKLER FROM \$1588\***

INCLUDES 12 nights cruising from Brisbane aboard P&O's Pacific Sky to 6 Pacific ports, all onboard main meals and entertainment.

**OUR GUARANTEE**

We guarantee to find you the **LOWEST** available AIRFARE on your chosen airline. If you find a genuine lower price, we will beat it by a minimum of \$5 for Australia & New Zealand & \$20 for International travel.

**CALL YOUR NEAREST STORE**

**131 600**

**FLIGHT CENTRE**  
WORLD'S NO.1 DISCOUNT FLIGHT SPECIALISTS  
www.flightcentre.com.au

theCourierMail.com.au

ISSN 1322-5235

Telephone: 1300 30 40 20  
Classifieds: 13 2202  
Home delivery: 1800 630 130  
Fax: (07) 3666 7888

More than 64% of Australia's newspapers are now recycled

**INDEX**

Business	31-36	Lotto	2	Brisbane	Few showers. Max 29
Casket results	20	Perspectives	17	Gold Coast	Few showers. Max 27
Classified Index	20	QConfidential	22	Sunshine Coast	Few showers. Max 28
Comics	21	Sport	Liftout	Townsville	Shower or two. Max 30
Crosswords	22	Television	13	Rockhampton	Mostly fine. Max 32
Editorials	16	Theatres	46, 47	Cairns	Showers/rain periods. Max 29
Leahy's View	16	Today	45-52	Toowoomba	Shower or two. Max 25
Letters	16	World News	18, 19	Full details	Page 21

**BEAUMONT TILES**

**BIG BATHROOM BLITZ!** Prices blitzed on a huge range of tiles and bathroomware

**Catalogue Out Now!**

Complete bathroom packages from... **\$1487**

Patterns & Frieze tiles up to **20% OFF**

Floor tile specials from **\$17/m<sup>2</sup>**

Sanford basin set **\$165**

Sanford Handshower set **\$125**

Genuine Natural Granite tiles from... **\$5/m<sup>2</sup>**

**BARGAINS IN ALL STORES!**

- ARCHERFIELD • CAPALABA • STRATHPINE
- SUMNER PARK • UNDERWOOD
- Bundall • Maroochydore • Tweed Heads
- Airlie Beach • Ballina • Cairns • Mackay
- Rockhampton • Townsville • Mt Isa

**BEAUMONT TILES**  
All the Best!

BAD0239

\*Based on Australian websites. Travel restrictions & conditions apply. Please ask us about these conditions. Prices subject to availability & seasonal surcharges may apply depending on date of travel. Prices are per person & accommodation is based on quad share. Prices include taxes, levies & government charges which are subject to change without notice on direct routes. Depending on flight routing additional international taxes & charges may apply. Additional local taxes may apply. \*Cruise departs 18 Sep 04. \*Cruise departs 22 Aug 04. \*Cruise Departs 31 Oct. FROM BRISBANE. LIC. No. TAC242.