

'SPARE THE ROD, AND YOU STOP THE NIGHTMARES,' SAYS A DUTCH TEACHER

AUSTRALIAN mothers must not tolerate school canings and strap-pings, Mrs. Jean Kalker, a visiting Dutch headmistress, said yesterday.

"It gives children nightmares and hate complexes," she claimed.

"It is particularly dangerous for children who have come from the gentle atmosphere of kindergartens.

"The little ones just can't understand why they're hit. They can't be expected to sit silent all day."

Mrs. Kalker, who was headmistress of a Montessori "self-expression" school in Amsterdam, has just completed a six-months investigation of the Victorian education system.

She said she was amazed to see how Australian teachers strapped their pupils.

"Ban it now"

"The Government should ban the strap — and the ruler — immediately. It is the most urgent reform in Australian education," she said.

"Strapping is dangerous, and can lead to children hating school and life generally."

Mrs. Kalker said many of our teachers did not seem to realise that "the strap" had been forbidden in most democratic European countries for 25 years.

"And most of your teachers over-emphasise the need for competition," she said.

"One reason why your

competition," she said.

"One reason why your teachers use the strap so much is that they bore their pupils to death.

"Many of them are using the teaching methods of 50 years ago. They claim what was good enough for them is good enough for today's children."