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EXCLUSIVE

Moira Deeming reveals the terms of her Liberal Party suspension and why she will continue fighting for women's rights

In an exclusive interview with Peta Credlin, suspended Liberal MP Moira Deeming explains the terms of her suspension, and why she'll continue fighting for sex-based rights

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Victorian Liberal MP Moira Deeming has spoken out about her traumatic experience with abuse following her suspension from the party after her appearance at a pro-women's rally was hijacked by neo-Nazis.

Moira Deeming has outlined why she will continue fighting for women's rights, and how the drive to clear her family's name led her to accept a nine-month suspension from the Victorian Liberal Party.

The Victorian MP was embroiled in controversy last month after she attended a 'Let Women Speak' rally that was crashed by neo-Nazis.

In the week that followed, Victorian Opposition leader John Pesutto sought to have Ms Deeming expelled from the Liberal Party based on accusations that were ultimately proven false.

Now, in an exclusive interview with Sky News Australia's Peta Credlin, Ms Deeming has explained what it was like being falsely accused of having Nazi-sympathies, and why she believes the fight for sex-based rights is so important.



Moir Deeming sat down with Sky News Australia's Peta Credlin for a tell-all interview. Picture: Sky News Australia

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"The one thing I was never ever expecting was to be called a Nazi sympathiser – in any way," Ms Deeming told Credlin, explaining that she was partially raised by her aunt and uncle, who was a Holocaust survivor.

"It was just such a shock because it was so obviously untrue... And it just got worse and worse. It seemed to snowball. I just couldn't believe how far and wide it was being spread."

Ms Deeming, who has a long history of involvement with the Victorian Liberal Party said that she resisted the urge to defend herself in the media at the time because the federal Liberal Party had asked her to "lay low" until after the Aston by-election.

"It was very frustrating hearing all these people – men in particular – telling me whether I should or should not, as an almost 40-year-old woman, go out and speak peacefully about my rights on parliament steps," she said.

"It was very degrading and demeaning to have people on Q&A tell me that I should have stayed home, that I should just go home and stay in bed, or that my views on this issue are not important because they're not genuine.

"Those two things were said, and especially the one about my views not being genuine, that really that really hurt."



MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA - NewsWire Photos 27 MARCH 2023: Moira Deeming is seen leaving the Victorian Liberal MPs meeting to vote on leader John Pesutto's bid to expel her. Picture: NCA NewsWire / Luis Ascui

Ms Deeming revealed the deeply personal reasons that motivate her commitment to women's rights.

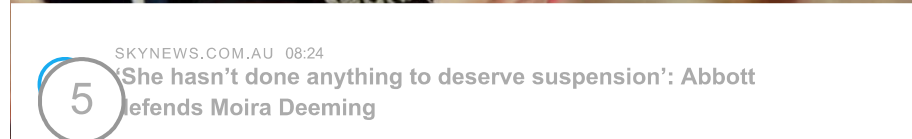
"I've experienced what it's like to be vulnerable," she said.

"I was abused as a child. I was often targeted in the toilets. I've had men expose themselves to me in public change rooms and toilets. But... I had the right to do something about it and to complain."

Ms Deeming said that the rights that that recourse available to her is no longer there under the current law.

"That was the biggest difference that I could see in the law was that women and girls have no right to complain anymore when their boundaries are invaded like that.

"I have three daughters and I have a son, and it's just so enraging that anyone thinks it's acceptable to put my daughters, or me, or any woman or any girl at such high risk where any man can now come into our changerooms and toilets and we aren't allowed to question why they're there."



Former prime minister Tony Abbott has defended embattled Moira Deeming after the Victorian MP was handed a nine-month suspension over her involvement with a...

She said said it was this removal of laws that protect women and girls that motivated her decision to enter politics, and she will continue fighting for them.

"I couldn't believe that everything that I had enjoyed in terms of women's rights were now going to be denied to my three daughters," she said.

Asked if she thought Victorians understood the extent of the legal changes that have occurred, Ms Deeming said she didn't think so.

"I think they look back on the horrors of what happened to gay people and I think that's the same thing here again – which is fair enough. Those things were terrible," she said.

"But it's very easy to make room in society for adults to make their own decisions. The problem with this issue is that there's just a direct conflict between women's rights and trans rights.

"Whether we like it or not, if you destroy or remove the definition of what a woman is to include men... if gender identity is more important in biological sex, then we lose all of our sex-based rights."

Ms Deeming said this change made women and children unsafe. But despite the accusations of being anti-trans, it wasn't trans people she was concerned about – it was "bad men" who would take advantage of the laws.

Exclusive: Sky News host Peta Credlin has revealed how Moira Deeming's "powerful" speech saved her from being expelled from the Victorian Liberal Party, and what it means for John Pesutto's leadership. <https://t.co/u9e9kXx8iC>

— Sky News Australia (@SkyNewsAust) March 27, 2023

"It means we're vulnerable – not to trans people in particular, just men.

"It's just about something that we all acknowledge as a reality, which is that in general, women have to be very careful about men – it's not controversial. And good men understand that... they're happy to let us have our boundaries. But I just think it emboldens and gives a legal excuse for bad men."

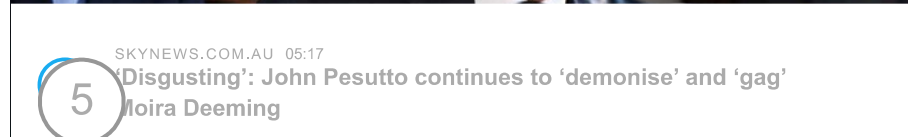
The Victorian MP also revealed – for the first time – the conditions of her nine-month suspension, and why she chose to accept it despite her assertion she has "said and done nothing wrong".

"So technically, there were no grounds listed for the suspension," Ms Deeming said.

"It was just (that) the other motion – that I had brought the party into disrepute and that I was in any way associated with Nazism – that was all withdrawn. And then a new motion was put up that I be suspended."

Ms Deeming said there were three conditions that informed her decision to accept the suspension, with the most important being the clearing of her name.

"I said look, so long as all of the guilt of that particular notice of motion is removed from me, because my main goal the whole time was just to have my name cleared – for the sake of my family, for the sake of my husband's career, for my children, for our family name.



It's disgusting how Victorian Liberal Leader John Pesutto is trying to fit Moira Deeming up as "some kind of extremist" as a way to "burnish his own strong man..."

"I just didn't want that [accusation] anywhere near our name. And that was just non-negotiable to me. And so even a nine-month suspension, I was willing to take it so long as that was achieved.

"And so the three conditions were that it's automatic reinstatement after nine months, the clearing of my name from that notice of motion, and a joint statement.

"And so that's why I accepted it. It didn't feel like a victory at the time. (But) my main goal was just to clear my family name. So I was willing to take that."

Ms Deeming said that people trying to paint her as a far-right extremist because of her views on issues like abortion were just "superimposing a stereotype" on her.

"People who know me know that, yes, I am personally pro-life, but I accept that there's a mandate for abortion laws and that," she said.

Asked whether she wanted to change the abortion laws, Ms Deeming said there was no democratic mandate for that and she respected democracy.

"I mean, I would love it if nobody wanted to get an abortion. That's what I would love. But that's not the reality. And I do respect the Democratic process. There's no mandate for it.

"I didn't mention it in my maiden speech. The newspapers all started talking about how I had mentioned it. I didn't even say the word - I've never said the word in Parliament."

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