

From: rachelbaxendale <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, 5 May 2023 9:45 PM
To: Moira Deeming
Subject: Re: FW: Unsent. Confidential

Thanks for sending this. Have read it but won't do anything with it until & unless you want me to.

I hope you're doing OK. What a week 😞 🙄

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

----- Original Message -----

On Friday, May 5th, 2023 at 9:29 PM, Moira Deeming <Moira.Deeming@parliament.vic.gov.au> wrote:

The words below began as my defence email. But I just kept typing because now I'm just shattered. I've not sent it to anyone. Pls don't publish any of it under my name.

"Dear Colleagues,

I find myself writing to you again, to appeal against yet another motion to expel me from the Parliamentary Party that our own membership chose me to be part of. As I am not allowed to defend myself at the meeting, I'm writing to you in my own defence instead.

The Liberal Party Leadership team have alleged in writing and in public commentary, that I, a Liberal Party MP had associations with "Neo-Nazis, extremist right-wing groups", "violence, prejudice, hate or odious actions" and "hold values incompatible with the Liberal Party [and] Victoria".

Belated announcements that I am not an actual Nazi and that I do not have actual Nazi sympathies are welcome. However, the entire set of allegations laid out above have not been retracted or corrected. If it's because they are true, then by all means, I should be expelled. But if it's because the Leadership would rather not admit they made a mistake, then the Liberal Party brand, along with myself, will continue to be unjustly tainted by them.

I feel that as a matter of integrity, a full and official exoneration should have been offered to me voluntarily as soon as it came to light that the evidence collected by the advisor would never hold up in court, let alone the court of public opinion.

But firstly, a few things need to be clarified-

My plan to engage a lawyer to mediate for me and lay out a legal-principles based case for a redo of the party room meeting, was my last resort attempt to gain clarity and closure on my suspension conditions in the event that mediation with Leadership broke down. I have never once even considered suing the Liberal Party and reports that I have or had planned to do so are false.

The simple fact is that I had been strung along for 6 long weeks, negotiating behind the scenes in good faith- staying silent in public- and hoping that the Leadership would eventually, finally, honour their agreement with me. I needed an honest answer, yes or no- was there going to be an official joint statement released to the media which exonerated me? I was exhausted and emotional and just wanted to know where I stood.

I had pinned my hopes on the May 2nd party room meeting, where the minutes would finally be accepted or amended and then finalised. Whatever the outcome was- whether I was satisfied or not- would mean that I could stop wasting my time and my emotions on pointless mediation. I could stop, recover and refocus on doing my job for the Western Metro and the Liberal Party.

Then I found out that the meeting was an abject failure. And even worse, poor Renee, another new female MP, had also been subjected to incredibly serious accusations by the Leadership in front of the whole party room.

Later that day I was told that Renee, myself, Kim and David Southwick were expected to work to resolve the minutes and my suspension conditions for another two weeks.

I thought that was a disastrous plan. Only Daniel Andrews would benefit from dragging out the public fracture in our Party. From my perspective it was simple, either the Leadership were prepared to honour the terms of the suspension or not, there was no need to drag Renee's name through the mud or draw out the confusion any longer.

I told David Southwick and Kim Wells, that we needed to end the saga by the end of the sitting week, and close the whole thing off with a short, emergency 5-minute meeting to adopt an agreed upon set of minutes before we all went home. If we couldn't do that, then I'd consider the mediation to have failed and I'd need to start defending myself in public. They assented and told me I'd have a draft the next morning.

As I'd been forced to have all my negotiations by proxy thus far, I decided that this time I would make sure I had a record for myself. I sent the agreed deadline, and my proposal to have a legal case prepared for a meeting 'do over' in the event that all else failed, by an email the next morning.

But when I arrived at Parliament, I was told that the Leadership refused to be held 'hostage' to this timeline and had ceased negotiations with me. I accepted that and waited for the 2pm deadline to well and truly pass before emailing Liberal MPs my proposal for a meeting do-over. Sadly, late on Thursday night I was informed that Leadership would never accept a meeting do-over to sort out the minutes or my suspension details.

On Friday morning I was told that another round of negotiations was being held to help reach a fair and reasonable solution, and which could stop the disunity rapidly spiralling out of control in our party.

So I refused all media requests for interviews and waited again in the hopes of good news.

And that brings me to the present moment- which is Friday afternoon. I have just now discovered that whilst some of us were painstakingly and doggedly working towards reconciliation, others had been working feverishly on a new expulsion motion against me, as well as sanctions against three others.

Is it not enough to expel me? Why this extra cruelty? This is not leadership. This is vindictiveness.

How humiliating that it was our own MPs who spewed such awful hyperbolic slurs as 'Nazism', 'extremism' and 'terrorists' at our own MPs- and in public too? We are one team! A slur on one of us, is a slur on all of us!

How humiliating that the party of democracy has contemptuously overridden the will of our party members- threatening, smearing, expelling, suspending, and sanctioning their chosen representatives? And to do so on the basis of 'evidence' that would never hold up in court, let alone the court of public opinion?

To say that I am exhausted, disillusioned and disgusted would be an understatement.

The Victorian Liberal Party Parliamentary team is in desperate need of good, strong, principled leadership.

I just have no idea where it could come from.”

Kind Regards,

Moira Deeming MP

State Member for the Western Metropolitan Region

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