Moira DEEMING MP

Standing for Freedom, Fair Laws & Family

MEDIA STATEMENT

Less than three months into my first term as a Liberal MP, I spoke at a rally to defend the right of women and girls to single-sex spaces and the protection of sex-based rights.

The rally was attended by ordinary people from across the political spectrum. Terrifyingly, it was also gate-crashed by groups of masked Neo-Nazi sympathisers and radical activists, resulting in our microphone being broken, myself and another young woman being assaulted and our rally having to end early due to the inability of police to keep these violent groups away from us.

Both during and after our rally, I and the organisers publicly condemned the Neo-Nazis, Nazism, antisemitism and bigotry of any kind. I did not know those neo-Nazis and did not arrange for them to gatecrash our event.
The next day, I was called into a meeting and informed by the Liberal Party leadership that if I refused to denounce the 'Let Women Speak' rally and it's organisers as being extremists and Nazi's/Nazi associates, they'd move a motion to expel me from the parliamentary team. Or, I was told, I could 'just resign and make it easier on everyone'. I declined.

I was then falsely and publicly accused by the Victorian Liberal Leader, Mr John Pesutto, of being a knowing associate of Neo-Nazi sympathisers and extremists, and therefore deserving of expulsion from the Parliamentary Liberal Party. Mr Pesutto has denied making these accusations against me. He claims instead that he sought my expulsion because I'm guilty by association with persons, who were themselves guilty by association with neo-Nazism. The guilt by association fallacy is well known. But Mr Pesutto' s version of guilt by association twice or thrice removed for the most extreme and serious punishment of expulsion, appears to be an excuse rather than a reason. Even Mr Pesutto' s very own 'evidence dossier', which he distributed to my colleagues, the public and the media, has since been shown to be false.

These unjustifiable and defamatory actions have caused me, my husband and our four children, enormous harm, personally, financially and reputationally. But out of respect for the Liberal Party members who have supported me, I and many other senior Liberal figures have tried to use internal party processes to resolve this matter and avoid legal action for eight long months. All I have ever wanted from Mr Pesutto was a full and official exoneration so that my children don't have to live under this 'Nazi bigot' slur, restoration of my financial position, and my rightful return to the Party Room as an elected Liberal MP.

This week, I made one last attempt to mediate and seek a resolution of this wrongful treatment in private. I made an offer on Wednesday and met with Mr Pesutto and Victorian Liberal Party State President, Mr Phil Davies yesterday afternoon. Unfortunately, the mediation failed. It is therefore with great regret as a current Liberal Party member, that I am now left with no option but to lodge my defamation case against Mr Pesutto in court. For the sake of my family, I have to bring this matter to a conclusion as it is has dominated our lives for most of this year.

I want to assure my Liberal Party supporters once more, that I remain faithful to our party's values and that not one dollar of party funds, nor any taxpayer funds, will be used in my legal action to restore my reputation, and that of my family.