

19/2/2013

Dr Kathleen Dermody
Committee Secretary
The Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and
Trade References Committee
Inquiry into the DLA Piper Review
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senators

Response to the submission by Ms Jacomb and possibly adverse commentary.

I categorically reject Ms Jacomb's accusations regarding my views in her submission to the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee Inquiry into the DLA Piper Review.

At no point in the article, nor in my published academic research on the question of military loyalty, discipline and comradeship, do I condone abuse. The first line of my article in *The Drum* (29/11/12) notes that: "*A culture which ignores sexual assault, bullying and victimisation is not a culture that can survive in contemporary Australia*". The claims by Ms Jacomb do not represent my views or what I was arguing in the article. Ms Jacomb mis-construes my argument and makes claims that are clearly false regarding my views.

I stand by the academic research that underpins the argument in the *Drum* article. My work on this topic has been published in my book *The Sociology of Loyalty* (Springer 2007) and in the double-blind peer reviewed Journal *Criminal Justice Ethics* [Connor, J. (2010) 'Military loyalty, a functional vice', *Criminal Justice Ethics*, Vol. 29, No. 3, December 2010, 278-290]. The academic value of my research in this area has been recognised by the University of New South Wales who awarded me an Early Career Researcher grant (fully competitive process) to look into military loyalty and mateship ['Loyalty, combat and mateship: exploring emotionality in combat', UNSW ECR grant scheme, 2012].

The article is providing an explanation as to how and why abuse comes about in an organisation like the Australian military and the problems facing the senior leadership and Minister in addressing the cultural issues. Providing an explanation for behaviour in no way condones abuse. Indeed, until the reasons for the continual litany of scandals are understood, change cannot occur. For the record: any abuse is unacceptable and should not form part of military training and culture.

Yours Sincerely

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