



Senator the Hon Robert Hill
Leader of the Government in the Senate
Minister for Defence

16 JUL 2003

Senator Sandy Macdonald
Chair
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

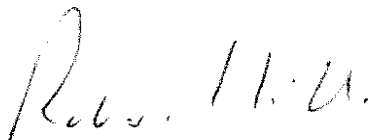
Dear Senator Macdonald

Senator Evans wrote to me on 8 July 2003 expressing some concerns about the evidence given at the Budget Estimates Committee Hearing on 5 June 2003 (pp392-400) relating to the number of charges preferred against a serviceman as a result of the investigation into allegations of misconduct by Australian Army soldiers in East Timor.

The Committee may have formed a view, based on evidence presented, that only two charges had been preferred against the serviceman. However, the offences being prosecuted are for the mistreatment of two corpses, not one. The primary and alternate charges discussed at Estimates are correct, but only in respect to one corpse. The same charges are also being pursued for alleged offences with respect to the second corpse, so four charges have been preferred against the accused.

I trust this will clarify the matter.

Yours sincerely


Robert Hill

