

The Senate

Committee of Privileges

Persons referred to in the Senate

Mr Jamie Ware, Board Chair
Redlands College

165th Report

June 2017

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Report

1.1 On 31 March 2017, the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Stephen Parry, received a submission from Mr Jamie Ware, Chair of the Board of Redlands College, seeking redress under the resolution of the Senate of 25 February 1988 relating to the protection of persons referred to in the Senate (Privilege Resolution 5).

1.2 The submission referred to a speech made by Senator Hinch in the Senate on 8 November 2016. The President accepted the submission and referred it to the Committee of Privileges.

1.3 The committee met on 22 June 2017 and, pursuant to paragraph (3) of Privilege Resolution 5, considered the submission. The committee resolved to recommend that the response be incorporated in *Hansard* without change.

1.4 The committee draws attention to paragraph 5(6) of the resolution which requires that, in considering a submission under this resolution and reporting to the Senate, the committee shall not consider or judge the truth of any statements made in the Senate or in the submission.

1.5 The committee **recommends**:

That a response by Mr Jamie Ware, Chair of the Board of Redlands College, in the terms specified at Appendix 1, be incorporated in *Hansard*.

Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins
Chair

Appendix 1

Mr Jamie Ware, Redlands College

Pursuant to Resolution 5(7)(b) of the Senate of 25 February 1988

Reply to speech by Senator Derryn Hinch

(8 November 2016)

I wish to bring to your attention a speech by Senator Derryn Hinch on November 8, 2016, that included false accusations against our College board and chairman. We wish to correct the record in order to protect the excellent reputation of our school and we also wish to express our disappointment that a senator is willing to use parliamentary privilege to spread false accusations without first checking the facts of the matter.

We acknowledge that these allegations were mentioned in the Senate several months ago. We are responding now because the timing of his speech coincided with the end of the school year and just prior to two months of school holidays.

The facts of this matter are very different from the sensational claims made by Senator Hinch based on misinformation given to him by one parent, which he refers to as “my informant”.

Here are the facts:

- The teacher tendered his resignation in June 2015, effective at the end of that year. He requested and took long service leave for Term 4 of 2015. The processes by which he resigned and sought leave are the same processes available to all staff.
- Police brought the allegations to our attention in November 2015, after the teacher had left the College.
- The teacher’s employment was immediately terminated on receipt of the information from the Queensland Police Service and his original leave and resignation negated.
- The school contacted the Queensland College of Teachers with information as provided by the Police. The teacher’s resignation was cancelled by the Queensland College of Teachers.
- **Student safety** - The Police advised that the allegations were external to the College and in no way connected with College activities. Based on their investigations, the Police advised us that no incidents of misconduct occurred at Redlands College, and that no other students or staff were involved. Throughout the process we cooperated fully with the Queensland Police Service. We take the safety of all children very seriously.

- **Protection of the victim's identity** - We wanted to notify our College community but were specifically and regularly directed by the Queensland Police Service not to make this matter public as it would compromise the victim's right to privacy. We also sought independent legal advice as to whether we could inform our community. The advice we received was consistent with instructions from the Police. I trust you understand that we are required to comply with State authorities and act according to their instructions.

As you can see, Redlands College acted appropriately throughout this process and was directed by police at all times. The reality is vastly different from what was presented by Senator Hinch to the Senate, who - while we admire and share his passion to stand against child sexual abuse - made no effort to check the facts and was incorrect in his summary of events. His careless and inaccurate words have defamed our board chair, caused great distress to the Redlands College community (including other students), and damaged the reputation of the excellent teaching and executive staff at our school.

We ask for the record to be corrected and the appropriate response - including an apology - to be provided by the senator to the Senate.