

From: Helen Papadimitriou [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 21 March 2023 10:51 AM

To: speaker@parliament.vic.gov.au <speaker@parliament.vic.gov.au>

Cc: daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au <daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au>; John Pesutto <John.Pesutto@vic.liberal.org.au>; maree.edwards@parliament.vic.gov.au

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Subject: Let Women Speak

Dear Speaker,

I am writing to express my dismay at the complete disregard and suppression of women's voices and the total misrepresentation of what the Let Women Speak gathering was about on the weekend by **Daniel Andrews** and **John Pesutto**. I was there.

Both party leaders have hijacked the event - using their public statements to misreport what happened and further silence women. They have obviously not checked any facts or spoken to the organisers or any of the attendees.

It is absurd to suggest that the Victorian women at the event, including Moira Deeming, are somehow linked to the Nazi group. The women who peacefully attended come from a diverse range of backgrounds. Many were lesbians and parents of gender dysphoric young people.

Our political leaders are supposed to represent us but instead both of these men are sending us a clear message that our lived experience does not matter and that women need to be silenced. These conversations need to happen. We need to be heard.

I encourage you to watch the Let Women Speak recording. Ordinary women should not be slandered by politicians and so appallingly misrepresented. This is abuse of power.

I am a lifelong Labour/Greens supporter who supports Moira Deeming. On Saturday Moira spoke eloquently and with dignity about a muslim, migrant woman's experience of living in Australia. Moira has done nothing wrong. Using her as a scapegoat for the angry violent behaviour of random men is unjust and unfair. Do not blame this woman and sacrifice her career and livelihood. This is also an abuse of your power.

I am happy to speak with you about the issue - I am a witness to the event and the women who spoke there. I am a woman who cares about the erosion of women's rights and our voice in public life. I hope you do too.

Regards

Helen Papadimitriou

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