
Sent: Thursday, 11 September 2008 16:48
To: White Paper
Subject: WWW Submission: 13. Miscellaneous [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Name: Clare Menck

Submission: I want to see a significant budget allocation for research and training in non-violent conflict resolution, peace work and political engagement. I would like to see Australia leading the world as professional peace workers, with a budget for non-violent approaches at least equal to if not greater than that for training and equipping traditional military methods.

I am concerned about the advertising of defense careers, which glosses over the basic purpose of the defence forces, that is, to be trained and prepared for engaging in violent conflict that kills people and wreaks havoc on communities and societies. It appears immoral to me to advertise defense careers in terms of adventure, peace-time skills and character development, when these are all side-lines to the main agenda of the Forces.

Funding for mental health services for returned servicepeople and their families needs to be significantly increased. There also needs to be increased openness about the well-known psychological effects of armed conflict on combatants and their communities. My awareness of this issue is due to a close friend (female) who works as a psychologist for returned servicepeople and their families, in an office with only two psychologists and a receptionist (all women) who at times are dealing with homicidal clients, sometimes alone in the office. Not only are they extremely overworked, but their personal safety is often in jeopardy, due to inadequate government funding for this government service to veterans.

Overall, my greatest concern in defence policy is to ensure that the humanity of servicepeople and those with whom they engage is honoured, nurtured and (where it has been damaged due to service) healed.

Thank you for inviting public comment. I am not 'miscellaneous' - my particular 'Category' is 'Concerned Australian Civilian'

I agree to my submission being published on the Defence website

I agree to my submission being quoted in the Community Consultation Report