



PRESS RELEASE (No. 2 of 2012)

New Zealand Law Society Censors Fijian Director of Public Prosecutions

The New Zealand Law Society (NZLS) has refused to allow the Fijian Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) to advertise legal positions in its magazine, Law Talk.

An email to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) this morning (3.2.12) said, “The New Zealand Law Society Board has decided unanimously that the NZLS will not accept advertisements for legal positions in Fiji under the current interim military regime.”

The DPP, Mr Christopher Pryde, said it was unfortunate that the NZLS was involving itself in politics and preventing New Zealand lawyers from hearing about job vacancies in Fiji.

“It is unfortunate that New Zealand lawyers are being denied the opportunity to decide for themselves whether they wish to take up legal positions in Fiji. By refusing to allow us the right to advertise, the NZLS is effectively censoring what New Zealand lawyers know about Fiji.

The ODPP is an independent office and the Director of Public Prosecutions has the sole responsibility for criminal prosecutions in Fiji. This is without recourse to any Government minister, including the Attorney-General. The ODPP in that regard is non-political. People charged with offences by the Police need to be

prosecuted through the courts. What shall we do with people charged with rape or robbery or murder? Send them to New Zealand?" he said.

Mr Pryde said he remains concerned that the NZLS continue to have an inaccurate picture of the Fijian situation, in particular of the judiciary and the courts.

"My invitation to the NZLS still stands. They are welcome to visit Fiji, meet and talk to anyone without restriction so that they can obtain for themselves a first-hand appraisal of things in Fiji. In the meantime, we would appreciate the NZLS allowing lawyers to decide things for themselves and allow us the right to advertise," he said.

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3 February 2012

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is an independent office established under section 20 of the State Services Decree 2010. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions is motivated by the principle that it is in the interests of justice that the guilty be brought to justice and the innocent are not wrongly convicted.