

Dr. Claire McGettrick, Dr. Maeve O'Rourke &  
Associate Professor Katherine O'Donnell,  
The Clann Project.

9 February 2021

A chairde,

I have been directed by the Committee on Parliamentary Privileges and Oversight to reply to your letter of 19<sup>th</sup> December 2020 which has been considered by the Committee on Parliamentary Privileges and Oversight (formerly the Committee on Procedure and Privileges).

With regard to the first paragraph therein, the Committee's letter of 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2020, set out the factual position in relation to the debate on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. The Committee did not, and was not empowered to, make any decision in relation to the substance of the matters involved and, in particular, did not determine or seek to determine whether or not any reference to The Clann Project was implied in the remarks made by Senator Ward.

Your letter makes a number of references to defamation. The Committee has no role in determining whether or not a statement made by any member of the Seanad is defamatory. The question of defamation is a matter of law and is determined elsewhere.

Concerning the final paragraph of your letter, the Committee suggests that you may wish to correspond directly with Senator Ward in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Carmel Considine

Carmel Considine  
Clerk to the Committee on  
Parliamentary Privileges and Oversight