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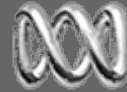
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Army Major found guilty of ill-treating an inferior

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PM Archive - Friday, 30 March , 2001 00:00:00

Reporter: Rebecca Carmody

COMPERE: The career of an Army Major who served in the once prestigious Third Battalion Royal Australian Regiment is in tatters tonight.

A Military Court in Sydney has found Major Troy Quinn guilty of ill-treating an inferior. The Court found that in 1998, while on duty in Malaysia, Major Quinn engaged in acts of bastardisation - that included tying up and blindfolding a junior officer, and subjecting his victim to some 15 hours of interrogation.

He's the first of a number of senior officers in 3RAR expected to be court-marshalled for similar offences.

The Army says Major Quinn's conviction is a sign that it won't tolerate bastardisation.

Rebecca Carmody reports.

REBECCA CARMODY: Major Troy Quinn's fall from grace has been prolonged and tormented.

TROY QUINN: It's been so long - it's been almost three years now. More than three years in this matter, and it's had, been a great personal cost. Not only to me by my, more importantly my wife. I've got a five-week-old child that I've hardly seen. It's made me question certain things. I had a certain expectation of how you would be treated in such a case. But again, I will be taking some leave and I'll be reflecting upon my future in the Army.

REBECCA CARMODY: In a Military Court in Sydney, Major Quinn was found guilty under the Defence Forces Act of ill-treatment of an inferior. The offence occurred in 1998 during a jungle training exercise in Malaysia.

Then, Major Quinn was a Commanding Officer. His victim Lieutenant David Good was responsible for a platoon under Major Quinn's command.

The Military Court heard Lieutenant Good endured a 15 hour ordeal, masterminded by Major Quinn. He was bound at the wrists and had his head covered with a pillowcase. His eyes were taped over and he was forced to stand for three hours. For two hours he was left in the scorching sun. He was also threatened to sit on an ants nest.

Major Quinn told a colleague he thought Lieutenant Good needed toughening up.

Outside Court today Major Quinn maintained he'd done nothing wrong.

TROY QUINN: I have participated in activities which are similar in nature.

UNIDENTIFIED: You've copped a bit.

TROY QUINN: As I said, I have gone through the appropriate training that people at the time thought was appropriate for my training purposes.

UNIDENTIFIED: Do you think it's appropriate now.

TROY QUINN: I'm, as I say, I am only, I only deliver the training that I have been taught to train.

REBECCA CARMODY: In passing sentence, Magistrate Colonel John Nolan said the offence was so serious that a reprimand was not an appropriate punishment. For such an offence there is a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment.

Major Quinn was fined \$2,000, but his lawyers say they'll appeal and they'll even go to the High Court if necessary. They say he's been made a scapegoat for some undisciplined comments by top Army chiefs and politicians about how 3RAR operates.

TROY QUINN: I want to clear my name. I believe my name should be clear. And, yes, I haven't made a decision one way or the other as to whether I still want to have a career in the Army.

The Army meant everything to me over the 15 years that I've been part of it. Particularly I've served all my time with 3RAR and I, regardless of what is being said out there in the marketplace about 3RAR and its performance, I am very proud to say that I have been a member of the Third Battalion.

REBECCA CARMODY: Brigadier Gary Byles, a senior Army commander, says Major Quinn's future in the Army is a matter

for him.

GARY BYLES: Oh no doubt he'll be considering his future as one would. But what we need to do is push on and ensure that all allegations of this nature are investigated thoroughly and fully investigated.

REBECCA CARMODY: Do you think the community and taxpayers are going to be satisfied with a \$2,000 fine as the only punishment.

GARY BYLES: Look what the community needs be aware, is that today the evidence was presented before the Court, and the Magistrate ruled and made his finding.

REBECCA CARMODY: Expect more scrutiny of 3RAR in the year ahead. As well as a Senate inquiry, there's also the likelihood of further charges against more Army officers.

GARY BYLES: There are ongoing investigations and they will continue. I'm not at liberty to say what the outcome of those investigations will be.

COMPERE: Brigadier Gary Byles, Commander of the Fifth Brigade at the Holsworthy Army Base with Rebecca Carmody.

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