



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Collaery, Mr Bernard

SPEECH

Friday, 12 June 2020

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date	Friday, 12 June 2020	Source	House
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Questioner		Responder	
Speaker	Payne, Alicia, MP	Question No.	

Ms PAYNE (Canberra) (13:48): It is a fundamental tenet of our legal system that the assessment of guilt or innocence be done in public so that, in the words of former High Court Justice Gibbs we aren't concerned that 'abuses may flourish undetected'. So why is my constituent Bernard Collaery facing charges in a closed court without the protection of open justice and without public scrutiny, and why are Bernard Collaery and his legal team unable to access all the evidence against him as he defends himself, another fundamental tenet of our court system that has been denied to him? I'm also concerned that, while the current Attorney-General consented to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions taking legal action against Mr Collaery and Witness K, neither he nor the Prime Minister has adequately explained that decision. The Attorney-General should explain to the Australian people why he has taken away the rights of Bernard Collaery and why this is in a closed court.

I know that, as the court meets, Canberrans are meeting outside, protesting and calling for due process and open justice to be upheld. Like many of my constituents and others around Australia, I am deeply concerned about this case and about the broader shift towards more secrecy and less accountability that we have seen under this Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government. This is a government that wants to silence all dissent. Labor will continue to closely scrutinise the actions of the Morrison government to ensure that abuses of our citizens do not flourish undetected within our justice system.