




Speech By
Jonty Bush

MEMBER FOR COOPER

Record of Proceedings, 24 March 2021

MOTION

Women

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (3.07 pm): What we are seeing right now is a clear and urgent message for women to be heard and for action to occur in relation to the experience of women in Australia. Women have also been emboldened by the stories of survivors—people like our 2021 Australian of the Year, Grace Tame, and Brittany Higgins who have highlighted the challenges for survivors in reporting sexual violence. I am so proud to now be part of a government that has led the nation in tackling violence, including sexual violence against women.

The landmark *Not now, not ever* report was critical in building the foundations to our latest announcement in establishing the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce. I commend the Premier and the Attorney-General for their leadership in this space. We as parliamentarians, women and men led by the Premier, marched and stood with the 10,000 people in Brisbane who marched for justice. It is leadership that perhaps our Prime Minister could learn from.

As I said last week, this nation is on fire with the experience of women in Australia. The Prime Minister may not hold the hose but he certainly controls the faucet. Rather than try to soothe and see the pain of women, he stood in Parliament House and essentially told us to be grateful because we could march without being gunned down. The Prime Minister goes home and privately questions 'What if this were my daughter?' rather than publicly challenge us to consider for one moment, 'What if these perpetrators were my sons?'

This is a Prime Minister who allows a member of his cabinet to take time off to deal with his mental health needs and his defamation case while simultaneously asking women to dip into their superannuation to fund their own escape from domestic violence. This is a Prime Minister who yesterday publicly stood up and urged women to come forward and report, saying, in one breath, 'You will be protected,' and, in the next, divulging an alleged harassment investigation in front of the nation's media without gaining consent from the complainant. But it gets worse: the media outlet named by the Prime Minister in this allegation has now stated there is no current complaint.

Where did the Prime Minister get his information from? It was reported to him by someone—we do not know who—the evening before. Perhaps the Prime Minister should have done his due diligence and looked into the substance of this claim before speaking out. Oh, but wait—of course, we know that he does not need to look at the detail. He does not need to read the dossier. He can just take someone's word for it that an event either did or did not happen depending on what is convenient. With this coming out of our highest office, it is no wonder we marched. I support this motion.