




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2022

ADJOURNMENT

Women in Leadership

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.21 pm): I understand that we had the great Julia Gillard in Parliament House today. Her presence in Parliament House brought to mind her famous misogyny speech, and it is rather fitting that it has been brought to my mind this week. For those honourable members who do not know—which is probably everyone on that side of the House—this was a passionate speech that was revered around the world and has been quoted time and time again.

Julia delivered that speech 10 years ago. In the lead-up to this speech there were instances of sexist, hateful attacks from anonymous critics and a plethora of pornographic and degrading images of her circulated on websites, emails and social media. Let's remember that this was the Prime Minister of Australia. Ten years ago Julia spoke about double standards and sexism and called out misogynistic behaviour. Julia was subjected to disgraceful commentary in the media, such as being likened to the 'coven' before a women's leader's forum and also 'ditch the witch'.

Much is said and, indeed, is being done on this side of the House to develop women's strategies and a women in the workforce strategy. However, more needs to be done. Working towards fair, equal and respectful treatment of women in the workplace is the responsibility of each and every one of us each and every day in each and every workplace.

What has changed? We continue to see our female leaders endure a level of scrutiny that would not be applied to their male cohorts. For example, the Finnish PM was hauled over the coals for dancing and was forced to undergo a drug test. I ask: what male leader would be held to account in the same way? None! Is it because she is a mother she cannot have fun anymore? This PM is a young, intelligent, strong and attractive female, but the rules seem to be different for her just because she is a woman. That PM did not miss one day of work. She did not leave a single task undone. Her children were not abandoned and she had worked throughout the entire pandemic, working towards keeping her country safe and doing her job.

Does all of this commentary sound familiar when compared to what we heard at the beginning of this week in our own state from those opposite? It is an absolute disgrace and I am tired of the treatment of women in this place. I ask honourable members: if it were a man, would we have heard this same commentary? I argue no. So double standards and sexism are still rife in this place. It is high time the male leaders recognised their role and their female colleagues held them to task.