

# What sort of Parliament refuses to discuss the plight of this most famous Australian?



On 26 March 2020, Julian Assange had served his 50 week sentence, the maximum possible sentence for his alleged misdemeanour of 'skipping bail' on 10 June 2012 to seek asylum in the London Ecuadorian Embassy. Julian Assange should have been freed on that day to join his wife Stella and their two children. Instead, he remains imprisoned to this day.

Even if there were any legal grounds for Julian Assange remaining in custody, what possible justification could there be, since his arrest on 11 May 2019, for his being confined for 22 hours per day in solitary confinement, denied access to the Internet and allowed to retain only a small collection of books - prison conditions far worse than are endured by prisoners who are locked away for financial extortion, drug trafficking, murder or terrorism?

Julian Assange's continued imprisonment is, in no way, legal under British law, Australian law or under the First Amendment to the United States' Constitution which guarantees the right to free speech.

Since Assange finished serving his 50 week sentence for 'skipping bail', his imprisonment has been illegally prolonged, so far, for another 2 years and 9 months. It has been prolonged for no reason other than to allow the United States, a country of which Julian Assange is not even a citizen, to commence legal proceedings to have him extradited where he faces imprisonment for 175 years for supposedly violating its 1917 Espionage Act.

## **Anthony Albanese, 8 months ago: "Enough is enough"**

Eight months ago, in December 2021, then Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese said he did "not see what purpose is served by the ongoing pursuit of Mr Assange" and that "enough is enough."

The then Morrison government could long before then have told the UK government to end this cruel imprisonment of Julian Assange. Had the UK not complied, Australia could have taken the matter to the International Criminal Court or the United Nations where the UK government would have quickly found that it did not have a leg to stand on.

## **As the world cries out for Julian Assange's freedom, the Australian Parliament remains silent!**

An Australian government, resolved to free Julian Assange, would have found international public opinion overwhelmingly on its side. Examples of this include Mexican President Obrador and the German Bundestag who have both called for Julian Assange's freedom. Faced with this, both the UK and the US would have, almost certainly, backed away very quickly with their tails between their legs and allowed Julian Assange to return home to Australia.

### **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese fails to act**

However, Anthony Albanese, who, 3 months ago, became Prime Minister of Australia, has failed to act, as he surely knows he could have, to free Julian Assange. He has not only failed to act, he refused even to give to the Australian people, through its Parliament, a full explanation for this inaction. To date his 'explanations' remain short outbursts, here, against 'megaphone diplomacy,' and, there, against Twitter supporters of Julian Assange.

### **Why does your Parliament refuse to discuss the illegal imprisonment and torture of that most famous and most revered of all Australians?**

At least since 2020, supporters of Julian Assange have been prevented from putting to Parliament the case for why the Australian government can and should act to free Julian Assange. On 2 December 2021, Tasmanian Independent MP Andrew Wilkie tried to put a motion which called for the government to speak to both the US and UK governments to end Julian Assange's imprisonment but even debate on that motion was disallowed. Prior to that, on 10 June 2021, Labor MP Julian Hill was also prevented from putting to Parliament a motion in support of Julian Assange.

So, why has even debate on the plight of Julian Assange been disallowed in your Parliament? Surely, if this government truly believes it is justified in its action, or lack of action, for Julian Assange, then what could it possibly have to fear from a full debate before Parliament? How could such a debate not put the matter to rest?

Clearly those in control of our Parliament know that, far from putting this matter to rest, such a debate would, in fact, make far more Australians aware of just how monstrously Julian Assange has been treated. They would no longer accept the tired old excuses, given to them by this government, for its inaction.

We must tell each and every one of our members of Parliament that, even if they remain opposed to our government acting to free Julian Assange, then at least they should allow others who support Julian Assange to put their case to our Parliament.

James Sinnamon, 23 August 2022.

For further information, please visit, <https://candobetter.net/JulianAssange>