



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Canberra Electorate: Canberra Islamic Centre

SPEECH

Thursday, 2 October 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Date Thursday, 2 October 2014
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Questioner
Speaker Brodtmann, Gai, MP

Source House
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Responder
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Ms BRODTMANN (Canberra) (13:51): Earlier this year, there was a horrific act of vandalism at the Canberra Islamic Centre in my electorate. Vandals broke into the centre and inflicted as much damage as they possibly could. They smashed windows and artwork. They overturned bookcases. They destroyed books. They pulled up carpets and flooring. The damage was extraordinary.

Following this event I called on the Canberra community to show that Canberrans will not tolerate this kind of behaviour. I called on Canberrans to speak out and to show their support for Canberra's Islamic community, to show that we have zero tolerance for racially motivated violence.

The response was overwhelming. A few days after the attack there was a working bee to clean up the centre, and more Canberrans showed up to help than there were jobs to do. To say thank you, the Canberra Islamic Centre is holding an open day and inviting all Canberrans to come to the centre to enjoy some food and good company and to learn more about the community. The open day is on 25 October, and I encourage all Canberrans, particularly those who helped out when times were tough, to come along.

Now more than ever it is vital that everyone in this great nation pulls together, not apart. Now more than ever it is vital that everyone, especially our leaders, especially the people in this chamber, do all we can to foster harmony, social inclusion, tolerance and, above all, respect in our communities.