



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**THE SENATE**

**WORKPLACE RELATIONS  
AMENDMENT (CODIFYING  
CONTEMPT OFFENCES) BILL 2003**

**In Committee**

**SPEECH**

**Tuesday, 2 March 2004**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

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## SPEECH

**Date** Tuesday, 2 March 2004  
**Page** 20591  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Collins, Sen Jacinta

**Source** Senate  
**Proof** No  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

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**Senator JACINTA COLLINS** (Victoria) (6.28 pm)—If it assists Senator Murray, we would be happy to deal with amendments (5) through to (11)—all of the matters you deal with in relation to schedule 1—in one group. I can indicate generally that these essentially deal with amending the government's provisions that create a new contempt offence with respect to the giving of false evidence to the commission. Labor opposes these amendments because we oppose the principal provisions. There is simply no demonstrated need for them. The current section 299(1)(e) captures this issue. As with the other parts of section 299, it has never been tested, so why is there a need to change it?

The approach taken right through here—and Senator Murray just referred to further examples of it—reflects back to the principal point. If there is such a case for these changes, as the purposes indicated in this bill, why has the government never sought to deal with similar provisions such as those in the AAT? It is obvious that the government does not care about similar provisions in other areas. This is part of their core industrial agenda. There has been no meritorious case put. The current provisions under section 299 deal with giving false evidence in much the same way as Senator Abetz gave us a lecture in the previous bill. I sat here and listened to him arguing that lockouts were covered because they are encompassed in the definition of industrial action. These matters are currently encompassed under section 299 and there is no need for more specific provisions.