

**Open letter to Prime Minister Scott Morrison,
Leader of the Opposition Anthony Albanese,
Members of the Parliament of Australia**

JOURNALISM IS **NOT** A CRIME

The Australian Federal Police raids on the home of News Corp Australia journalist Annika Smethurst and on the offices of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation represent a grave threat to press freedom in Australia.

We welcome the Prime Minister's stated commitment to freedom of the press and openness to discuss the concerns that have been raised.

A healthy democracy cannot function without its media being free to bring to light uncomfortable truths, to scrutinise the powerful and inform our communities. Investigative journalism cannot survive without the courage of whistleblowers, motivated by concern for their fellow citizens, who seek to bring to light instances of wrongdoing, illegal activities, fraud, corruption and threats to public health and safety.

These are issues of public interest, of the public's right to know. Whistleblowers and the journalists

who work with them are entitled to protection, not prosecution. Truth-telling is being punished.

The raids, a raft of recent national security laws, and the prosecutions of whistleblowers Richard Boyle, David McBride and Witness K all demonstrate the public's right to know is being harmed. Truth-telling is being punished.

It is also clear from the global response to the recent raids that Australia's proud reputation around the world as a free and open society is under threat.

We urge Parliament to legislate changes to the law to recognise and enshrine a positive public interest protection for whistleblowers and for journalists. Without these protections Australians will be denied important information it is their right as citizens to have.

We urge you to take prompt action to protect our democracy for all Australians.

Signed,

Michael Bachelard,
The Sydney Morning Herald/The Age

Richard Baker,
The Age

Mark Baker,
Melbourne Press Club

Barrie Cassidy, ABC

Phillip Coorey,
The Australian Financial Review

Annabel Crabb, ABC

David Crowe,
The Sydney Morning Herald/The Age

Miranda Devine,
The Daily Telegraph

Malcolm Farr,
news.com.au

Adele Ferguson,
The Age/The Sydney Morning Herald

Marina Go,
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Michelle Grattan,
The Conversation

Peter Greste,
Alliance for Journalists' Freedom

Claire Harvey,
The Sunday Telegraph

Tim Lester,
Seven Network

Isabel Lo,
Media Diversity Australia

John Lyons, ABC

David Marr,
Guardian Australia

Chris Masters,
Investigative Journalist

Kate McClymont,
The Sydney Morning Herald

Nick McKenzie,
The Age

Karen Middleton,
The Saturday Paper

Katharine Murphy,
Guardian Australia

Paul Murphy, MEAA

Laurie Oakes,
Retired Political Journalist

Kerry O'Brien,
Chair, The Walkley Foundation

Matt Peacock,
ABC Alumni

Mark Riley,
Seven News

Leigh Sales, ABC

Niki Savva,
The Australian

Tory Shepherd,
The Advertiser

Marcus Strom, MEAA

Sandra Sully,
Ten News

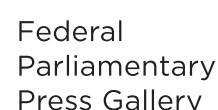
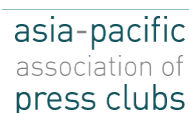
Lenore Taylor,
Guardian Australia

Paige Taylor,
The Australian

Hedley Thomas,
The Australian

Laura Tingle, ABC

Lisa Wilkinson,
The Project



Take action by emailing the PM and your local MP at journalismisnotacrime.org