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Four Corners

Bursting the Canberra Bubble

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"I have been subject to the most wild, intense, unrestrained series of accusations that I can remember in modern Australian politics." Federal Attorney General Christian Porter

"She told me that at the college that night she was raped by him." Friend of the complainant

"The only thing that I'm ever going to be able to say, and it's the truth — and that is that nothing in the allegations that have been printed ever happened." Federal Attorney General Christian Porter

On Monday, Four Corners brings you "Bursting the Canberra Bubble".

"I would have thought if there was an inquiry by a competent person without a political agenda, that that would be a way of stopping this trial by media." Friend of the complainant

Bursting the Canberra Bubble, reported by Louise Milligan, goes to air on Monday 8th March at 8.30pm. It is replayed on Tuesday 9th March at 1.00pm and Wednesday 10th at 11.20pm. It can also be seen on ABC NEWS channel on Saturday at 8.10pm AEST, [ABC iview](#) and at [abc.net.au/4corners](#).

Transcript

plusminus

Four Corners

Bursting the Canberra Bubble

8 March 2021

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: So, I just wanted to start by saying something to the parents who are grieving for the loss of their adult daughter.

I only knew your daughter for the briefest periods, at debating competitions when we were teenagers about 33 years ago.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Last week Commonwealth Attorney-General Christian Porter went public to confirm what many in Australian political and legal circles already knew – that he was the federal Cabinet Minister identified in an anonymous letter sent to the Prime Minister about the alleged historical rape of a 16-year-old girl in the 1980s.

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I was aware, over the last few months, of a whispering campaign. Had the accusation ever been put to me before they were printed, I would have at least been able to say the only thing that I can say — likely the only thing that I'm ever going to be able to say, and it's the truth — and that is that nothing in the allegations that have been printed ever happened.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: In an extraordinary press conference, Mr Porter strenuously denied the allegation that had been swirling around Canberra and across the nation for days.

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The allegations appeared to be about a period in early 1988, during an end-of-school debating competition at Sydney University.

I was 17 years old and the other person was 16.

We were both selected, with two others, on the Australian Schools Debating Team and we went to Sydney University for an international competition.

It was a long time ago and I'd always remembered it as a happy time.

But I can say categorically that what has been put in various forms and allegations simply did not happen.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The event brought an unprecedented saga to a head as the Attorney-General declared that he would not step aside.

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: If I stand down from my position as Attorney-General because of an allegation about something that simply did not happen, then any person in Australia can lose their career, their job, their life's work, based on nothing more than an accusation that appears in print.

My guess is that if I were to resign and that set a new standard, well there wouldn't be much need for an Attorney-General anyway, because there would be no rule of law left to protect in this country.

So, I will not be part of letting that happen while I am Attorney-General and I am sure you will ask, so I will state to you: I am not standing down or aside.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Welcome to Four Corners, I'm Louise Milligan.

Last November we brought you a story called 'Inside the Canberra Bubble.' It explored the workplace culture within Australia's federal parliament house, a culture that can be both toxic and career-destroying for women.

At the time, there was an allegation that we were unable to report on. Now, after Minister Porter came forward last week, we can finally bring you the story of the untested allegation he has categorically denied.

'Inside the Canberra Bubble' went to air on November 9 last year.

The story focused in part on the conduct of Attorney-General Christian Porter.

MALCOLM TURNBULL, PRIME MINISTER 2015-18: On 6th December 2017, I had a meeting with Porter in my office and I told him that I had had reports of him being out in public, having had too much to drink, and in the company with young women and he, he acknowledged that, he didn't argue with that and I just said, 'Look, this is unacceptable conduct for a Cabinet minister, and it exposes you to the risk of compromise'.

RACHELLE MILLER, LIBERAL STAFFER, 2010-18: When we were at the bar, I noticed that Minister Porter was with someone in the corner, and they were clearly very intimate, they were cuddling, they were kissing.

It was quite confronting given that we were in such a public place and we're in a place where we had multiple press gallery journalists, multiple MPs and senators.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The Public Bar incident remained inside the Canberra bubble – it never leaked.

Christian Porter did not respond to Four Corners' multiple requests for an interview or answer our detailed questions.

He provided a brief statement about his meeting with Mr Turnbull in December 2017.

Mr Porter said that in the meeting Malcolm Turnbull "queried whether there was any accuracy" to the story Mr Turnbull had heard.

According to Mr Porter, "the answer was no".

Mr Porter's statement continues: "Malcolm then promoted me to Attorney-General about two weeks after.

In my time as AG, I never had any complaint or any suggestion of any problem from Malcolm regarding the conduct of my duties as AG until the last week of his Prime Ministership when we had a significant disagreement over the Peter Dutton citizenship issue."

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Mr Porter was later questioned about this on Perth radio.

GARETH PARKER, PRESENTER 6PR RADIO: Did you or have you ever had an intimate relationship or intimate relations with a staffer?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Look, I'm not even sure that the program made that allegation.

GARETH PARKER, PRESENTER 6PR RADIO: But I'm just asking the question, have you ever had intimate relations with a staffer?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Well, they indicated that I had, I think implied that I had with a person that I had a drink in a bar with and I said to Four Corners, that their depiction of those interactions in that bar three and a half years ago, were wrong.

I told Malcolm there was no substance to rumours around that bar story.

I told Four Corners, that's what I said.

GARETH PARKER, PRESENTER 6PR RADIO: The Four Corners program, if we take the sort of helicopter view created the impression that for a very long period of time stretching right back to your high school days to your university days, and since that you have misogynistic attitudes towards women, that you're a sleazebag, a womanizer, are you?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Look, I mean, those things like writing in law school magazines 25 years ago, you know, they're words that I obviously, regret writing.

GARETH PARKER, PRESENTER 6PR RADIO: You wrote that you were going to smut your way through law school, writing about a debate on whether lawyers are just well-dressed prostitutes, you said your opponent's case had more holes than Snow White's hymen.

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Yeah, but Gareth I'm no orphan in looking back on things that I wrote and did 25, 30 years ago, that made me cringe.

Like, you know, do I regret writing those things?

Absolutely. I mean, I think that the show described, my behaviour at university as rowdy and in some ways that is something of an understatement.

It was way too rowdy.

But you know, that's 25, 30 years ago, and I can't undo or redo that period of my life and I'm not sure that that is a fair indication of who I am now.

GARETH PARKER, PRESENTER 6PR RADIO: What I'm asking you is, you can go to bed tonight, comfortable in the knowledge that there isn't a woman out there who's going to come forward and give a truthful account of her interactions with Christian Porter that would further embarrass you or damage the government?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: Well, I mean, you know, I can't comment about what people might want to do to try and damage me or damage the government, right?

That is part and parcel of politics, but I haven't conducted myself in a way that I think would lead people to provide that sort of complaint about me.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: While all of this was unfolding, there was an allegation that for legal reasons we were unable to bring you at the time.

It was alleged that the Attorney-General had committed a serious crime long before he entered politics: the rape of a 16-year-old girl in 1988.

Now that Minister Porter has come forward to vehemently deny it – we are able to bring you the story behind the allegation, and that of the woman who made it, who took her own life in June last year.

REPORTER: Is your defence here that you didn't sleep with the alleged victim or that it was consensual?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I did not sleep with the victim. We didn't have anything of that nature happen between us.

REPORTER: So, what does that say then about the allegations here? Is this something which has been fabricated?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I can't talk to you about the allegations. I can say to you all, it didn't happen. But I can't criticise or mount a defence or cross-examine someone. I am just not going to do that to the family of this poor woman.

ARTHUR MOSES SC, FORMER PRESIDENT, LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA: Christian Porter at the end of the day is entitled like anybody else to the presumption of innocence and the right to silence.

Yet, I saw at the press conference, he was being questioned about these events that occurred 33 years ago and in circumstances where it was being done in a vacuum without any detail.

I mean, to put a question to somebody, did you rape somebody and to answer the question, no and then to have follow-up questions, being put to him based on the most general and vague assertions, I think puts him in a difficult position and it's not about him.

It's about any individual in the community who would be faced with those types of questions 33 years after the event.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The woman's name was Kate. Four Corners has decided not to use her surname or show her face.

KATE STATEMENT (ACTOR'S VOICE): This is my story, plain and simple. It's not pretty, but it is mine. And I stand by it, every single word and image in this document is true.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: In September 2019, Kate started writing a detailed statement for her lawyers.

She described a trauma she alleged she had endured decades before.

These are her words, it's not her voice.

KATE STATEMENT (ACTOR'S VOICE): In order to complete this account, I have drawn on all my resources: emotional, psychological, mental, spiritual, physical and financial.

But I have no regrets.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Kate was a historian by training who was doing a PhD.

She had been one of the most brilliant high school debaters of her generation.

Until her life unravelled.

JO DYER, LITERARY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR AND FRIEND OF KATE: The thing that you would notice about Kate was that she was caught on a jag, in a very specific era.

That really seemed completely consuming and completely debilitating to her.

JEREMY SAMUEL, FORMER LIBERAL CANDIDATE AND FRIEND OF KATE: She started to tell me about the subject of the allegations she made against the Attorney General and then we ended up corresponding and talking about it quite extensively.

There were a number of emails, Facebook messages, phone calls.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: In February last year, Kate decided to go to speak with detectives from the NSW sex crimes squad.

She met them at King's Cross police station.

KATE'S STATEMENT (ACTOR'S VOICE): All I really want, in the end, is for this to have been reported to the NSW Police Force and to know that a copy of this document, and a transcript of any interview they might do with me, is in their archives.

MATTHEW DEEBLE, NON-PROFIT EXECUTIVE AND FRIEND OF KATE: It was a great relief to Kate when she made the initial engagement with the police, she reported back to me that she felt very well-supported, that her disclosure was taken seriously, that it was referred to the appropriate unit, and that she was beginning contact with them on that.

JO DYER, LITERARY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR AND FRIEND OF KATE: Kate was very cognisant of the type of cross-examination that she was likely to encounter had this case ever made it to court and she was also very aware that it may never have got to court in the first place. Historical cases this old – no real evidence, he-said, she-said.

All of these things.

She was prepared to take that risk.

NICK RYAN, WINE WRITER AND FRIEND OF KATE: She said 'I know what this is going to involve.

I know the shitstorm this is going to bring down on me.

But I need to do this and I'm ready to do this'.

ARTHUR MOSES SC, FORMER PRESIDENT, LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA: They have the right to believe her version of events and their views of course should be respected.

But that is not evidence.

What she told her friends and what they may believe happened of course is to be respected and nobody should in any way criticize them because they obviously love her very much and they are they're advocating for her as one would hope anybody would of a loved one, but that doesn't prove that the offense was committed by Mr. Porter.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Kate's complaint relates to an incident she alleged occurred when she was in high school.

As a high school debater, she represented South Australia with her friends Jo Dyer and Nick Ryan.

NICK RYAN, SA HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1988-89: When we first became friends, we were about 16 years old and Kate was a bit of a golden child.

She was just so clever.

She was so bright, she was, ah, intimidating.

JO DYER, SA HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1986-87: She was a girl with sharp intelligence, rigorous intellect, she was warm, she had a compelling eloquence.

She was a winning combination, really, of poise and shyness.

Confidence, and insecurity, as many girls aged 15 can be.

UPSOT: Our next speaker is 16 years old and enjoys basketball, hockey and at school drama.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Many of Kate's friends told Four Corners they expected Kate would be Australia's first female Prime Minister.

She privately struggled with an eating disorder, but that did not hold her back.

JO DYER, SA HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1986-87: In the world of debating, there were many stars shining in the firmament.

But Kate really shone the brightest, or certainly one of the brightest.

She had a charisma, and we all imagined the trajectory her life would be one of skyrocketing success.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Another star in the debating firmament was a young Christian Porter.

Porter had a proud Liberal pedigree. His father was an Olympian who had become a kingmaker in Western Australian politics.

Kate and Christian were two of Australia's best four high school debaters.

MATTHEW DEEBLE, AUSTRALIAN HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1987-88: Kate and I were fortunate enough to be selected in the Australian schools debating team along with Daniel Mulino, Christian Porter, Kate and myself.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: How would you describe Christian Porter at the time?

MATTHEW DEEBLE, AUSTRALIAN HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1987-88: Christian was confident, he was winning, he was very smart, and very funny.

He combined a very, very smart, he combined a wonderful intellect with a real showman Aussie-style larrikin about him and he was very ambitious, he was driven to succeed.

JO DYER, SA HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1986-87: We met CP in 1986, for the first time. he was very charming.

He was very confident.

We were all quite confident back then.

But he was, you know, brash, blond and breezy.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Christian Porter was a young man with high political ambitions.

KATE STATEMENT (ACTOR'S VOICE): He told me, while I was ironing his shirt, that I would make "make someone a wonderful wife one day".

Not only was I "smart and pretty" but I could do all the "housewife things".

He went on to boast that he would need a smart, pretty wife, to help his political career, and that he would be Prime Minister one day.

By the age of 50, was his prediction as I remember it now

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: In January 1988, the national schools debating team was invited to the World Universities Championships held at the University of Sydney.

REPORTER: What are your memories of the woman who was involved.

You talk about you remember the trip very well, as a nice trip.

What are your memories of her and what was your relationship with her?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: I didn't say I remembered it very well, I remember it as a happy time.

It was 33 years ago.

I remember the person as an intelligent, bright, happy person, but I hadn't had any contact from that person, at all, to the best of my recollection, in the 33 years since that time in January 1988.

REPORTER: What was your contact with her then?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: There were four of us on this team. We were friends. We hung out together.

REPORTER: Were you in a relationship?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, it wasn't

REPORTER: Were you ever alone, the two of you?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: Look, I just — I don't think so. I mean we did what normal teenagers would do.

There were groups of people.

MATTHEW DEEBLE, AUSTRALIAN HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1987-88: We had had a week together debating.

Kate and I were in a pair and Christian and Daniel were in another pair.

So, Kate and I had spent the days prior in debates and then various social events at each night.

The last night the formal dinner was held, and it was a black-tie affair, although I don't think I had a black tie, and Kate was well dressed and it was a formal dinner and a party.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The girl with the bobbed hair in this photo is sixteen-year-old Kate sitting next to Christian Porter at the formal dinner that night.

REPORTER: The complainant has provided a photo of the two of you sitting at the formal dinner that night. Do you remember that dinner or sitting next to her?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am sure there was a formal dinner that night.

I am sure that is the case. We were a group of people who were going out debating during the day, going out to functions and things at night.

I am absolutely sure there would be such a photo.

Look, it is 33 years ago. I remember two evenings that week.

One was a night with — at one of the colleges with bowls of prawns, which sticks in my mind.

I do remember a formal dinner and going out dancing sounds about right.

REPORTER: Do you remember walking her to her room though?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

REPORTER: Was there no sexual involvement with anybody on that trip?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: Well, no.

MATTHEW DEEBLE, AUSTRALIAN HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM 1987-88: I attended the dinner, but I was leaving to go back to Melbourne reasonably early the next day, and so I attended the dinner and then headed back to the dormitory rooms where we were billeted during the event and Kate and the others continued on out that night.

JO DYER, LITERARY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR AND FRIEND OF KATE: Kate told me that they had been out dancing, drinking, partying until late - very late.

They were walking back to the university campus.

Christian offered to walk Kate back to her college.

KATE' STATEMENT (ACTOR'S VOICE): I was drunk, and I trusted him, so I agreed.

I had no real reason then, not to. We went up to my room, and I let him inside.

What did happen next was a total surprise to me.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: There are no witnesses who can corroborate that the events Kate described occurred.

REPORTER: So, her specific allegation in the statement to her lawyer was that then you took her back to her room allegedly and allegedly then forced her to perform oral sex on you and that after that you raped her twice.

What do you say to that allegation?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: Just it didn't happen, and it's not true.

REPORTER: Do you think the Prime Minister and your Cabinet colleagues are going to stick by you?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: My colleagues are doing, I think, a very, very good job in the most difficult of circumstances.

No-one is beyond an allegation, no-one.

If you could just imagine for just — and I know that we're all cynics and this is a hard and tough and fast environment that we're all in — but just imagine for a second that it's not true, that for whatever reason the recollection and the belief, which I'm sure was strongly held, is just not true. Just imagine that for a second.

ARTHUR MOSES SC, FORMER PRESIDENT, LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA: The problem here is it is not sworn evidence of the complainant.

So, there is no record of interview as we understand it, between the complainant and the police, that could be the subject of admissible evidence and there is no evidence from any third parties that they witnessed the alleged sexual assault.

So, in those circumstances, a court would have to conclude that this individual could not be the subject of a conviction.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Christian Porter told the press conference that he didn't recollect seeing Kate again after that year.

REPORTER: When was the last time you had communications with the complainant?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: That week, I would think in early December, sorry January in 1988.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: But in Kate's written account she says she met with Christian Porter again in 1994

KATE STATEMENT (ACTOR'S VOICE): The last time that I saw CP was in 1994, in Perth. I was there for the annual Australian Historians' Association conference, held that year at the University of Western Australia, from 26 to 30 September.

One evening, I had dinner with CP. On this occasion, he made various inappropriate remarks to me.

He told me, on arrival, that the piece of plastic tied around his left wrist had been put there by his current girlfriend, as a reminder to him not to "kiss other girls."

He also boasted about being the "oldest fresher on campus" as he had recently begun his Law degree at UWA.

JEREMY SAMUEL, FORMER LIBERAL CANDIDATE AND FRIEND OF KATE: Kate talked about and wrote about in her in her documents, having been in Perth in 1994, and contacting Christian and having dinner with him and spending what appeared to be several hours with him.

Now, that may well be his recollection.

But it certainly wasn't Kate's recollection.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: In a statement to Four Corners Christian Porter said

“If there is some information that there was some form of contact in the early 1990s that is not impossible. But I do not recollect any specific contact since 1988.”

Kate’s career never lived up to the huge promise she had shown.

The older she got, the more she struggled. She was diagnosed with bipolar disorder and had been hospitalised. She attempted suicide several times.

There’s no way of knowing what caused Kate’s mental health problems.

JEREMY SAMUEL, FORMER LIBERAL CANDIDATE AND FRIEND OF KATE: She certainly, presented as a person with damage and she was quite open that she’d had mental health challenges.

But she also presented as a historian and a documenter, and a very brilliant and articulate person.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Four Corners has learned that Kate contacted a counsellor in Adelaide in about 2013 and discussed making a report to police.

She saw the counsellor about six times and spoke in detail about her allegation against a boy she called Christian. Kate told her that they had been debaters together.

The counsellor has told Four Corners that Kate was torn about pursuing the matter knowing it could ruin this man's life.

This was Kate's first known disclosure of the allegation. By 2019, Kate had decided to pursue her complaint.

MICHAEL BRADLEY, KATE'S LAWYER: I was contacted by Kate.

This was quite a while ago now wanting to come and see me and we, we met in, in my office and that sort of led to quite a lot of work together over, over a period on what ended up being her report to the police.

Wanting to get help with her case, Kate began to contact politicians, including Labor Senator Penny Wong, whom she had once met at a parliamentary function.

PENNY WONG, LABOR SENATE LEADER: The complainant approached me in the street in November 2019.

She reminded me we'd met once before. In that discussion she made an allegation.

She made an allegation that she had been raped uh, many years before by Christian Porter.

She told me she was going to go to the New South Wales police.

I told her that was the right thing to do. I subsequently facilitated her referral to rape support services at Yarrow Place here in Adelaide and confirmed through one of her friends that she was being supported uh, to make uh, her complaint to the New South Wales police.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The following month, Kate also wrote to former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and his wife Lucy, whom she had never met.

MALCOLM TURNBULL, PRIME MINISTER 2015-18: So, we simply wrote back, expressing our sympathy for the experience she had written about, and the pain that it must have caused her to write the email to us, and then simply said to her that we believed she was on the right course of action, she had a lawyer who was competent in that field and she was going to see the police and that was clearly the right track to proceed with.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: While Kate lived in Adelaide, because the incident she alleged happened in Sydney, South Australian police put her in touch with sex crimes squad detectives in NSW.

MATTHEW DEEBLE, NON-PROFIT EXECUTIVE AND FRIEND OF KATE: Once Kate had decided that she wanted to make her statement to police and take the matter forward, I was involved in supporting her with the steps that she was taking towards that.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: FRIEND OF KATE Matthew Deeble offered to accompany Kate to meet the detectives.

But they told Kate it was best he didn't as he could be a witness in any criminal case because he had been with her on the night of the alleged incident.

Another friend accompanied her instead. She met the two detectives at Kings Cross on February 27 last year.

MATTHEW DEEBLE, NON-PROFIT EXECUTIVE AND FRIEND OF KATE: I was reluctant for her for her own sake to move on to reporting to the police, but she was adamant that she wanted her story to be heard, and she was particularly keen to make sure that it was understood by people in authority.

JEREMY SAMUEL, FORMER LIBERAL CANDIDATE AND FRIEND OF KATE: She'd been to the police, she'd reported, she felt like she'd been well treated well listened to and taken seriously.

Then she'd gone back to Adelaide and she was nervous about what was going to happen, what the response might be. If this went public, and she was struggling.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Ultimately, the COVID pandemic stymied Kate's plans to make her formal statement to police.

MATTHEW DEEBLE, NON-PROFIT EXECUTIVE AND FRIEND OF KATE: She was on path to give her statement to the NSW police I believe who were going to travel to South Australia to be with her and take that statement and move the matter forward – COVID restrictions stopped that occurring. And I know that she was under enormous stress and distress because of those delays.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Kate was becoming very depressed. She checked herself into a psychiatric clinic in Melbourne.

JEREMY SAMUEL, FORMER LIBERAL CANDIDATE AND FRIEND OF KATE: I think it's well documented that she ended up in a institution in Melbourne, I had tried to go and see her and she'd said that she wasn't allowed any visitors because of COVID.

This was at least the second if not the third time she'd been hospitalized.

She presented at a facility in Sydney and was basically forced to stay for a period of time, even though she didn't want to or feel she needed to.

She then put herself into hospital in Melbourne, and then been released in the middle of lockdown without having been able to see any of her friends and went back to Adelaide and from what I can tell, there was no follow up, there was nobody making sure that she had somebody with her.

You know, this was a person who clearly was struggling with mental health issues and, and of course, we all know the outcome.

JO DYER, LITERARY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR AND FRIEND OF KATE: There were many of us who were happy to step forward and help her carry that burden to the extent that we could and ultimately, of course, we couldn't do everything we hoped.

But we did what we could.

Sorry.

We did what we could.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The week after Kate left the clinic, she told police she did not want to proceed with the complaint.

The day after that, on June 24, at her home in Adelaide, Kate took her own life.

JO DYER, LITERARY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR AND FRIEND OF KATE: It's heartbreaking. It really is. She was very strong and very clear, as you can hear in her own words.

NICK RYAN, WINE WRITER AND FRIEND OF KATE: It's such a waste. That this beautiful, clever, young woman with so much potential has a life squandered, and a life ended far too early.

JEREMY SAMUEL, FORMER LIBERAL CANDIDATE AND FRIEND OF KATE: When I think about Kate, I just think about this sparkling smile and it was in her eyes as much as anything else and this brilliant wit and this this wonderful, compassionate person.

And I'd like people to remember when they talk about this, that that was the person who this was about not just some random statistic.

REPORTER: Prime Minister, have you asked the Cabinet Minister who the subject of allegations aired by the ABC, of rape allegations, have you asked him if he denies those allegations?

SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER: Yes, I have, and he absolutely does. Categorically.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Last week, the allegation that a Cabinet Minister had been accused of rape became public when an anonymous letter was sent by a friend of Kate to the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison.

REPORTER: Do you believe the allegation to be false?

SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER: Well, that is a matter for the police.

See, I'm not the Commissioner of Police.

REPORTER: When you actually spoke to him on Wednesday night, did he say that he knows the woman involved and what...

SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER: I'm not going to go into the conversation.

Simply to tell you I was asked; did I raise it?

Yes, I did.

And he vigorously and completely denied the allegations.

So that means there is a proper process for it now to follow.

REPORTER: Sorry can I just clarify, you haven't actually read through these documents yourself, given the seriousness of these allegations, why haven't you read - ?

SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER: I'm aware of the contents of them. I've been briefed on the contents of them and it was appropriate, as the Commissioner himself advised all of us in the Parliament, to refer any allegations to the proper authorities.

That is the way, in our country, under the rule of law things like this are dealt with and it is important to ensure that we uphold that.

That is the way our society operates.

Now, these are very distressing issues that have been raised, and as there are other issues that have been raised in relation to other members and other cases.

But the proper place for that to be dealt with is by the authorities, which are the police.

That's how our country operates.

That system protects all Australians.

REPORTER: So, you won't be ordering an inquiry on this?

SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER: I'm not the police force.

I have given it to the police to investigate.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The following day, NSW Police announced they had closed the case stating that there was "insufficient admissible evidence" to proceed with the investigation.

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: I can say to you all it didn't happen.

After days of speculation about who the mystery cabinet minister was, the Attorney-General stepped forward to categorically deny the allegation in an emotional press conference.

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have discussed with the Prime Minister today that after speaking with my own doctor I am going to take a short period of leave to assess and hopefully improve my own mental health.

All of my life I have just pushed through, but for the many caring family and friends who have asked me that question over the course of the last week: "Are you OK?"

I have got to say my answer, my honest answer is, I really don't know.

I am not ashamed to say that I am going to seek some professional assessment and assistance on answering that question over the next few weeks before I go back into the field of my duties and resume the role of Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations and Leader of the House.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Mr Porter's front bench colleagues have voiced their strong support for the Attorney General.

JOSH FRYDENBERG, TREASURER: It's up to the police to ascertain the veracity of the facts in that particular case.

The police are the only body, Lisa, who are authorised to deal with such serious criminal matters and, in the case of the New South Wales police, they have spoken, said the matter is closed.

Yesterday you saw an emphatic denial from Christian Porter at his press conference and in his statement in the glare of the nation's media and the glare of the Australian public.

He's entitled to the presumption of innocence as any citizen of this country is entitled to and he has the Prime Minister's support and he has my support.

REPORTER: Given the circumstances, though, surely an inquiry would resolve some of the issues?

SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER: No, I don't agree with that.

I don't agree with that, because I don't agree with the precedent or the prima facie case for there being such a process.

Because that would say that our rule of law and our police are not competent to deal with these issues.

And they are competent to deal with these issues.

They have reviewed the materials, and they've formed their assessment.

REPORTER: Did you believe his account of events that he said yesterday?

SCOTT MORRISON, PRIME MINISTER: Look, my judgement is based on the report of the police.

That's the point I was making before.

They are the competent and authorised authorities to make the judgements about any such allegations and they have made their conclusions and that's - as people have said in similar occasions in the past - that's where the matter rests.

ARTHUR MOSES SC, FORMER PRESIDENT, LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA: It is impossible to prosecute an individual with a deceased complainant, where there is no sworn testimony of that individual and where there are no eyewitnesses to the alleged sexual assault.

It would be impossible to undertake such a prosecution, let alone to have a conviction.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Last week, South Australia police delivered their report on Kate's death to the state's coroner.

The coroner released a statement saying that following media reporting he regarded the investigation as "incomplete" and has asked for further investigations, after which he will decide whether to hold an inquest.

On Thursday, Kate's family also released a statement saying that they would support "any inquiry" into the circumstances surrounding her death.

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: In this last week, I have tried to do what I have tried to do all of my life: respect the rules and the processes and the law.

I was determined to follow the process set out by the AFP Commissioner, and it's a process because of my background I know well, to not comment on allegations through the media, because it risks prejudicing any investigation.

So, I've waited until the NSW Police concluded their consideration of the matter.

And staying silent, following the rules, was a very difficult decision.

While I have followed the rules and stayed silent, I have been subject to the most wild, intense, unrestrained series of accusations that I can remember, in modern Australian politics.

Maybe that's the new normal.

I hope for everyone's sake, it's not.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: Mr Porter hoped that his press conference last week would have been the end of the matter but calls for an independent inquiry have persisted.

MICHAEL BRADLEY, KATE'S LAWYER: He is the first law officer. It is a unique position, in a sense, it is an apolitical position because he oversees the whole system of justice and sits above all the judges, all the barristers, all the solicitors, all the legislation, you know all of our laws.

He's responsible for all of that and it is absolutely essential that the person in that role has no suspicion, no cloud hanging over them.

We, we have, you know, that the integrity of that role is paramount.

JEREMY SAMUEL, FORMER LIBERAL CANDIDATE AND FRIEND OF KATE: I would have thought if there was an inquiry by a competent person without a political agenda, that that would be a way of stopping this trial by media.

I mean, I'm certainly not calling for him to resign.

He said, if you had to resign just because an allegation was made, then everybody would be stuffed.

And I think he's right.

But I think he should stand aside from being the chief legal officer while a competent person like the former judge holds an inquiry.

He certainly denied it very strongly.

But that's all we have.

And the PM saying that well he says 'he didn't do it, the police have looked at it, that's good enough for me.'

I don't feel like it's good enough for the Australian people.

ARTHUR MOSES SC, FORMER PRESIDENT, LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA: Some of my colleagues who are calling for an inquiry are some of my closest friends and colleagues who I've served with either as predecessors of the law council or in other areas, and I respect them immensely, but I disagree with them profoundly on this issue.

In my view, you cannot call for an inquiry into whether a criminal offense is allegedly being committed in situation where the criminal justice system has determined that there is no charge to be laid in respect of the matter, because what you're then doing is adopting a shifting sands approach to our criminal justice system.

If you determined who was to be the subject of an inquiry based on who they are and based on what the alleged crime is, that is not how we operate within this country and I think it takes us down a very worrying road as to what may happen in the future.

LOUISE MILLIGAN, REPORTER: The allegation against Christian Porter can now never be tested in a criminal proceeding.

There is no way of knowing whether or not a rape occurred.

For the late complainant and for the Attorney General there may be no justice.

REPORTER: Is your recollection flawed?

You have said her recollection is obviously strongly held, could your recollection be flawed by your own perception?

CHRISTIAN PORTER, ATTORNEY GENERAL: I will finish by saying the things that I have read did not happen, and to suggest that they could be forgotten is ridiculous.

They just never happened.

END.

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