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## Bishop Praises Cash's Passionate Defence of Price's Leadership

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In July 2025, during Senate debate on 24 July, Michaelia Cash, the Liberal Party's Senate Opposition Leader, delivered a strong defence of Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price, following remarks by Foreign Minister Penny Wong. The exchange occurred after Price raised concerns over ceremonial protocols, such as Welcome to Country, which she described as excessive and symbolic rather than practical.

Cash asserted that Wong's comments failed to show respect for Price's background and advocacy. Referring to Price's mother, Bess Price, a former Northern Territory politician and

a respected Indigenous elder, Cash emphasized the legitimacy and cultural integrity of Price's views. She told the chamber that Senator Price should not be dismissed or patronized for speaking out on Indigenous issues from her own lived experience.

Cash declared:

"I will stand by and respect Senator Jacinta Nampijinpa Price. Her father is white, her mother is black, so please don't ever come into this place again and pontificate to us like you've just done."

Former Speaker of the House Bronwyn Bishop praised Cash's remarks as "passionate" and "right from the heart," describing the exchange as a significant moment for conservative leadership in the Senate. Bishop said Cash demonstrated that the opposition was willing to defend voices like Price's—voices advocating for practical solutions rather than symbolic gestures.

Senator Price, who holds the portfolios of Shadow Minister for Indigenous Australians and Shadow Minister for Government Efficiency, has proposed reducing federal funding for ceremonial acknowledgments. She has argued that resources should instead be directed toward addressing critical issues such as domestic violence, child protection, and community services in Indigenous communities.

The 24 July debate followed an incident in the Senate where One Nation senators turned their backs during the formal Acknowledgment of Country, drawing strong criticism from Labor, the Greens, and Indigenous Affairs Minister Malarndirri McCarthy. The act was condemned as disrespectful. In the aftermath, Cash's impassioned remarks drew attention for standing in defence of Price's right to question cultural norms while advocating substantive reform.

Although some government members dismissed Price's position as controversial or politically motivated, her message has found resonance among those who support a shift away from ceremonial politics. Bishop noted that Cash's defence reflected a renewed confidence within the opposition to support senators who speak "truth to power."

The episode underscores a broader political divide over Indigenous policy in Australia, highlighting contrasting views between symbolic reconciliation and policy-driven reform. For conservative figures like Price and her supporters, the emphasis remains on measurable

outcomes over ritual expressions. As public debate continues, this exchange has come to symbolize the sharpening lines of contention within the national conversation on Indigenous affairs.