

When libel lawyers stop the reporting of parliament the...

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This [is a real report](#):

The Guardian has been prevented from reporting parliamentary proceedings on legal grounds which appear to call into question privileges guaranteeing free speech established under the 1688 Bill of Rights.

Today's published Commons order papers contain a question to be answered by a minister later this week. The Guardian is prevented from identifying the MP who has asked the question, what the question is, which minister might answer it, or where the question is to be found.

The Guardian is also forbidden from telling its readers why the paper is prevented — for the first time in memory — from reporting parliament. Legal obstacles, which cannot be identified, involve proceedings, which cannot be mentioned, on behalf of a client who must remain secret.

The only fact the Guardian can report is that the case involves the London solicitors Carter-Ruck, who specialise in suing the media for clients, who include individuals or global corporations.

This is staggering. It demonstrates to what degree one judge — Mr Justice Eady is, [as the Time puts it](#):

Almost single-handedly — creating new privacy law

The man is out of control. legal firms like Carter Ruck are running amok as a result. And consequentially a question on Parliament's order paper cannot be reported in the Guardian. The question can be [found here](#).

The time has come for a basic human right — that of freedom of speech — to be reasserted. If Labour has a last gasp left to it then I say use it to reform libel law. The Tories never will.