



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Main Committee

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Live Animal Exports

SPEECH

Monday, 13 February 2012

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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Questioner
Speaker Ley, Sussan, MP

Source House
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Ms LEY (Farrer) (10:48): I rise to acknowledge the hard work and belief of a constituent of mine from the city of Albury. During the height of last year's disastrous live cattle export ban by the Gillard government, Eddie Lombaert took to the streets with fellow believers collecting signed support to end the export of live animals for slaughter. I do not agree with Eddie's point of view. I do not agree with it at all, but I am here today to acknowledge that he has a right to make that view known and he has a right for his voice to be heard on the floor of this House. That was certainly missing in this place last year. When Labor blundered in and cancelled 100 per cent of the trade in June, it overlooked the fact that up to 45 per cent of cattle were already going to abattoirs that met the same stringent standards that we demand here in Australia.

As we saw last week there are isolated examples where these standards are broken, but that does not mean there is widespread crisis taking place. In everyday life there can be breaches of acceptable standards that can be calmly extinguished with negotiation, understanding and good skills. The issue of taking animals to slaughter certainly did not need the impotent stamp of this Labor government to protect itself against its dominant bedfellow, the Greens.

Unlike the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry last year, my constituent Eddie Lombaert did not charge in to correct things by using a sledgehammer. Unlike the corporate arm of the RSPCA, which took that moment for an opportunistic, ill-informed and incorrect swipe at me and others, implying that anyone who opposed the live ban must therefore, in turn, support animal cruelty, Eddie Lombaert saw the *Four Corners* report and thought, as most of us did, that there must be a better way. So he actively and diligently sought support for his views. And I respect him for doing that. I too believe that Australia must always pursue the cause of animal welfare both at our market abattoirs and those of the countries we continue to export to. I thank Eddie for arguing his case to me. I recognise that, for him personally, it was not an easy task, but it was one he completely dedicated himself to, tramping the streets door to door, shop to shop. I wish Eddie all the very best and I thank the House for allowing me to table the results of his campaign, the 2,866 signatures of constituents who have petitioned me on this important matter.

The **DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Leigh): The document will be forwarded to the petitions committee for its consideration and will be accepted subject to confirmation by the committee that it conforms with standing orders.