



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**THE SENATE**

**FOOD IMPORTATION (BOVINE  
MEAT STANDARDS) BILL 2010**

**Third Reading**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 15 March 2010**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

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## SPEECH

**Date** Monday, 15 March 2010  
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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Parry, Sen Stephen

**Source** Senate  
**Proof** No  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Senator PARRY** (Tasmania) (4.31 pm)—Senator Ludwig cannot have it both ways. I will be very brief compared with Senator Ludwig, who has taken about 11 minutes. Senator Sterle—the only other government speaker who contributed to the debate on the Food Importation (Bovine Meat Standards) Bill 2010 on Thursday—spoke for 20 minutes and hardly touched on the topic. At one stage I interjected, and I was reprimanded by the Acting Deputy President at the time. I said, ‘What has this got to do with the bovine meat bill?’ to which Senator Sterle replied—and I hope Senator Ludwig takes note of this:

Senator Parry asks what this has got to do with it. I’ll help you out, mate. Clearly this is filibustering from you lot. That is what we have seen here. You just oppose for the sake of opposing.

We complied with the filibustering allegation, and we put the motion that the question be put. Putting the motion curbs the debate. Senator Ludwig should know that that had nothing to do with government business time. We were taking our own time. We gagged our own debate. We did not gag the government’s debate. So Senator Ludwig is wrong on two points. He had a filibustering senator on his side who wasted 20 minutes with quotes like ‘boofhead’ and ‘thickhead’ and talking about the CPRS bills. He went on to everything bar the bill that was currently before the chamber. You may want to read Senator Sterle’s speech in the *Hansard*. It was a great contribution, but not for that particular debate, unfortunately. So Senator Sterle let the cat out of the bag on Thursday during our own time and we curbed our own debate. Senator Ludwig is wrong on two counts.

This is simply covering up. I am going to quote Senator Colbeck, who interjected in Senator Ludwig’s contribution a short while ago. He said, in response to his comments, ‘You haven’t got used to governing yet.’ And that is the problem. You accuse us of doing anything we want in this chamber, but we do not have the numbers. We need to have senators from the crossbench to do anything. The senators from the crossbench, who represent other states and other constituencies, support us. You cannot get used to the fact that you do not have the numbers. We have the numbers if we have the consent and the support of other senators. This is simply a debate that has the support of everyone in the parliament except for the government, because they got it wrong. They are too embarrassed to admit they could not legislate themselves, so we took up our own time to legislate for them, and we are going to fix the problem. That is what it boils down to: you are embarrassed by that. There is a new mantra from the Prime Minister, because the Prime Minister has failed on so many fronts: ‘We can’t fix this anymore.’ The Prime Minister has even failed to negotiate with the minors and the crossbenchers. So what is the old adage? ‘Let’s just blame the opposition. We’ve failed, so let’s just blame the opposition.’ That is the easy line. Without taking up any more of the chamber’s time, unlike the government, who have wasted a lot of time on this debate, we are certainly going to support the bill’s third reading.

Question put:

That this bill be now read a third time.