

LIVE EXPORT — PROPOSED MORATORIUM

339. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to the Minister for Agriculture and Food's media statement from this morning that states the government is taking legal advice on the Western Australian government's obligations under the Western Australian Animal Welfare Act to prevent cruelty on board ships going to the Middle East during the high summer period. Will the government rule out a live export ban during the northern summer months for our live sheep export industry?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The answer is no. We are working to ensure the highest standards of animal welfare that are possible in the industry. I have said to the Leader of the National Party on at least three occasions in here: you have your head in the sand if you think what is going on in that industry is acceptable. What is going on in that industry is deplorable and the industry's leadership is acting in a deplorable way by not accepting that Western Australians and Australians more generally want to see improvements. The National Party seems to think that what has gone on so far is acceptable—it is not. Anyone who has seen those images of what has occurred on those ships would be appalled.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr M. McGOWAN: You are doing your industry no service whatsoever because —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr M. McGOWAN: — if I look at members of the Liberal Party, I know there is a whole bunch of people sitting right there who would like to close the industry tomorrow. I can look here —

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Does the Liberal Party support the current arrangements in the industry? Is that right?

Mr D.C. Nalder: No, that's not what you said.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You cannot get a good word out of them.

I could look around Parliaments all over Australia, I could walk down Hay Street mall, or I could walk down the main streets of Bunbury, Kalgoorlie, Karratha or Broome and I expect I would find that an overwhelming majority of people would want to close the industry. That is the reality. I could walk down the main street of Nedlands and find that a majority of people there want to close it. All I am saying to that industry —

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Members might have noticed that I have not said to close the industry. They might have noticed; in fact, a question was asked last week, which confirmed that. I have not said that.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have said that the industry needs to lift its game. To quote a former Premier, it needs to raise its game. It is about time it did.