

LIVE EXPORT — FEDERAL LABOR POLICY

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

My question is to the Premier.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Water, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I refer to Bill Shorten and federal Labor's commitments to shut down WA's \$250 million live sheep export industry.

- (1) Has Mr Shorten sought input from the Premier or his government over what economic impacts ending the trade would have on regional WA?
- (2) Has the government done any modelling on the broader impact of shutting down the trade, including its effect on regional employment, and social ramifications including mental health and family breakdown?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(2) What is that?—the first question from the National Party after the budget, but no question on the budget. This must be the best budget because the Leader of the National Party did not even ask me a question on it!

Let us talk about agriculture. WAFarmers is on our side. Do members opposite remember Trevor Whittington? He is on our side. He has indicated that we brought down a marvellous budget. Even though the Leader of the National Party is not prepared to ask a question about the budget, I am prepared to answer one about it. I will quote, so the member is aware, the headline of the WAFarmers' press release about our budget: "WA Minister delivers for agriculture". The first quote is —

The WA Government has come through as per its pre-budget announcement, with a turnaround budget for the WA Department of Agriculture.

For the first time in years, the WA Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development ... has secure funding to end the annual budget cuts, which over the past decade have seen staff numbers effectively halved.

There it is!

Point of Order

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The Leader of the National Party asked a clear —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Wait a minute. I will hear this in silence, thank you.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The Premier is not answering the question that the Leader of the National Party asked about live export—whether or not the Premier agrees with his federal Labor counterparts.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: Questions are meant to be about issues within my personal control. What is within my control is the department of agriculture's budget. Policy initiatives from the federal opposition are not within my control. I can only answer what the standing orders allow me to, but I will go to the question to show my big-spiritedness. Before I did, I had to mention the great outcome that WAFarmers see in the budget that we released.

Mr P.C. Tinley: What was it?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will read it out again, if members like. Trevor Whittington is a former chief of staff to a range of Liberal, and maybe National, ministers. Tomorrow morning, Bill Shorten will be here. The member can ask him a question about the matter tomorrow morning. We have made our views in respect to the live sheep industry abundantly clear on numerous occasions.