

INDONESIAN ABATTOIRS — LIVE CATTLE TRADE SUSPENSION

**401. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to the comments of the minister and his department during estimates in 2010. The minister said —

... the northern beef herd is largely live export, typically into Indonesia. The notion of whether animal welfare is important is a blind Freddy argument: of course it is; absolutely! We are doing everything we can to ensure that industry standards are high.

- (1) In April 2010, the minister visited Indonesia on a trade mission and did nothing to protect the welfare of cattle. Does he now accept responsibility for his poor leadership on this issue?
- (2) Since 2010, had the minister brought up any concerns about the welfare of cattle with Indonesian importers before *Four Corners* highlighted the issue?
- (3) What has the minister done since his department's statements in 2010 to ensure, as he said, that "industry standards are high"?

**Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:**

- (1)–(3) I thank the member for Collie–Preston for the question and it is interesting that he has now broken his silence on this issue. I am assuming that he is going to come out strongly supportive —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Members, this is an issue that many people have an interest in, and I appreciate that. But I would appreciate at this moment, though, being able to hear the minister's response, and that other people in this place also be able to hear the minister's response.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** I make no apologies for my engagement with the Indonesian government as a minister for Western Australia, both on a trade mission in April last year and during the recent trip in response to the more acute issue around this. We have in this state a significant trade relationship that is worth just short of \$1 billion; until last year it was the number one agrifood market out of Western Australia. In terms of Western Australia's position on animal welfare, we have made significant investments in the recent state budget, doubling our resources for animal welfare to \$1.6 million. We have given another \$250 000 to the RSPCA. It is interesting that the member for Maylands stood up and said that the RSPCA funding was too little too late; she did not ask the next question about who gave too little and who was too late. We have come to the party and I think our record stands and we are —

**Mr F.M. Logan:** You were in the abattoir, and you did nothing.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn, I formally call you to order for the first time today.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** I think our record stands pretty high on the issue of animal welfare and the resources that are going into —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Collie–Preston, if you want answers to your questions, I suggest you cease interjecting. Member for Cockburn, I formally call you to order for the second time today.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** The question basically implies that, on a visit I made last year to Indonesia, I should have —

**Mr F.M. Logan:** Two abattoirs.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** I did not visit abattoirs in Indonesia when I was there last year.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** What did you do?

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** I engaged with a whole range of Indonesian companies about taking grain from Western Australia. Again, Western Australia's single biggest export to Indonesia is wheat. I met with a number of companies that import our grains to ensure that what we grow in Western Australia meets their standards. I also looked at research opportunities to pursue other markets going beyond that.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn!

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** I engaged with a small Indonesian co-operative about getting lupins into the tempeh market.

**Mr F.M. Logan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cockburn, I formally call you to order for the third time today.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** Besides engaging about the wheat and the lupins, we also engaged about our sister state relationship with East Java, which last year celebrated 20 years of a relationship with Western Australia. I had to sign agreements on the delivery of milk into that market and also to support the Indonesian farming community in raising the level of productivity in its dairy sector. Mr Speaker, we did not stand on our hands! The member makes implications about what we did; we were right in there. At the level —

Several members interjected.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** It should have been “sat on our hands”; I accept that!

**The SPEAKER:** There is an opportunity today for other members in this place to ask questions; they might be of the same minister, I am not sure, but many people seem to have opinions that they all want to share at the same time.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** I have a supplementary question.

**The SPEAKER:** I do not know whether the minister has finished.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** Not quite, Mr Speaker.

**Mr P.C. Tinley** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Willagee, I formally call you to order for the first time today.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Throw him out!

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Collie–Preston, I will give you a supplementary question, but at the moment I think the minister is answering the first question that you asked. Member for Girrawheen, I formally call you to order for the first time today as well.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** Those who know me well know that I can actually walk on my hands!

We have ensured that we have engaged with all the relevant industry groups that are most strongly engaged in all our overseas markets on the live trade issue. The concern about animal welfare is not new. We have engaged with Meat and Livestock Australia, the Australian Livestock Export Corporation Ltd and a whole range of companies that export from Western Australia. Given the footprint that live cattle and sheep exports out of Western Australia have into these international markets, it is absolutely appropriate that I do that. I maintain the very strongly held view that we should target the issues of animal welfare and that we should use our international trade relationship to target a shift in those issues. It is my belief that over time there has been some significant shift in that regard. Also, I cannot stand up with 100 per cent authority and say that we will not have animal welfare issues in Western Australia. Therefore, we absolutely need to engage. We stand on the strong record that this Liberal–National government is actually doing stuff.