



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



THE SENATE
MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

National Security

SPEECH

Monday, 22 September 2014

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

SPEECH

Date Monday, 22 September 2014
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Questioner
Speaker Lambie, Sen Jacqui

Source Senate
Proof No
Responder
Question No.

Senator LAMBIE (Tasmania—Deputy Leader and Deputy Whip of the Palmer United Party in the Senate) (15:53): I rise to speak to the motion before the Senate regarding the Prime Minister's statement on national security and the overseas deployment—again—of members of the Australian Defence force to fight the sharia extremists in the Middle East.

On behalf of the Tasmanian people I acknowledge the bravery, commitment, decency, humanity and professionalism of the Australian forces deployed by this government to fight in Iraq and other Middle East countries. I also acknowledge the courage, love and support those back home have for the troops—the Defence families who wait and pray for the safe return their fathers, sisters, brothers and mothers. They all represent everything good about the Australian people. And as much as they represent the good, the sharia foe stands for pure evil.

Despite the horrific images and evidence of the evil of these sharia extremists which flood our televisions and computer screens there are still those in our community who are innocent to the sharia supporters' intent, motives, capability and threat. There are still those in our communities who do not realise that these thugs and extremists will not stop their acts of terrorism and depravity until their way of life, their culture and their law is imposed on Australia—indeed, on the whole world. There are still those in our community who think they can negotiate peace with these monsters and agree to some of their law and customs.

It is about time we faced the fact that these maniacs and depraved humans will not stop committing their cold-blooded butchery and rapes until every woman in Australia wears a burqa and is subservient to men. These depraved sharia law supporters will not stop until all Australians worship the same way as they do. These thugs will not stop their killing until we bow down before their religious leaders, who will tell us how to live our lives and conduct our business.

Australia is a secular society where we have a clear separation between church and state. There is no religion or religious leader in Australia, or outside Australia, who has the right to implement law. It is unconstitutional and it is for the protection of all Australians that this is the case. Indeed, if any law other than Australian law were recognised or followed—either formally or informally—it would clearly show divided loyalties to our nation and its constitution. And yet we still have Australian citizens who continue to protest, advocate and push to allow a form of sharia law or cultural practice in our country.

It is now time to get rid of this sharia rubbish in Australia. If we are going to send our forces overseas to battle against these fanatical sharia supporters then we also need to get rid of them and their associates on home soil. 'Clean up the rubbish in your own back yard, before you try to clean up the rubbish in others,' is the advice my grandmother gave, and advice we should now follow. We do not want our troops putting their lives on the line overseas only to come back home and find that our government have sold out to the Australian sharia supporters.

I have been criticised by some because I could not properly define what sharia law is. Mr Acting Deputy President, it is not going to come as a shock when I tell you that I am not an Islamic scholar. However I will tell you what I do know about the supporters of sharia. Every major terrorist attack on Western world citizens and Australian citizens—9/11, the Bali bombings, the Boston marathon bombings, recent beheadings and massacres—have all been carried out by supporters of sharia law. If people want more detail on this law, my advice is to google 'sharia'. But be careful: you will see shocking images from overseas, which I do not want repeated in our beautiful nation.

Essentially sharia law is a law made up by men who hate women: it takes away women's rights, attacks equality and treats them like slaves and second-class citizens. Sharia law forces women to wear clothing which covers their face and body, on threat of being beaten or killed. Any form of sharia law in Australia, no matter how small or benign, will mean church and state are no longer separated. Overseas experience shows that under sharia law, religious freedom would be destroyed while an extremist monoculture is established. It will also mean that the

death penalty will be imposed on people who criticise or reject the state's official religion and women who are found guilty of adultery. Torture and body mutilation—limb removal—will be state sanctioned for those found guilty of stealing.

Sharia law makes it okay for girls to be denied the same education rights as males and prohibits women from driving. Sharia law makes sport and music illegal. Sharia law makes it okay for the state to kill anyone who disagrees with religious leaders' beliefs and their teachings. It makes it okay for the state to mutilate and torture people who are found guilty of minor crimes like stealing. Sharia law allows men to have four wives—polygamy is unlawful in Australia and should always be unlawful. Sharia law allows men to divorce their wives by saying 'I divorce you' three times—that is not bloody Australian! Sharia law forbids interest on money lending—shall we change the banking industry? Sharia law allows for, and fails to criminalise, the barbaric custom of female genital mutilation.

Each member of this parliament knows the truth in the words I have spoken. Why have those members of this parliament who have put themselves out as the champions of women's rights not supported my call to rid Australia of this evil sharia influence? Why have they turned a blind eye to the sharia atrocities committed on our own home soil?

It is clear there is one question every citizen and politician must answer: do you support sharia law or the people who follow it? If you do support sharia law, then I will say it, and I will continue to say it: get out of Australia! If you oppose it, then welcome.

In closing, I once again call on this Abbott Liberal government to guarantee that this government will properly care for our war veterans on their safe return. The outrageous Australian veteran suicide rate of 30 or more veterans a year for the last decade shows that this Liberal, and also the previous Labor-Green government, have failed to care properly for our veterans after their discharge from our military.

Our veterans should not have to fight the DVA to obtain a gold card. That fight causes more harm, which is unnecessary. That fight causes our veterans to say, 'I'd rather face the Taliban. I'd rather face Australia's enemies, than have to fight with the Department of Veterans' Affairs.' This is a disgusting state of affairs, when it would be cost-neutral or would save Australian taxpayers' money if members of our ADF who were put in harm's way overseas automatically qualified for a gold card. That would be a pretty simple procedure. The industry of doctors and lawyers who assess our veteran's claims for a gold card would not be needed. We would save billions in fees and dozens of veterans' lives each year if the Australian government made, as a right of service, the issue of a gold card to members of the ADF who have served in combat or peace-keeping roles upon their discharge.

If we cannot afford that cost, then do not bloody send them to war in the first place! Do not send them to war! And this is the point I will end on: every government must detail and explain to the Australian public the true cost of war before sending our men and women into harm's way. Sending men and women to war, as many veterans have told me, is more than the cost of just bullets and blankets. And this government has been caught out trying to hide the true cost of war. Perhaps that is why they have used weasel words in trying to describe the action of sending our troops into harm's way.

Mr Abbott and the defence minister should be honest and, like other countries in the western alliance, declare war. Yes, that is right—say the word—'we declare war on the sharia supporters and extremists.' The only reason this government has failed to declare war officially is to try to save money and to deny our troops their full entitlements and care when they return home.

Last, but certainly not least, I pray for the safe return of all the members of our military and salute them and their families' service for this country.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The question is that the motion moved by Senator Abetz be agreed to.

Question agreed to.