



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



THE SENATE

PROOF

BILLS

Shipping Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

Second Reading

SPEECH

Wednesday, 25 November 2015

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

SPEECH

<p>Date Wednesday, 25 November 2015</p> <p>Page 105</p> <p>Questioner</p> <p>Speaker Lambie, Sen Jacqui</p>	<p>Source Senate</p> <p>Proof Yes</p> <p>Responder</p> <p>Question No.</p>
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Senator LAMBIE (Tasmania) (19:15): I rise to speak on the Shipping Legislation Amendment Bill 2015. To an outsider, Australian shipping laws can be very complex and daunting. However, this government legislation boils down to one simple question: do the Australian people want an Australian shipping industry? If the answer is yes then this legislation must be strongly rejected, because, if this Liberal National Party legislation passes this Senate, the Australian shipping industry will be killed and thousands of direct and indirect Australian jobs will be destroyed in the process. I will not stand by and allow this government to betray the Australian people and future generations in such a reckless and treasonous manner.

The government's official summary of the act reads:

Amends: the Coastal Trading (Revitalising Australian Shipping) Act 2012 to: rename the Act as the Coastal Shipping Act 2015; replace the existing three tiered licensing system with a single permit system, available to Australian and foreign vessels, which will provide access to the Australian coast for a period of 12 months; and establish a framework of entitlements for seafarers on foreign vessels engaging or intending to engage in coastal shipping for more than 183 days; the Shipping Registration Act 1981 to allow vessels to be registered on the Australian International Shipping Register when they engage in international shipping for 90 days or more; and four Acts to make consequential amendments. Also repeals the Coastal Trading (Revitalising Australian Shipping) (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) Act 2012.

This legislation effectively takes away any protection that Australian shipowners and maritime workers had against unfair, heavily subsidised, monopolised competition from cheap overseas vessels and cheap overseas maritime workers.

This legislation means that members of the Liberal and National parties are prepared to sacrifice Australian maritime jobs and national shipping security on the altar of free market economics when the opposite of a free market exists in shipping. However, there are many countries around the world who are prepared to acknowledge reality and protect their nation's merchant marine, maritime workers' jobs and skills, because they know history shows that their nations become less safe in times of world conflict. If we place ourselves at the mercy of foreign shipping and seafarers in times of world conflict, what happens to our supply chain security? What happens to the security, safety and reliability of (1) fuel and oil, (2) containerised goods, (3) dry bulk stores such as coal and iron ore and, of course, passenger cruise liners once we lose the maritime skills, personnel and ships to act in Australia's national interest at all times? If you listen to those irresponsible Nationals and Liberal Party members of this place, we should vote for their legislation and adopt their 'she'll be right' attitude in response to the multiple threats to world peace and Australia's national security and interests.

Are those threats real? Let me briefly remind the Senate of a few facts that some opposite are trying to bury. For the first time in history, we have armed guards with machine guns patrolling the perimeter of Parliament House after religious psychopaths declared war on us because we do not want to accept their religion and law and prefer to live in a secular, free, democratic society. Today, most Australians—as a matter of fact, three out of four people—believe we will suffer a Paris-style terrorist attack. The Chinese government, when it is not scaring the hell out of its near neighbours with over the top military parades, is implicitly threatening to kill our sailors as they support our allies in freedom-of-navigation exercises in international waters. The US President and security advisers have warned our Prime Minister and senior Defence officials about the dangers of selling vital civil infrastructure like our ports to the Chinese companies which, of course, are closely linked to the Chinese military, who are threatening to kill our sailors while they act peacefully and within international laws. A sitting royal commissioner, Commissioner Heydon, has told us that he discovered a grave threat— (*Time expired*)