



Speech by

Mrs J. SHELDON

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

Hansard 3 March 1999

MINISTER FOR RACING

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—LP) (6.47 p.m.): At the outset, I pay tribute to Mr Des Scanlan, a past Chairman of the Corbould Park Racecourse. Unfortunately, Des passed away a short time ago. He was a champion of Corbould Park, of the racing industry itself and of all the people in it. He will be sorely missed.

At the beginning of this debate, the Minister, Bob Gibbs, intimated that he had a plan for the racing industry. I think that it might be like Baldrick's cunning plan in *Black Adder*, and it has about as much credibility. I am very much concerned about the Corbould Park Race Club, which is one of the regional race clubs that Gordon Nuttall said no-one was paying any attention to. I can assure him that I have paid attention to it, as did the former coalition Government.

That Government decided that we would allow Corbould Park to freehold. The history behind Corbould Park was that the council, Mr Corbould and the race club came to an agreement whereby the council would purchase the land from Mr Corbould and the club, which was then in its infancy and could not afford to buy the land itself, would lease the land back from the council. This was done only after agreement with Mr Corbould that that land would always be used as a race club and that it could not be sold by the club or the council or used for any other purpose. That was the signed agreement that was entered into.

That repayment to Mr Corbould is complete, because the last payment was to be in 1999 and I believe that it has been made. The club, through its lease payments to the council, has pretty well repaid any debt that the council owed to Mr Corbould. It is only fitting that the club now has that freehold. Cabinet, in a submission that was taken to it by the then Racing Minister, Russell Cooper, and which was supported by me, decided that Corbould Park be allowed to freehold, as had been done by a number of other clubs throughout Brisbane and was proposed for clubs in Mackay, Townsville, Rockhampton, Bundamba—which was the former Minister's own electorate, so we were not leaving that out—Ipswich and Clifford Park, Toowoomba. We also announced that the QPC would purchase Deagon, that it would be a long-term asset for the racing industry and that it would be used to train jockeys and undertake other general training.

Approximately \$5.5m was going to be made available to purchase Corbould Park and Deagon. This money was coming from the TAB reserve. The proposition had been put to us by the racing industry itself. That is where it came from. The TAB reserve money was reserved for the TAB and had always been used for the purposes of racing. The money was there. The industry said, "This is the way it should be spent and this is the way we would like it to be spent." As Treasurer I reviewed this matter, as did the Minister. We agreed, and so did Cabinet.

When the Labor Government came to power Mr Gibbs, who says that he is all for the racing industry, reneged on that agreement. He victimised Corbould Park. He would not go ahead with the freehold purchase of that club. He would not agree with it. The money was there. When I spoke to him in the lobby——

Mr GIBBS: I do not mind a bit of stuff across the Chamber——

Mrs SHELDON: It is true and you are wasting my time.

Mr GIBBS: Sit down, you shabby little creature.

Mrs SHELDON: I will not sit down. You are a very shabby Racing Minister.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr D'Arcy): Order! I will not tolerate that, Mr Minister.

Mrs SHELDON: Mr Deputy Speaker, what is very obvious——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Have you a point of order, Minister?

Mr GIBBS: I rise to a point of order.

Mrs SHELDON: It is obvious that the Minister will not support Corbould Park.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will the member for Caloundra resume her seat? There is a point of order.

Mrs SHELDON: You don't support Corbould Park and I do. You haven't——

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did, and I chastised the Minister.

Mr GIBBS: My point of order is that there has been no victimisation by me against Corbould Park. I have always had an excellent working relationship with Corbould Park.

Mrs SHELDON: Mr Deputy Speaker, this is wasting my time and he knows it.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr GIBBS: I find the remarks offensive.

Mrs SHELDON: Mr Deputy Speaker, if it was not victimisation, why——

Mr GIBBS: I find the remarks offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mrs SHELDON: No, I will not withdraw it because you reneged on your agreement. You would not buy it.

Mr GIBBS: I ask that the remarks be withdrawn.

Mrs SHELDON: Oh, I will withdraw whatever he finds offensive.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister finds the remarks offensive. I ask that the member withdraw.

Mrs SHELDON: I withdraw whatever he did find offensive but the facts speak for themselves.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member to withdraw unequivocally.

Mrs SHELDON: I did. I withdrew. The fact of the matter is that the Minister would not provide the money to buy the freehold. I am pleased to see that the Minister is laughing because the jockeys, the owners, the trainers, the strappers and everybody involved with the racing industry in Caloundra knows that the Minister duded them. That was supposed to be his commitment.

The \$6m was available in the TAB reserve when the coalition Government went to the election. When I spoke to the Minister later on about not providing the money he said, "The money isn't there." Where did it go? It could not be used for consolidated revenue. It was TAB reserve funds. If the Minister allowed Beattie and Hamill to use that money for other purposes he is reneging on his duty. Otherwise, what did the Minister do with the \$6m?

Time expired.
