



Speech by

**Hon. KEN HAYWARD**

**MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR**

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Hansard 3 March 1999

**MINISTER FOR RACING**

**Hon. K. W. HAYWARD** (Kallangur—ALP) (6.33 p.m.): It is a pleasure to second the amendment moved tonight by the Minister for Racing, which states that the House endorses the Racing Minister's commitment to the best interests of Queensland racing. Members should make no mistake: no-one doubts the Minister's commitment to the racing industry in Queensland, both as a Minister and a shadow Minister over the past 10 years and more. The Minister personally relates to the industry, he understands it and he has identified with it. What is more, people in the industry identify him with it.

I like to tell a story about the Minister. In March last year, I was at a boxing promotion with the Minister, who was then the shadow Minister. A prominent Queensland horse owner, and a fairly prominent punter, was present and he introduced the then shadow Minister to the assembled crowd as the Queensland Minister for Racing. Bob turned to me and said, "Ken, I'm not the Minister." I said, "Bob, they identify with you as the Minister." It was as simple as that. I can tell those who have an interest in racing that that man was the only Queenslander who raced a horse in the Melbourne Cup this year. I will not mention his name, but if members have an interest in horses they will know who he is. As I said, the reality is that the Minister understands the industry and he identifies with it, and people in the industry identify him with it.

Let us look at the Minister's record under the previous Labor Government. He was able to modernise the Queensland racing industry by the reform of the archaic industry-controlled structures that existed. That move was opposed by the gang that used to run the show. They complained, they whinged, they whined, they went to the Opposition. They said this and they said that. They said things that were quite slanderous, but it did not matter because Minister Gibbs was able to drive that modernisation process through. He developed industry incentive schemes which meant that Queensland-bred horses were rewarded when they won races in this State. For the first time, he provided direct financial assistance to control bodies.

Of course, as representatives of all areas of the State, members would know that for the first time, under the former Labor Government, a systematic program of redevelopment of training and racetracks was devised for Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville, Cairns, Toowoomba, Doomben and Caloundra. A systematic program was introduced right across the State. For the first time, a commercial TAB board was introduced which was focused on maintaining the wagering turnover. Under the previous Labor Government, radio 4TAB, which has been so important for the racing industry in this State, was established. That was the legacy of the Labor Government and, in many ways, it was driven personally by the then Minister and current Minister. As I said before, prominent owners in this State never regarded him as the shadow Minister, even when we were in Opposition.

Let us now look at the record of the previous Government. Under the former Racing Minister, the previous Government squandered millions and yet achieved little. It is hard to imagine how they could have achieved so little in two and a half years in office. At the end of 1996, despite warnings from the TAB that the Queensland racing industry was in danger of being swamped by interstate rivals, Mr Cooper's only response was to set up endless industry consultation. There were more talks and more sop was given to the vested interests within the industry. Eighteen months and \$4m later, the Minister had still failed to take a submission to Cabinet supporting the racing industry. Millions of dollars were squandered on consultants for industry strategic plans and TAB reforms. All sorts of corporate people jumped on the gravy train to collect that money. In two and a half years, over \$4m was spent by Mr Cooper with no results. Of course, this philosophy of inaction became the norm for that never-never

coalition Government. When people look back at the track record of the member for Crows Nest, they ask: what did he achieve? The answer is: nothing.

Time expired.

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