



Speech by

Hon. MERRI ROSE

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Hansard 13 December 2001

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Racing Industry

Hon. M. ROSE (Currumbin—ALP) (Minister for Tourism and Racing and Minister for Fair Trading) (10.12 a.m.): Last week I put through the parliament changes to the Queensland racing industry, which was struggling under the weight of an outdated system managed in an unprofessional and unethical manner and hampered by parochialism, vested interests and the old boys mentality. I was determined to give our racing industry a future, and that meant change. The changes, which were demanded by the industry, will bring stability, fairness, professionalism and transparency—

Mr Hobbs interjected.

Mrs ROSE: I note that the member for Warrego is yelling out and interrupting. He is obviously attention seeking. I can assure him that in about two minutes I am going to give him some attention.

The changes, which were demanded by the industry, will bring stability, fairness, professionalism and transparency, remove conflicts of interests and ensure appointment on merit rather than nepotism. There are those, though, who will stoop to any level to stop that change—those people who put themselves in self-appointed positions of control and power and they now see that power and control slipping away. They want racing to be the sport of kings, to remain their exclusive domain, and to exclude all but their own network of cronies. They seek to cling to the past, even if it means dooming Queensland racing. They have tried every dirty trick in the book—from secret meetings to rumour mongering—

Mr Hobbs interjected.

Mrs ROSE: The member for Warrego is still yelling out. If he just waits a minute he will get it.

They have tried every trick in the book from secret meetings to rumour mongering, to the circulation of patently inaccurate information, forgery and scandalous and highly defamatory material about me. They have been aided and abetted by members in this House. These same people have not been able to criticise my reform plan, so they attack me personally.

I have this message for the cowards who hide behind respectability: I will not be diverted or stopped from making the reforms the Queensland racing industry so desperately needs. They know that my plan to have the industry run by an independent board in the lead-up to the formation of an industry company to run thoroughbred racing dissolves their own power base. The very people who have been controlling the racing industry and politicising the QPC to the detriment of the industry are trying to exert their influence in other ways. The only sensible thing the member for Warrego has done is support my bill—the opposition supported my bill—bringing about the changes to the racing industry.

Mr Hobbs interjected.

Mrs ROSE: The opposition supported an Interim Thoroughbred Racing Board. The record shows it supported it. However, the member for Warrego is still operating in the Russ Hinze era, when Racing Ministers controlled every decision and bought favours and influence from the very old boys network that is now criticising my plan for an open, accountable and modern racing industry. The member for Warrego has shown time and time again his lack of knowledge and ignorance of how the Queensland racing industry is run. I will not be swayed from implementing the reforms and will not allow

the process to be derailed. I have established the Interim Thoroughbred Racing Board to stabilise the industry until the independent Queensland Thoroughbred Racing Board is in place. The interim board will provide a solid foundation for the QTRB to take over control body functions next year. I will give Queensland racing a future.
