




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Queensland Racing

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (10.09 pm): We are now into the eleventh month since the Labor government took over the reins of racing in Queensland, and in the words of the famous baseball coach Yogi Berra, 'It is déjà vu all over again.' We have the same crowd that we had with Bob Bentley, which is wonderful for us but terrible for the racing industry. They have sacked the board. It is leaderless, rudderless. They have a Labor mate consultant in there running it at great expense to racing industry funds. They have basically ignored 30,000 participants in the racing industry who are hanging by a thread: the strappers, farriers and good working class people that the Labor Party should be supporting plus hundreds of thousands of punters out there that rely on this industry. The Labor Party hates the racing industry. It is Bob Bentley all over again being guided by Bill Byrne. We have the Magic Millions and the wonderful carnival coming up this January, yet there is a big cloud over the racing industry because they are worried that this government is strangling racing in Queensland.

They are absolutely crippling country racing, and country racing is the social fabric of those Queensland communities that do not have a netball team or other opportunities. Country racing is their social interaction and part of the fabric of their society. It is very, very important once a year because they do not have too many other times to enjoy themselves like a lot of city people do. This government is going to strangle country racing, and all those people that rely on that industry for their entertainment, pleasure and jobs can look back again and say, 'I'm sorry! We forgot what Bob Bentley did to Queensland Racing.' We have a new mob in here, and they are doing exactly the same thing. I would like to talk about the rough end of a pineapple, but I will not mention that in the House.

Not only is country racing in trouble, but so is the major course in Queensland, Eagle Farm. The people over there are extremely worried. The breeders are panicking about what is going to happen to the Queensland bonus system up here and the sale in March which is run by the Magic Millions people. This is going to cripple the racing industry. I do not know what is in the DNA of Labor that makes them hate racing. It goes back to Bob Gibbs, who thought that rich people run it. But a lot of battlers like myself have horses, and we rely on the government to drive this industry appropriately and not into the ground, which they are currently doing. They need to sack the consultant and put in a board straight away.