




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2018

ADJOURNMENT

Racing Industry

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.00 pm): I have been involved with racing for over 50 years since first listening to the radio with my mum—I think it was a wireless back then—as Tulloch won many races end on end, and I have never seen the industry so shattered and shell-shocked that it had to strike collegiately, with owners, trainers and jockeys combining not to race in Queensland last Saturday. I note that this drastic action has drawn out a financial commitment from the Palaszczuk Labor government to temporarily silence the unhappy multitude of racing participants, who genuinely cannot believe this Palaszczuk Labor government's treatment of an industry that is at the forefront of enjoyment and dedication for hundreds of thousands of Queenslanders. For the Treasurer to whack on a 15 per cent point-of-consumption tax—the highest taxing rate in Australia—and return none of that funding to the industry on a permanent basis is as incredulous as it is degrading to the racing industry.

Labor has always been dismissive of the racing industry, with no ministers with racing knowledge appointed by Labor in a Sergeant Schultz response to an industry they have little regard for. They put Bob Bentley in charge under their watch and stood by as Mr Bentley ran the industry into the ground. I cannot tell you how many speeches I have made in this House on the racing industry money that Bob Bentley squandered on wild plans and irrational largesse for Labor mates and Labor electorates. The LNP while in government had a brief period to undo the damage Bob Bentley created and eventually came up with a three-code model that would have ensured long-term sustainability, but 12 months after commencement we were out of office.

Then the rot set in again, with Labor spending millions and millions of racing industry money on a Keystone Cops integrity unit that provided a generous retirement job—on his defined benefits superannuation scheme—for police assistant commissioner Ross Barnett. Nice work if you can get it. The promises given by this incompetent racing minister—the same minister who brought Queensland the rail fail—are a temporary bandaid solution to stop the political bleed from the racing industry. The industry needs a guaranteed ongoing source of racing industry revenue, and the POC tax provided the perfect opportunity for that to occur.

Currently, with the Palaszczuk government's complete lack of faith in, and commitment to, the racing industry, there is no certainty that Labor's one-off political peace offering to the racing industry will be around next year, when it is likely that a fiscal downgrade of the Palaszczuk Labor government's AA credit rating will make next year's 2019-20 budget an even tougher proposition to secure much needed racing industry funding. As our Indigenous forefathers may have said, 'Beware of white men bearing gifts.' I urge all racing industry—

(Time expired)