



## A Bob each way

IT is an unlikely pairing; our ever elegant Governor-General **Quentin Bryce** and **Bob Ellis**, the paunchy and perpetually rumbled court jester of the ALP. But it has now emerged Ellis played a part in crafting Bryce's eyebrow-raising speech at the Melbourne Cup last year. Bryce spoke to the crowd about a nation built on bush-rangers, two-up, "50 lashes for impertinence" and "a currency

that, for a while, was measured out in gallons of rum". She called racegoers "mates, comrades and partners", and celebrated the "arousing" race, which puts "so much wealth at risk".

Quizzed by Victorian Liberal senator Scott Ryan in estimates yesterday, Yarralumla officials denied Bryce had dallied with Ellis, before a correction was rushed to Parliament House later

that evening. "On return to Government House," the deputy official secretary to the Governor General, Mark Fraser, said in a note, "the Governor-General advised the official secretary that she had approached Mr Bob Ellis on one occasion seeking ideas for her Melbourne Cup speech . . . There was no payment from this office for these services."

