



Speech by

Hon. RUSSELL COOPER

MEMBER FOR CROWS NEST

Hansard 25 August 1999

SES POSITIONS, MERIT SELECTION

Mr NUTTALL (Sandgate—ALP) (6.40 p.m.): In his motion before the House this evening, the honourable member for Clayfield fails to recognise the realities of politics. In every walk of life people choose to align themselves with one or other side of the political spectrum. On polling day, people go into the booth and cast a vote and they make a choice about which side they support. However, for the sake of good government and the good decision-making processes of government, it is important that Government appointments have a cross-fertilisation of people from all walks of life, regardless of what side of politics they come from. We have a basic understanding in our society that, regardless of race, colour, creed, religion or politics, a person should not be excluded. However, the honourable member for Clayfield continues along the line that, if someone is aligned to the Labor Party in any way, shape or form, they should be excluded from making any contribution to public life in this State.

Looking at the hit list that has been produced by the honourable member for Clayfield, I think what it does not say is more important than what it does say. We as a Government have ensured that appointments to all Government bodies have a decent balance, that is, that appointments have been made right across the political spectrum of this State. As honourable members in the Chamber this evening would know, that assertion has already been made by previous speakers. I could list a number of honourable people in my own electorate who are members of the other side of politics but who are members of various Government boards.

The member for Clayfield fails to understand the importance of public life. The member for Clayfield has allowed his political bias and his sheer hatred of the Labor Party and the union movement to interfere with his good judgment. We have only to look at his performance when he was a Minister in the former Government to see that.

Speakers in the debate this evening have reminded us of his dealings with Commissioner Dempsey. He broke an 80-year convention in not reappointing Commissioner Dempsey. That was done solely because of the bias against and the hatred that he has for the Labor Party and, indeed, the union movement. He has failed to rise above his political bias. As a former Minister of the Crown, he should indeed be able to rise above that. He should be bigger than that but, unfortunately, he has not been able to do that.

I have heard the honourable member for Clayfield on many occasions in this Chamber say that he wishes to play the issue and not the person, yet we see time and time and time again the honourable member stand up in this Chamber and attack individuals. Everybody on this list that he tabled in the Parliament yesterday has been smeared by his innuendo. Yet these people wish to make a contribution to the betterment of the society in this State. This is the same stunt that the honourable member for Clayfield pulled the last time that he was in Opposition. The appointments that we have made have been on ability—the appointments that we have made right across the spectrum—but this is a biased list, of course. The appointments we have made have been made so that people can make a contribution to the betterment of this State.

By his behaviour the member does his party, the position that he represents, the constituents whom he represents and himself no credit. In making continuous attacks on people, he is ensuring that people who might think about making a contribution to the betterment of public life in this State think twice because they are worried about the smear and innuendo that come from the honourable member

for Clayfield. He does nothing for the betterment of the good government of this State. He does nothing for the betterment of the good decision making of this State by the continued attacks that he makes on the citizens of Queensland. What we really need here is for him to understand that and to rise above his political hatred of members of the Labor Party.

Time expired.
