



Speech by

Hon. RUSSELL COOPER

MEMBER FOR CROWS NEST

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SHEFFIELD SHIELD

Hon. T. R. COOPER (Crows Nest—NPA) (11.04 p.m.): I endorse the remarks of the member for Nudgee. He is one member on the other side of the House who often comes up with some very sensible and practical ideas. I am sure that most people on this side of the House would endorse his sentiments.

I wish to speak tonight on the issue of naming rights. It is something that has come up recently, especially in relation to the Sheffield Shield, now known as the Pura Milk Cup. If honourable members can identify that with the Sheffield Shield, then they are a better person than I am. It is one of those things that is very, very hard to come to grips with—107 years of tradition of the Sheffield Shield. It does not matter that it was named after Lord Sheffield—I do not care; it is something that we have all gotten used to over time and it has disappeared literally overnight. One day we are watching the Sheffield Shield and the next day we are talking about the Pura Milk Cup.

I do not mind milk, whether it is super, standard or light. More importantly, I know where it comes from. I think that this idea of changing names, such as changing Lang Park to Suncorp Stadium, is silly.

Mr Mickel: Fosters Melbourne Cup.

Mr COOPER: The Fosters Melbourne Cup is another one that I have certainly used as an example before. I have talked about the shield and Lang Park, but there are more. There is the Vodafone Wallabies. How stupid does that sound? As for the actual companies, whether it be Vodafone, Pura Milk—

Mr Mickel: Winfield Cup.

Mr COOPER: That has gone. As far as I am concerned, these companies are making fools of themselves because the people are not going to take any notice. I am always going to refer to "Lang Park", the "Sheffield Shield" or the "shield", the "Wallabies" and so on. I think most other people will, too.

We know the reason why this is done; it is done for money. We are well aware that some clubs and some sports need funds. However, there must be better ways of raising those funds. The shield and cricket in general will benefit from extra funding—whatever amount that might be—from Pura Milk. However, I do think it is far better to leave the name of the shield as it is and to find some other way to advertise Pura Milk so that the additional funds can benefit the game.

Mrs Edmond: Isn't it better than having Benson and Hedges or something like that?

Mr COOPER: No, I am talking about the Sheffield Shield versus Pura Milk; I am talking about Lang Park versus Suncorp Stadium; I am talking about the Wallabies versus the Vodafone Wallabies. I would prefer the names to remain traditional. That is what I am used to. The Minister for Health might have other ideas. I am not talking about cigarettes; I am talking about changing traditions without any public consultation whatsoever. I think it is a pity. The Minister is obviously not interested in sport; I am. I am interested in traditions, as I think most people are. It should not all be about money. Obviously the Minister thinks it should be; I do not. These sports need funds; we know that. However, I think that

money should be well spent, and I do not think it should lead to interference with our traditions. I think that is very, very sad indeed.

As I say, I think it reflects on the company concerned—Pura Milk. Traditional cricketers would say, "This is silly. What a silly way to go about it!" There are other ways to raise money. I do not think that we should be throwing out traditions such as that. It hurts. We should think of all those cricketers who have played for the shield over the years—especially the Queenslanders, who have battled like nothing on earth to try to win a shield.

Mr Lucas: We took so long to win it, then they change it on us.

Mr COOPER: Yes, the member is right, then they change it. So now we have to go out and win the Pura Milk Cup, which I do not think means anything at all. People can use their chocolate toppings and so on, but it will not make any difference whatsoever. I think that is sad. Most of our sportsmen—our cricketers, footballers and so on—realise that, but they cannot say anything because they receive their pay from certain quarters and they cannot get involved in that debate. I understand that. However, some of us are in a position to speak out for them and to say that we should keep our traditions. We should not have to go changing names like that just for the sake of the dollar. I think it is sad and very unfortunate.

Time expired.
