




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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POLICE POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (COMMONWEALTH GAMES) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (5.18 pm): I rise to support the bill before the House and to reiterate and join those speakers in the debate who have expressed their deep condolences to the people and particularly the families who have been affected by the horrific attack that we saw in Manchester in the United Kingdom earlier this week. When we see the attack occurred in an arena that was one of the venues for the 2002 Commonwealth Games hosted in Manchester, it reminds us how important security is in the context of this massive and very special event that the Gold Coast, Queensland and Australia will have the great honour of hosting in April of next year. I pause to extend and reiterate my condolences to our great friends in the United Kingdom who have been affected by this terrible crime against humanity and, in many ways, against the exuberance of youth.

I want to highlight what a great role the United Kingdom plays, alongside nations like Australia, in being beacons of pluralism that support the broad opportunities for a range of people to express themselves, to be their best and to be part of a society that is tolerant and accepting of a range of people. That is what the enemies of pluralism despise the most.

The Commonwealth Games is an expression of pluralism as it brings together the peoples of 70 different nations and territories who are tied by the common bond of being members of the Commonwealth of nations and also the common bond of a commitment to and love for striving for excellence through sport. As we have heard from a number of speakers today, the games will bring together some 6,000 athletes and officials from 70 different nations and territories; 15,000 volunteers who will make this wonderful event so very special and a great experience that people will take away with them; and 1.5 million spectators who will have an opportunity to be a part of it. I note and acknowledge the news from earlier this week that there have been 1.2 billion bids for tickets. I have put in a few of those bids. I am very keen and look forward to the opportunity to enjoy a whole range of the fantastic events that will be a part of the 2018 Commonwealth Games. In particular, I hope to get tickets to the men's and women's basketball finals to be held at the Gold Coast Convention Centre at Broadbeach. I look forward to seeing how that bid will turn out for me.

In addition to the 1.5 million spectators who will enjoy the games firsthand, the global television audience of 1.5 billion people will enjoy this tremendous event, which, as I say, is indeed a celebration of the diversity of the Commonwealth, as well as a celebration of tolerance and acceptance. People will come together to celebrate sport and culture, as well as the values that the people of the Commonwealth share, including a commitment to democracy and a respect for the rights of others and the principle of freedom of religion. All of those things need to be a fundamental part of what we do. However, with a global event such as this, we need a balance between pluralism and the security that all of the people visiting and taking part in the event need to enjoy and should be assured of enjoying, which is why it so important that we support the bill before the House.

The Police Powers and Responsibilities (Commonwealth Games) Amendment Bill provides an opportunity to get the balance right by supporting our security services and, most particularly, the Queensland Police Service. In the time that I had the honour of being the Commonwealth Games

minister, I really appreciated the great work that the Queensland Police Service was doing. I very much appreciated the fantastic briefings I received regularly from Assistant Commissioner Peter Crawford and his whole team. They are doing a fantastic job that will support this tremendous event, which is the biggest sporting event that we have seen in Australia this decade. That does not come purely from their good efforts, their smart work, their research and their commitment to learning from the experiences of previous major events, both here in Australia and overseas. It also comes from the support that we can provide to security services through the amendments that are before us this afternoon. We all need to support the event, as I hope members have done, by putting in bids for tickets to events—

Mrs Frecklington: Yes, gymnastics.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Clearly the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is a great fan of gymnastics. Hopefully, she will be at the Coomera Indoor Sports Centre enjoying the gymnastic events. I trust she has put in a bid for tickets, as that would be an exciting thing for her to do and, as I say, for each and every one of us to do. We can support the games not just by purchasing tickets; by supporting this legislation, we can ensure that we have a framework that gets the balance right and that allows for the relaxation of some provisions, such as in relation to spot searches. In that way, we can ensure that the games events will be very safe and secure for all people to enjoy in April next year.

I know that our great Queensland Police Service will respect and have great regard for the responsibilities and powers they will be provided through this amendment. I acknowledge and respect the concerns that civil libertarians have raised about how those powers could be and may be misused. As a parliament and as a government, we must very carefully watch how those powers are used in next year's Commonwealth Games and reflect upon that in any further amendments to legislation that maybe undertaken, so that we can be a great venue for and facilitator of global events.

As I have said on a number of occasions in other contexts, the 2018 Commonwealth Games will provide a wonderful opportunity for the Gold Coast and other host cities such as Cairns, Townsville and Brisbane to showcase themselves to the world as potential hosts of major global events. I hope this is the beginning of a long story of attracting great global events to the City of Gold Coast and other host cities. I commend the bill to the House. I encourage everyone to share the dream and be a part of the 2018 Commonwealth Games. I urge people to be a part of the celebration. In the face of threats of global terror, the most important thing we can do to reject those threats is to celebrate our way of life and the pluralism that Australia and other Commonwealth nations have been very much a part of for many generations.