




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

Mackenroth, Hon. TM

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (10.15 am): I too wish to pay tribute to Terry Mackenroth and also pass on my condolences to his family. I feel that there is a piece of important information that has been left off the public record today. Terry and I both shared a very common but secret passion. I believe it would be appropriate to go so far as to say that Terry was actually a closet Titans fan. We have certainly heard accounts of his contribution to the redevelopment of Suncorp Stadium. What we have not heard on the public record is his role in delivering a stadium for the Gold Coast and the Gold Coast Titans.

My first encounter with Mr Mackenroth was here at Parliament House. I was the chair of the Gold Coast city council finance committee. I was invited to parliament for Christmas drinks with the then Labor government. At the time I was very involved with the Titans bid. I ended up on the lawn with Shane Edwards and Wayne Bennett having a chat. We were discussing the possibility of a team on the Gold Coast.

Terry wandered over and started to engage in the conversation. This was the first time I had ever met him. There was a bit of finger-pointing. There was some fairly unparliamentary language and some fairly colourful language. The conversation basically went, 'Look you are never going to get an NRL licence for the Gold Coast, but I tell you what, if you can get the NRL to commit to a licence then I will give you the money for a stadium on the Gold Coast. I can make that commitment because that is never going to happen.' I went back to Gold Coast excitedly that evening and rang Michael Searle and Paul Broughton and said, 'Guess what? I have us the stadium.' They said, 'What do you mean?' I said, 'All you have to do is get the NRL to commit and then we have a commitment for the stadium. I think Terry is a man of his word.'

The following week there were further meetings. A week later I was standing in the councillors room at the Gold Coast City Council just before our council meeting and in walked the director of economic development with a two-paragraph letter that went something like, 'I, Terry Mackenroth, Treasurer of Queensland, do hereby commit to a certain amount of money for the stadium on the Gold Coast under certain conditions'—one of them being that the Gold Coast council had to come up with the land—'yours sincerely, Terry Mackenroth.' That was a very interesting moment for me and an interesting lesson in politics.

I made the mistake probably seven or eight years later when I ran into Terry at a building industry dinner just down the road here. We were both on the same speaking bill. He was there as a special guest to talk and I had been invited along in my role as then assistant minister for planning. I recounted a little bit of the story of my first encounter with Terry only to have him get up after me and say, 'Well, actually, lad, I just need to set the record straight—that is, that that deal had actually been done before I had that conversation with you.' I can well understand why he earned the nickname 'The Fox'.

He was certainly great company on the many occasions that I got to share an evening with him at Titans games on the Gold Coast and at the odd Broncos game. It was great to sit at Suncorp Stadium the night of the very first Titans game and see him across in one of the other boxes, with a thumbs up and a big smile. I just wanted to, in a sense, correct the public record because I think it is a little-known fact that the Gold Coast can be very thankful for his role in helping to secure the NRL licence for the city. He was very passionate about Rugby League, but he also took on a very assertive role in making sure that we had the infrastructure to meet that opportunity.