

SOCCER HOOLIGANISM

7 December 2006

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: I seek leave to make a brief explanation before asking the Minister for Police a question about football or soccer hooliganism.

Leave granted.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: Football hooliganism, if I can use that term, is a blight on the game in Europe, particularly in the United Kingdom. On the night of Friday 1 December 2006, the Melbourne Victory Football Club played the Adelaide United Football Club at Hindmarsh Stadium. Prior to the game, Melbourne Victory supporters were chanting and congregating in the middle of Port Road and, in fact, spilling right across Port Road, and they then set off to the ground lighting flares of the light and smoke variety, halting traffic as they lingered on the road and crossed the road, causing a traffic hazard with the smoke that was all around.

Multiple flares were lit by the Melbourne supporters during the game. For the record, Melbourne won 3-1. Saturday's *Advertiser* reported the following day that three men were arrested by SA Police, including a Richmond man for possessing an offensive weapon and a Brunswick man for possessing a flare. Brazilian World Cup goalkeeper Dida spent time on the sidelines in Italy after being struck with a flare by fans in April last year. Indeed, at the Ashes cricket match down the road the same day I understand that a camera in the sky, if you like, monitored crowd behaviour and enabled South Australian police to identify hooligans and evict them from the ground.

The Hon. J. Gazzola: Especially those with trumpets.

The Hon. D.G.E. HOOD: Indeed. My questions are:

1. Did South Australian police receive any information that the Melbourne Victory fans possessed these flares; if so, what action was taken?
2. Is ground security required to report such information on the possession of such flares to police or security staff situated on-site?
3. What impediments are there to searching supporters entering the ground when such information has been received?
4. Is video surveillance used at the ground to monitor crowd behaviour; if not, why not?

The Hon. P. HOLLOWAY (Minister for Police): I thank the honourable member for his questions. I think he raises some important points. Those of us who attended the cricket recently would be aware of the security that applied to everyone entering the grounds. I think that, given the number of people who attended that match, the security people did a pretty good job in processing the large numbers involved without causing unnecessary inconvenience. We know that different rules apply to different sports and different grounds. For example, if you wish to take a trumpet into the grounds, it is obviously different on some grounds than on others.

In relation to the soccer and football hooliganism, there is no doubt that it is a problem. I know that Soccer Australia has gone to significant efforts to try to deal with some of the origins of that hooliganism over recent years. It was certainly disappointing to see the displays we had the other night. I will seek a report from the Police Commissioner in relation to that event and about what information was known by police prior to the match. It really is an operational matter. I will also get the information on what video or other security measures apply in relation to inspecting bags at that particular venue.