



Speech by

BILL FELDMAN

MEMBER FOR CABOOLTURE

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MOTOR CYCLE RIDERS ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND

Mr FELDMAN (Caboolture—CCAQ) (1.49 a.m.): On Sunday, 22 October this year—a very wet and rain-soaked Sunday in Brisbane city, I might add—the Motor Cycle Riders Association of Queensland Inc. held a rally outside the grounds of Parliament House. Being the concerned group of decent, law-abiding citizens these riders are, they had not taken the unprecedented step of taking time off from their employment to attend Parliament House to protest Government inaction. The organiser and secretary of the MCRAQ, Stuart Mason, was very happy with the turnout of riders.

They wished to present their list of issues affecting them as motorcycle riders on the roads in Queensland and suggestions as to how Government might assist in making riding a less hazardous means of transport. I was there with them, having ridden from Caboolture—and, yes, I was quite wet. I attended the rally to listen to their concerns with respect to the serious issues of road safety affecting motorcycle riders. I also hoped that I would be able to assist with the presentation of their concerns on the floor of Parliament.

Having held a motorcycle licence since I was 17 and ridden trail bikes on farm properties for years before that, I felt quite aware of the legitimate concerns that were to be raised. There are over 73,200 motorcycles registered in the State of Queensland. There are more persons holding a licence to ride motorcycles than actually owning a registered motorcycle. Motorcycle enthusiasts deserve a voice and deserve to be heard. More and more people are turning to motorcycles as a mode of transport, especially due to the current unpalatable petrol prices.

The Motor Cycle Riders Association of Queensland Inc. wishes to bring 10 current issues to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. These issues are as follows—

1. Q-ride—approve a two-year trial of competency-based rider training and certification as detailed in the Q-ride draft paper as from January 2001;
2. safer road users—to encourage all road users to use the roads according to the conditions rather than by numbers by vastly improving training, education and reappraisal;
3. rules, policing and penalties—introduce an agenda of rules, penalties and policing that will emphasise fairness and justice in place of the current agenda which emphasises cost-effective, politically expedient laws;
4. safer road surfaces—remove the debris and aggregate left after road building and post repair; improve drainage; introduce non-slip road-marking paint; reduce roadside hardware to an absolute minimum;
5. consultation—involve motorcyclists in all aspects of road safety and safe road use consultation, not just those considered to directly involve motorcyclists;
6. front numberplates—no front numberplates or identification transponders for motorcycles. Front numberplates would create serious handling and cooling problems;
7. wire rope barriers—place a moratorium on any further installation of non-rigid wire rope roadside barriers; remove all current installations of this type; ensure that all roadside barriers comply with the spirit and the letter of Australian Standard AS3845:1999 and remove those that do not. It is ironic to say the least that roadside barriers are placed to protect those already protected by metal cages, seatbelts, airbags, etc., without any apparent concern shown for the more vulnerable such as bikers and cyclists;

8. tolls—motorcyclists to be allowed to use all toll roads and bridges without paying tolls. Motorcycles are an efficient means of transport that cause little or no wear or tear on these structures. Motorcyclists receive little or no benefit from their road and registration fees;
9. high occupancy vehicle lanes— motorcyclists should be allowed to use all high occupancy vehicle lanes, if only to improve motorcycle safety and efficiency;
10. noise limits—no further restrictions on decibel noise limits for motorcycles.

I table the issues paper as presented to me by Mr Tony Pearson, the President of the Motor Cycle Riders Association of Queensland Inc.—laminated to avoid it getting wet that day and stop the speaker from highlighting or corrupting the document itself.

The riders were most perturbed with the Minister for Transport's sudden love for the brifen wire rope barriers, known as cheese graters by riders, as preferred roadside barriers. Due to the concerns raised by riders, the Sutherland Shire Council in NSW has moved to ban the potentially dangerous wire rope fencing. The MCRAQ is hopeful that the Minister for Transport will place a moratorium on the installation of these barriers that are at the moment being erected on Anzac Avenue, Redcliffe, and have been erected along the Pacific Highway. I also table for the information of the House a copy of an article from the Live to Ride magazine concerning the brifen fencing and its danger to motorcycle riders.

Another issue raised by the riders at the rally was the length of time road surfaces that were scarified were being left. This is a dangerous practice—leaving these scraped road surfaces in that condition and thereby destroying the ability of motorcycles to maintain traction.

I thank all the riders from the various clubs that were present that day and look forward to the next rally in Hervey Bay. I also look forward to assisting the Ulysses Motorcycle Club with the toy run later this year. I wish all of those motorcycle riders who attended the rally that day in the wet a safe motoring Christmas.
