



Speech by

**Mr R. QUINN**

**MEMBER FOR MERRIMAC**

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Hansard 15 November 2000

### **WEAPONS AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr QUINN** (Merrimac—LP) (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (9.03 p.m.): The Liberal Party has always staunchly opposed any moves to undermine the national approach to gun control. The original legislation was sponsored and supported by the coalition at both the Federal and State level. On a number of occasions in this House we have indicated that we would not compromise the underlying principles of the Weapons Act. We believe that the national system of gun control has delivered tangible benefits to the people of Australia. We have always said, however, that if there are anomalies and ways are identified to make it administratively simpler or which change some technical aspects of the legislation, we should look at that to make it more workable in the interests of everyone concerned. The proposal put forward by the member for Thuringowa does not undermine the principles of the legislation. It maintains those principles, and we support that approach.

However, there are some anomalies. Over the next couple of years those anomalies will come to light even more. It is incumbent upon the Police Minister to take those anomalies to the Australian Police Ministers Council to try to iron out those inconsistencies. It was always said that every State would have its own State-based regime and that inconsistencies would need to be ironed out. We support that. This legislation is not something that ought to be cast in stone; it ought to be able to be amended to take account of anomalies as they arise. As I said before, we do not believe that the principles of the Weapons Act are being undermined. If we thought they were, we would oppose the legislation, as we have opposed legislation in this House on previous occasions. We have made it quite plain that the Liberal Party does not believe we should be watering down the legislation in any way, shape or form. We do not see this as a move to water it down; we see it as a sensible administrative change to allow some flexibility in the system. As I said, I would think that similar moves will be looked at in other States over the next couple of years.

It is important that the underlying principles be maintained. There must be confidence in the regimes at the State level. However, there may be a need to look at the issue of administration. We will support the legislation on the understanding that it does not compromise the underlying principles of the principal legislation.

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