




Speech By
Hon. Jarrod Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 15 October 2013

**CRIMINAL LAW (CRIMINAL ORGANISATIONS DISRUPTION) AMENDMENT
BILL; TATTOO PARLOURS BILL; VICIOUS LAWLESS ASSOCIATION
DISESTABLISHMENT BILL**

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (12.25 am), in reply: I thank all honourable members for their contributions to the important debate tonight on the Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Bill, the Tattoo Parlours Bill and the Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations) Disruption Amendment Bill 2013. I think it has been a great debate, and we are making history tonight with some of the toughest laws to hunt, track down, find, locate, target, disrupt and destroy the most violent and vicious offenders that we have in our communities; that is, criminal motorcycle gang members and other organised crime members.

It was interesting when I watched the news last night. One of the lawyers representing a criminal motorcycle gang member who had been charged with an offence essentially said that these people are just misunderstood and they want to contribute positively to society. They have to stop fooling people. The time is up. This government has drawn a very firm line in the sand and we have said enough is enough. Not only will we crush the enterprise of the criminal motorcycle gangs, but we will crush their associations and their protection rackets. We will crush the morale of these individuals, and we will crush their businesses and enterprises. The only way we can do it is with a tough package of reforms.

But make no mistake, colleagues: this is phase 1. I would fully expect that in the next two sittings of parliament we will be debating more tough measures as criminal motorcycle gang members respond to these laws. As they come up out of the ground from where they are hidden at the moment, we will have to introduce more laws targeting criminal motorcycle gang members, because I have indicated that this is phase 1. When I talk about phase 2, I am talking about the Tattoo Parlours Bill. The reason we are doing that tonight is that we do not licence tattoo parlours at the moment, but we would look at implementing the same definition of fit and proper person under the Tattoo Parlours Bill for the likes of the security industry, the second-hand motor dealers industry and the gym industry. If there are criminal motorcycle gang members profiteering, promoting, working, associating with or being the proprietor of these other businesses, then we will crush them too.

We are unapologetic in relation to making sure that we have the net cast as far and as wide as possible to catch these individuals and rid them from our streets. If they do not want to be rid of the streets of Queensland, then they will end up in the tough new jail facility that we are going to re-establish at Woodford. Some of the tough measures that we are going to put into the jails include no TVs, limited non-contact time of one hour per week and no phone calls other than from legal representatives which will be censored and under surveillance at all times.

I turn to the debate at hand and will address the contributions made by honourable members. I will start with that of the opposition leader. The opposition leader had 60 minutes in which to speak this evening. In the 48th minute of her speech we finally found out that the opposition would be

supporting the legislation. Despite attacking the government and despite attacking these provisions, in the 48th minute of 60 minutes we found out that the Labor Party would be supporting these tough laws. That is surprising, given comments made by members of the Labor Party in the past and particularly in the past 10 days.

The opposition leader has been all over the place with respect to criminal motorcycle gangs. I suspect it has something to do with the fact that the Labor Party Peel Street organisation would be pressuring Labor parliamentarians to support these tough measures because the community certainly supports these tough measures. But I suspect that the member for South Brisbane does not support these measures. What will be very interesting is to see whether the member for South Brisbane votes on this bill if it goes to a division. I know that those in the Labor Party detest mandatory sentencing—she is not objecting to that?—but will support our reforms implementing the biggest range of mandatory sentencing this state has ever seen. That makes me think one of two things: either we have had such a great debate tonight that we have convinced the opposition to support these tough measures or those in the Labor Party are terribly frightened of their communities if they vote against this legislation. I suspect it is the latter. I suspect that even the member for Bundamba could not go to the next election and sell to her constituents, ‘I voted against these tough measures but still vote for me.’ I can hear the laughter of the member for Bundamba. I suspect that is where we are going with these measures, which, surprisingly, Labor Party members will endorse this evening—surprise but welcome support from the Labor Party.

The opposition leader talked about how the Labor Party tackled organised crime in this state and about how the best way to tackle organised crime is through a piece of legislation called the Criminal Organisation Act 2009. That was the Labor Party’s way of dealing with organised crime. I note that all of the Labor Party members were bragging about this great law they introduced. None of them mentioned how many times this law has been effectively used, because the answer is nil. No criminal organisation in this state has been declared a criminal organisation because of the Labor Party legislation.

It is one thing to have legislation on the statute books; it is another thing for it to actually work. We have had concerns with and criticisms of the Criminal Organisation Act all along. My concerns are still there in terms of having on the statute books an act that has not actually achieved anything. And the process for the legislation to achieve anything is cumbersome. It can take up to 12 months before any punishments or penalties are dished out to criminal members because of the process involved. At the start intelligence has to be gathered. Then they have to ask the Supreme Court for a criminal organisation declaration. Having achieved that, they then have to get a control order. Then, of course, an organisation has to breach the control order before there are any punishments. And the punishments are not worth the paper they are written on. We need severe, deterrent punishment. That is what this bill is all about.

The opposition leader also tried to fool Queenslanders by saying that criminal organisations in Queensland have only cropped up in the past 18 months, under this government. Criminal organisations were not there 18 months ago; they have just come since March 2012! Considering they said in 2009 they had the toughest and best piece of legislation dealing with criminal organisations, I suspect that is a mistruth. They have certainly been economical with the truth in this debate.

The opposition leader talked about my criticism of the Criminal Organisation Act.

Ms Palaszczuk: We loved that, yes.

Mr BLEIJIE: I loved it as well. Again, this piece of legislation has not worked. I cannot understand how the Labor Party can hold up the Criminal Organisation Act and say, ‘We are solving the problems of criminal organisations in Queensland,’ because no-one has been declared under it. Nothing has happened. All that has happened is that an application has been made.

What the Labor Party did not say—it did not quote from our speeches at the time—is that a more effective way of dealing with criminal organisations is through unexplained wealth laws. One of the first pieces of legislation introduced in the first 12 months of our government related to unexplained wealth. We also introduced serious drug-trafficking declarations, whereby all of the assets of the drug trafficker could be seized by the state and then sold. Also, offenders now have to serve 80 per cent of their sentences.

We said that there was a better way to deal with criminal gangs. We have done that with respect to unexplained wealth laws and serious drug-trafficking declarations. I remind the opposition

leader that in the past 12 months the honourable Minister for Police has introduced the toughest firearms legislation, which provides for mandatory sentencing in relation to illegal firearms.

In 20 years in government those opposite came up with the Criminal Organisation Act, which has achieved nothing. It has taken no criminal motorcycle gangs off the streets and has not rid the state of any criminal motorcycle gangs. In the short space of 12 months we have introduced the toughest and best unexplained wealth laws in the country. We have also increased the penalties for serious assaults on police officers from seven years imprisonment to 14 years imprisonment to protect our front-line police officers. We have also introduced mandatory sentencing for carrying illegal weapons to deal with criminal motorcycle gangs. We have also increased a range of penalties for offences such as murdering a police officer.

The opposition leader would have Queenslanders believe that nothing has happened in this space over the past 18 months. More has happened under the Newman government in 18 months in terms of criminal motorcycle gang legislation than happened in 20 years under the Labor Party. All those opposite came up with in 20 years—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I will get to the CMC and the member for Bundamba in a second. In 20 years, all they came up with was one bill dealing with criminal motorcycle gangs. We have had a range of legislative reform in the past 18 months, and these bills complement our existing tough approach to criminal motorcycle gangs in this state.

For 48 minutes the opposition leader talked about how great the Criminal Organisation Act was—despite the fact that it has never been used, that the Labor Party—

Ms Palaszczuk: Put on record your hypocrisy.

Mr BLEIJIE: I put on the record tonight that the Labor Party's view is that the best way to address criminal motorcycle gangs is through a piece of legislation that has not yet been used. That is what those in the Labor Party believe. Again, they are in a corner. They reject everything. They philosophically reject this legislation, but they are forced to support it tonight. Even the member—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection. If the member for Bundamba does not feel that she is forced then she ought vote against the legislation. If she hates the legislation, if she is repulsed by mandatory sentencing, then she ought vote against the legislation. She ought vote against the legislation if she finds it that repulsive.

I want to deal with the member for Rockhampton. It took the opposition leader 48 minutes to say that she was supporting the bill; it took the member for Rockhampton 30 seconds. I refer honourable members to a debate in this House on 27 November 2012. This is what the member for Rockhampton said in *Hansard* on the Weapons and Other Legislation Amendment Bill—

Our position is pretty simple. Our position has been stated by our members in this House numerous times, and the LNP has not listened to our warnings and has ignored the experts in the field such as the Law Society and numerous academics, having dedicated their lives to understanding crime and punishment—

and here is the punchline, colleagues—

who have pointed out the shortcomings of mandatory terms of imprisonment. We wish for our opposition to be recorded not only in terms of this bill but also in relation to all future bills that may be contemplated by those opposite incorporating mandatory sentencing.

Was the member for Rockhampton misleading the House tonight when he said that on 27 November 2012, and I repeat it for the opposition leader—

We wish for our opposition to be recorded not only in terms of this bill but also in relation to all future bills that may be contemplated by those opposite—

that is, the LNP government—

incorporating mandatory sentencing.

Hypocrisy has many definitions, but when we look at the ALP and Labor in Queensland there is only one succinct definition. We should recall that the member for Rockhampton is in fact the shadow police minister. The shadow police minister—if you did not know that he is the shadow police minister—said in November that those opposite oppose all future bills with mandatory sentencing and then 30 seconds into the debate tonight he said that they support this bill. What has changed? We come into this place and we debate laws. We have toughened the laws because we have a philosophical objection to offenders in this community. We said that we were going to rebalance the

scales of justice in favour of the victims in these instances, and we have done that all along in the 18 months we have been in government. We have a position and we have stood by our position and our values. Nothing shows more contempt for the people of Queensland than when you have to chop and change your values for the political landscape of the day.

I turn now to the member for South Brisbane. I can imagine the shadow cabinet room debate on whether they support these bills or not. I see the opposition leader smiling because she knows that I know exactly what went on in the shadow cabinet room. When the opposition leader said, 'We just need to support this. It's going to kill us politically if we don't support this,' the member for South Brisbane would have been riled. The member for South Brisbane would have been ropeable. Tonight I call on the opposition leader to let this go to a division. Let these bills go to a vote so that we can see where they really stand on these tough measures, where they really stand on mandatory sentencing, because the things that they have said about this bill and mandatory sentencing no doubt—and Queenslanders ought be warned—will flip and change with the next bill that we have in this place. The opposition leader, in a couple of hours time if the debate is still going, will put out a press release and she will say, 'We're supporting tough measures.' But 10 days ago the opposition leader said that these measures that we are introducing tonight would bring back a police state in Queensland. Is the opposition leader still supporting those comments that she herself made?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I rise to a point of order. The Attorney is deliberately misleading and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): You find the comments offensive?

Ms PALASZCZUK: My comments were about the vision on the television. It was not about these—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Opposition leader, are you saying you find the comments offensive?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I ask for a withdrawal.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, if you would withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. The opposition leader was quoted—in fact, it was the vision that I saw on the news—saying that this state is becoming a police state. It was in response to the tough measures that the Premier and I announced with respect to these laws—these tough measures contained in the bills that we are debating tonight.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My Deputy Speaker, I find the comments offensive. He is repeating the comments. I ask him to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, you have been asked to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw, but I also—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Unconditionally, Attorney.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw unconditionally. I will give notice that I at some stage this parliamentary sitting week will produce the video footage of the opposition leader in her own words saying that this state is becoming a police state. That is a quote from the opposition leader. I will tweet it out so the world at large can see that she is now trying to backtrack from those comments she made on the news. I can see the hypocrisy. We will go all through the last two weeks. The opposition leader has been on side with the reforms, rejected the reforms, said they are police state reforms, on side with the reforms. Tonight at this point in time—at a quarter to one in the morning—I believe that she is on side with the reforms, but we will see when the vote on the second reading takes place.

The opposition's answer in the last two weeks to this vexed question about what to do with criminal motorcycle gangs was to set up a group of people at the Gold Coast to talk about the issues—a summit. It was going to set up a committee. It was going to set up a talkfest. What it was effectively going to do with this committee is outsource the responsibilities of the state—outsource the responsibilities to a talkfest!

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The member for Bundamba laughs about it, but this is Labor Party policy. This is Labor Party policy. If the opposition leader laughs, maybe the member for Bundamba missed the press release from the Leader of the Opposition—'Labor will host Gold Coast crime summit', and I table a copy. If an attendant could give that to the member for Bundamba, she might find it interesting Labor Party policy reading.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 30 September 2013, by Mr Tim Mulherin MP titled 'Labor Will Host Gold Coast Crime Summit' [[3748](#)].

I thank the Premier for his continued support in ensuring that we get these tough measures through the parliament and for having it on the government agenda to continue our line that we want to rid Queensland of criminal motorcycle gangs. I thank my colleague the police minister for his support over the last two weeks. Colleagues will know the effort that one puts into these types of reforms, and I want to pay tribute to all government staff and public servants who have drafted this legislation, and I can assure members it has been day and night as we have drafted the legislation. To all staff in the Public Service and also ministerial and government staff members, I do thank them because this has been a mammoth effort. We believe this is right and we believe this is what is needed, and the opposition leader and opposition members come in here again asking what is so urgent about this. It is not so urgent for them, as they can afford the time to have a crime summit and a talkfest. We do not believe in talkfests and crime summits; we believe in action. We believe in direct action to go to the heart and soul and break the morale of criminal motorcycle gangs in Queensland.

Has the opposition leader wondered why the criminal motorcycle gangs have gone underground for the last few days wondering what all this legislation is about? Has the opposition leader wondered if criminal motorcycle gang members actually may be worried about their enterprise and these laws and what these reforms will mean for their enterprise? We make no mistake: this is about crushing their enterprise. It is about getting rid of these criminal motorcycle gangs from Queensland, and the position is clear. The position has been made quite clear by the Premier: get a real job. If they do not want to go to jail, get a real job. Get out of these clubs, and that is why through the Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Bill we are creating major penalties. This will be the heavy-handed approach with respect to getting informants out of the system to make sure that we get everyone possible caught up in this vast net of criminal motorcycle gangs. It is important to note that the vicious lawless associates may not necessarily be caught up in criminal motorcycle gangs. The definition is sufficiently broad enough to go after paedophile rings in Queensland and support our tough new laws on paedophiles and two-strike policies we have in this state and to look at other gangs in Queensland that are not criminal motorcycle gangs but organised crime gangs. That bill is sufficiently broad enough to make sure that we can go after as many of these organised crimes as we can.

The opposition leader also talked about the CMC. This side of the House is restructuring the CMC. We are restructuring the CMC because we believe the priorities of the CMC have been wrong for many years.

Clearly, the Labor Party, with its performance this morning over the CMC and potential matters before CMC, has not learned the lesson as to why it is important to restructure and reprioritise the efforts of the CMC. Not only will we reprioritise the efforts of the CMC to put the 'Crime' back in the Crime and Misconduct Commission, we will invest resources to ensure that, with these new and expanded powers, the CMC—

Mrs Miller: How much? How much?

Mr BLEIJIE: The member obviously does not read the newspapers, because we have announced—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! The member for Bundamba will cease interjecting.

Mr BLEIJIE: We have announced up to \$7 million—

Mrs Miller: How much?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I now warn the member for Bundamba under standing order 253A.

Mr BLEIJIE: Up to \$7 million. This government is working with the CMC through the acting chair, Dr Ken Levy. We will work out the resources that are required by the CMC with the CMC—in consultation with the CMC—through proper cabinet budget review committee processes to ensure that Dr Ken Levy and the CMC crime-fighting team have what it needs to enable the extra coercive hearings, to make sure that they have in place the adequate resources and people resources to tackle the issue.

Not only that, we have also said that up to \$20 million is available to the Police Service to make sure that it can tackle this issue. We have also announced up to \$5 million so that Queenslanders can be part of the solution. Queenslanders can do in these bikies. As the Premier has announced, if things lead to successful prosecutions for serious crime, the benefits to Queenslanders can be upwards of \$20,000 and \$1,000 for information that leads to successful raids on criminal motorcycle gang premises.

We are serious about tackling organised crime. Make no mistake: this is not something that was dreamt up. This is in addition to the tough laws that we have already introduced in the past 18 months, particularly the unexplained wealth laws. There are not many jurisdictions in Australia that have unexplained wealth laws. Queensland is one of two or possibly three jurisdictions—but I think it is two—that have unexplained wealth laws. Queensland would not have unexplained wealth laws today if the Labor Party was still in power. The member for Nicklin gave one of his—

Mr Newman: Rants?

Mr BLEIJIE: Rants and usual contributions to the debate. I interjected, because the member for Nicklin was talking about briefings that were afforded. I did afford the member for Nicklin—and all crossbenchers—a briefing. I afforded the opposition a briefing at three o'clock. The reason I ordered the shutdown of the briefing was that I was getting reports from my staff in that briefing that the member for Nicklin's objectionable behaviour and unruly behaviour to public servants and ministerial staffers without my presence was shameful. That is why I sent in my chief of staff to shut down the briefing. They had one hour and 20 minutes of a briefing. It was a sufficient, broad—

Mr WELLINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, it would help the House if you withdraw. The member found the comments offensive.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. In talking about the briefing that was provided to the member for Nicklin, maybe he will have the same courtesy to the same departmental staff and my policy advisers and withdraw his unruly behaviour at a later time. An apology would be nice. I was getting those reports. That is why I sent in my chief of staff after one hour and 20 minutes—because the member for Nicklin was getting agitated because my staff did not have the anti-racketeering legislation of the United States of America.

Mr WELLINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, the member has found those comments offensive. If you would withdraw—

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. At the briefing the member for Nicklin got upset because my staff did not have the United States of America anti-racketeering legislation on hand for his perusal. He got upset because my staff did not have the New South Wales tattoo parlour legislation. We are not the US government. We are not the United States—

Mr WELLINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and not accurately reflecting what happened at the committee meeting. I ask that they be withdrawn. They do not accurately reflect what happened at the meeting and I ask that they be withdrawn. I find those comments offensive.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, the member has found those comments offensive and asks for them to be withdrawn.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw and I will move on. Perhaps I should have one of the—

Mr Newman interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: I rise to a point of order. Mr Deputy Speaker, I find the comments from the Premier offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not hear anything from the Premier. Member for Nicklin, I did not hear anything from here at all.

Mr JUDGE: I actually heard it from here.

Madam SPEAKER: I did not hear anything from the Premier. I have no reason to think that the Premier said anything. Can the Premier just clarify for the sake of the record if the Premier has not said anything?

Mr NEWMAN: If the member is offended by anything that I have said or done I withdraw.

Madam SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier.

Mr BLEIJIE: I need not remind the member for Nicklin of the laws with respect to misleading this House. If I feel it necessary, then I will have a staff member lodge a statutory declaration of the member's attitude. Then if he wishes to object to that and if he thinks that he did not display that disgraceful attitude towards the departmental staff, then let him stand in this place. But I remind him of the serious penalties applicable to misleading the House.

While we are on the subject of the member for Nicklin, he talked about the CMC. We are investing up to \$7 million in the CMC. I want to point out to honourable members that the member for Nicklin has been very vocal in newspapers such as the *Sunshine Coast Daily* with respect to allegations of government attacks on the CMC. He has been very vocal. Every time we talk about the CMC he attacks us for even mentioning it. But last year the opposition leader put out a press release saying that she was going to undertake one of the most fundamental reforms of the CMC and split the CMC. The member for Nicklin remained silent. There was no word from the member for Nicklin in this place. There was no word from the member for Nicklin. We know that the member for Nicklin is the mouthpiece for the Labor Party on one day, the mouthpiece for Katter on another day, or the mouthpiece for Clive Palmer—

Mr WELLINGTON: I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Attorney-General, the comments have been found offensive.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. I thank all honourable members for their contributions. We heard woeful speeches from the member for Nicklin and the member for Dalrymple. I rose on points of order on five occasions, but I still do not think the member for Dalrymple spoke to the bill. I think he mentioned bats somewhere—

A government member interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Was that me? The member for Dalrymple gave a 10-minute diatribe of everything that is not associated with the bill. We are talking about a bill that deals with association. The member for Dalrymple did not quite get the point of the legislation.

This is clear: we want to rid the state of criminal motorcycle gangs. We want to crush their bikes, we want to crush their enterprise, we want to protect our front-line service men and women—the Police Service. We want to bolster the CMC's powers and resources to deal with these vicious, violent thugs.

This bill is to disestablish these organisations, to drive them out of Queensland so Queenslanders can go to a shopping mall without fear of being shot, so Queenslanders can have a cup of coffee at Broadbeach or anywhere in Queensland without the fear of retribution from these criminal motorcycle gang members. I commend the bill to the House.