




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

Record of Proceedings, 15 October 2013

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

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (9.48 pm): The Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Bill, the Tattoo Parlours Bill and the Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations Disruption) Amendment Bill seek to disestablish associations that encourage, foster or support persons to commit serious offences, to increase public safety and security by the disestablishment of the associations and to deny the person who commits the serious offence the assistance and support that is gained from association with other persons who participate in the affairs of the associations. The severity with which the government has decided to tackle the issue of organised crime and bkie gangs is commendable. However, the approach taken is a threat to the integrity of the committee process and to the parliament itself. The sensationalism that the government drummed up by closing the parliament before introducing these laws only serves to create the impression that the government is right to bypass the committee system and avoid submitting the bills to any scrutiny before being passed.

Queenslanders rightly expect greater sensitivity towards their democratic rights when law and order policies are developed. One of their fundamental democratic rights is the right to lawful assembly. This bill places the responsibility on groups to prove that they are not conducting illegal activity. That means that police will have the legislative backing to presume guilt, which is a violation of the rule of law. When the onus of proof is placed on citizens, the democratic right of all civilians is under threat. This bill contains serious violations of democratic rights and principles. The government's unwillingness to submit such contentious legislation to public scrutiny is a major concern. If the Attorney-General believes that the legislation is consistent with community expectations, there is nothing for him to be worried about. So why does he not submit the bill to the committee process? The LNP strongly supported this democratic process believing that it was the right of people and the parliament that legislation be appropriately scrutinised. This legislation has been rushed through to create the perception that the LNP government is tough on crime. We have just had a federal election. That has taken precedence over what the LNP is doing here. So now this government is rushing through legislation to create the perception that it is tough on crime.

I notice that no government member representing an area in North Queensland will be speaking to this bill. We have the Premier and the members for Bundaberg, Ipswich, Burleigh, Greenslopes, Broadwater, Mermaid Beach, Lockyer, Logan, Southport and the Attorney-General speaking to this bill, but no members representing North Queensland are speaking to this bill. That is because North Queensland does not have these issues. The members representing North Queensland are not hearing about these issues. The issue that is talked about in North Queensland is the travel rorts of politicians, especially those members of the Liberal Party who are paying back their travel rorts. That is the issue that people are talking about in North Queensland.

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. The member for Dalrymple is talking about federal politicians' entitlements. I fail to see any relevance at all. I know there are three bills to debate and there might be a broad catch, but there is no relevance. I ask the member to be brought into line under relevance.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Dalrymple, could you address the terms of the legislation, please.

Mr KNUTH: Yes, I will address the—

Mr Hopper interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Condamine, your cohort is addressing this chamber. Will you give him an opportunity, please.

Mr KNUTH: I will address the terms of the bills. This legislation is about the fundamental democratic rights of law-abiding people, including motorcycle riders, trail riders, Harley riders and Triumph riders. These bills come down hard on crime while the LNP is pushing for more gambling licences, more casinos, more pokies—

Mr BLEIJIE: I rise to a point of order. Madam Deputy Speaker, the legislation does not contain anything about pokies, casinos or gambling licences. I ask you to call the member to order on relevance.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Dalrymple, this is a cognate debate of three bills. Will you please contain your comments to the bills.

Mr KNUTH: Madam Speaker, I agree that my comments are borderline. There is a concern that these bills are being rushed through. We just had the Queensland Plan and all the applause that went with that. There was no reason to recall parliament so that we could rush these laws through as fast as we could because there was a matter of urgency. No, there was nothing like that. There was the standing ovation and the applause.

Today we had a briefing on one bill. The bill was tabled. The explanatory notes were not even there for us to scrutinise. This is what parliament is about. We could only get a briefing on one of the bills for one hour. We missed the briefing on the other two bills. We were never given the information. We never had the opportunity. But we were told that this was good for Queensland, that this was going to be beneficial for Queensland. However, we have law-abiding citizens expressing great concern that this legislation is going to affect their fundamental principles and rights. But we must support it by whatever means necessary because the LNP is right! They were elected. They have a massive majority and they are not like the Labor Party, which suspended standing orders every second parliamentary sitting to rush through legislation. The LNP will never suspend standing orders! It will ensure that this parliament will have processes whereby everybody will be heard! Campbell Newman promised Queensland that he would be here for everybody. That is why we are laughing at this present moment. The members opposite are pointing their fingers in my direction. They can implement their pokies, they can implement their casinos, they can implement their rushed legislation, but the reality is—

Mr Hopper interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Dalrymple, will you resume your seat for a moment. The member for Condamine is having a debate happening in that corner that makes it extremely difficult to hear the member for Dalrymple. I ask all members to respect this opportunity for the member for Dalrymple to place his views on the record.

Mr KNUTH: If members of a motorcycle club go on a ride to raise funds for spina bifida, they want to be assured that they can do that lawfully and not be pulled over or have the perception created that they are a criminal bikie group. The HOGs—a millionaires bikie club—ride up to the Herveys Range tearoom. Those riders want to be assured that, when they go up there and put \$2,000 into the Herveys Range tearoom, they are not going to be pulled over by the police because of a suspicion that they are members of a criminal organisation.

A government member interjected.

Mr KNUTH: I cannot hear much while this parrot is right here beside me squarking. I would like the Attorney-General to tell the motorcycle riders and the trail bike riders that they will be able to ride their motorbikes up to the Yungaburra Whistle Stop on a Sunday morning and put their \$1,000 into the Whistle Stop without the fear of police pulling them over and questioning them. That is the question that we want answered. That is our concern. That is why we are here in the parliament.

Government members interjected.

Mr KNUTH: They can squark and they can squawk. They can yell and they can scream. They can cry and they can wish why on earth this person is here saying these things. We will be moving an amendment and, hopefully, the Attorney-General will accept it. We want to ensure the rights of motorcycle riders. We want to ensure that when police see 40 motorcyclists on Harleys or Triumphs ride past that they are not under pressure to check to see if they are an outlaw motorcycle gang. The people in my area really do not have this issue. For them, it is a minute particle. The members opposite can brag about this legislation, they can talk about the importance of what they must do, but the people in my area do not have this problem. I want to ensure that these motorcycles are not going to be affected, that they can ride their bikes, that they will not have retribution against them.

These are important issues and that is why we are going to move this amendment. I am sure government members will support it because it is about law-abiding motorcycle riders. It is about law-abiding Harley and Triumph riders.

Mr Cox interjected.

Mr KNUTH: We look forward to the government supporting this amendment because it is about protecting law-abiding citizens. The government does want to get tough on crime, like the roting system that is taking place in travel.

Mr Cox interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Cunningham): Order! Member for Thuringowa, I would ask you to give the member for Dalrymple an opportunity.

Mr KNUTH: I want to bring these important issues to the attention of members of the House.