




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENTS

Criminal Motorcycle Gangs

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (3.42 pm): Last year the state government smashed through get-tough-on-bikie laws that were so rushed that it did not even have the bill printed for members to peruse and scrutinise, but instead asked members of parliament to trust it. It said, 'Put faith in us'. That bill was so complex that a southern lawyer said it had taken him two days to try to get his head around it.

The attack on motorbike riders was a politically palatable response to a brawl on the Gold Coast. I have seen bigger brawls at a rival football match. We already had the appropriate police power laws in place to deal with criminal elements of outlaw bikie gangs. The reality is that at the time these laws were rushed through, people were more concerned about politicians' travel rorts. The Newman government was hoping the rushed-through laws would give it a boost in the polls, but inadvertently negative effects are showing. That is what we know happens when you make politically based policy on the run.

I am greatly concerned that this knee-jerk reaction which has impacted on law-abiding motorcycle riders has also resulted in small businesses suffering to the point of bankruptcy. The publican at the iconic Mingela bush pub, Ivan, is one of those who now suffers. Every weekend he would put a pig on the spit and over 100 motorbike riders would turn up to have a yarn, a feed and a beer. Now, he is flat out getting 10 riders to come. These draconic laws have destroyed the viability of that iconic bush pub. I call on the Premier and the Attorney-General to call in to the Mingela pub, which is only 50 kilometres east of Charters Towers, to look around and ask themselves how a pub can make a living in bush surroundings.

An example of police harassment involved a member of the Liberal National Party. Noel Evans was stopped by police while riding in a motorbike guard of honour at his wife's funeral in Townsville. The riders were customers and business partners of a local Townsville motorcycle shop and were not associated with any bikie clubs. The riders' phone numbers were recorded and they were filmed, despite alerting police days earlier about their plans to escort the hearse. That card-carrying member of the LNP is completely gutted about what has happened in relation to the guard of honour at his wife's funeral and he has now left the LNP.

No-one has a problem with tough laws on crime, but this government has demonised law-abiding motorbike riders who ride for recreational purposes or who buy a Harley or Triumph as they meet a midlife crisis. Even the Assistant Deputy Commissioner in the Central Queensland region relayed that if there were three or more bike riders on their travels, the police must presume they could be outlaw bikies, placing pressure on the police and other motorbike riders. These are just a few issues that are affecting many coffee shops, small businesses and charities and they are suffering. That is why these bike laws must be reviewed to ensure law-abiding people do not continue to suffer.

(Time expired)