




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Mermaid Beach, VLAD Laws

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (7.05 pm): Prior to the introduction of the VLAD laws I had risen in this House on no less than 10 occasions to highlight the proliferation of criminal bikie gang rogue elements on the Gold Coast. It was with considerable relief I rose on 15 October 2013 to support the introduction of the VLAD laws with the belief that they would have a successful outcome, ridding the streets of these criminal networks and organised criminal activity of bikie gangs once and for all. Those Newman government laws worked, to the great delight of my Gold Coast community. It was with dismayed disbelief I heard the now Premier Palaszczuk promise the winding back of these successful laws during the 2015 election campaign.

What is the genesis of getting rid of the successful criminal bikie gang laws? Was it the CFMEU and their militant protection rackets in the building industry or was it bikie gang money syphoned through the union movement to support the Labor campaign? These laws that are supported unanimously by our hardworking police force—it has stated publicly that the statistics and crime busts show the effect this legislation is having—is now being further handicapped by the reduction in the Rapid Action Police Patrol, or RAPP squad. First it was the removal of the experienced Superintendent Jim Keogh and Deputy Commissioner Brett Pointing, whose actions directly benefited the Gold Coast through RAPP—the main drivers enforcing the VLAD legislation. Now it is the removal of Inspector Shane Holmes and the downsizing by reassignment of duties of the Gold Coast RAPP that is a further example of how little the Palaszczuk Labor government cares for the safety of the Mermaid Beach and Gold Coast constituents and, indeed, the safety of all Queenslanders in the face of this scourge.

By quickly launching a review into the organised crime legislation, Premier Palaszczuk and a clueless team threw open the gates to welcome the low-lying scum that are criminal bikie gangs back into Queensland. The Labor Party themselves certainly voted for the introduction of the VLAD legislation in this parliament when originally introduced and now because of political expediency and pressure from their union masters they are prepared to destroy good law-making—particularly effective on the Gold Coast—to sooth their faceless, puppetmaster associates to the detriment of all Queenslanders.

Many will recall under the failed stewardship of the Beattie-Bligh Labor government, whose focus was everywhere but the Gold Coast, the bikie gang problem was excused with spin, bodgied-up crime figures and sloppy legislation giving lawbreakers a smack on the wrist and releasing them back into the community to reoffend and reoffend, exemplified by the bikie brawl at Broadbeach which had men, women and children cowering in the dining and entertainment precinct of one of the most popular family destinations in Australia. The Palaszczuk government is certainly following in their footsteps by pandering to the outcast, criminal fraternity.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the minister and member for Waterford, member for Mermaid Beach, the words you used were 'low-lying scum'. You have the ability to come up with better words that are parliamentary. I ask you to withdraw those words.

Mr STEVENS: I withdraw.