




Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**

**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2016

**SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (4.06 pm): As Jack Gibson famously said, this is déjà vu all over again. I was sitting here through the Bligh government and their answer was their stupid law the Criminal Organisation Act, which arrested nobody, got nobody through the courts and did nothing. When in opposition I gave nine speeches in this House and on national ABC on the bikies before this took off in Mermaid Beach, Nobby's Beach, Broadbeach—all around my area. We would see them sitting around in coffee shops intimidating people and the whole box and dice and not one was put away at that time under the Bligh laws. Now we are going back to where we were with the Bligh laws. It is a total watering down of the successful VLAD laws that were introduced.

In those early Bligh years my wife went to a Pilates class in the bottom end of Broadbeach and was home by seven o'clock. That night tattoo parlours all around Broadbeach were shot up by the bikies. She went to Robina shopping centre the next day and, bang, the bikies were back again. I say to the police minister that they did not use rat-shot; they used fair dinkum guns that actually cleaned up somebody. They were serious about their crime.

The member for Rockhampton knows that I have been talking about this matter since before it became famous due to the bokie brawl in Broadbeach. The fact of the matter is we are watering down these laws and I do not understand why Premier Palaszczuk is doing this. All I can think is that, as a Hilary Clinton fan, she does not care about the Gold Coast deplorables. She is basically saying that her union mates, the CFMEU, and the lefty lawyers who are nudging her to water down these heavy penalties only for criminal bikies are saying, 'We have to get rid of those. How are we going to do that? We are going to finesse it by putting it under child exploitation and hiding it.' The coppers have all said to us, 'Don't get rid of the VLAD laws.' We will be bringing them back when we return to government, hopefully after the next election.

Why is the government doing this? Why are they watering down a successful law for the Gold Coast? It did not come in overnight. It came in because of the awful scenario that happened on the Gold Coast in the Broadbeach brawl and that was broadcast on national television. Forget about the 'ballroom blitz' that happened at Royal Pines which happened years previously. When the LNP was in power Premier Newman, who was in China at the time, got on the phone and said, 'Bang, we're going to fix this. It is not happening. Anarchy is not happening in Queensland. We are putting in these tough laws.'

The attorney-general at the time did a great job taking advice from a leading barrister in Queensland, quite a famous gentleman, who modelled these laws on the Mafia laws in America by getting these bikies to talk and dob on each other. That is why the mandatory 25-year and 15-year sentences were put in there to make senior bokie executives talk, because they have a code of silence which cannot be broken. They will not dob in their mates. They will do three years, no problem, and their families will be looked after and they will pop out bigger and badder than ever. They get a lot of money out of this game through their tattoo parlours. They wash the proceeds of crime and turn the dirty money which they obtain through drugs, standover tactics and prostitution into clean money. They

then pay the 30 per cent tax rate through a company, and that is how they are able to fund the enormous amount of drugs that you see in drug busts because they are making such a truckload of money out of these illicit and illegal activities.

Why are we winding it back? No sensible government would wind back the laws. In fact, those big fans and followers of the LNP—the South Australian Labor government—have introduced the same laws. Isn't that amazing? They really love the LNP. I wonder if Campbell would like to run in South Australia. The fact of the matter is that the laws are good and they have worked. They are so good that this government is hanging onto them for two years until after the next election, I presume, just in case the bikies start to roll back into town—and they will and they are. I see them around. They are not in big groups in the coffee shops like they were, but they are coming back. You will see by the violent activity on the coast and the ones that have been put in jail that the bikies are back because they know they have a friend in the Labor Party.

Unfortunately, the only reason I can put down to the Labor Party being friends with criminal bikie gang members is through their CFMEU union mates and their lefty lawyer mates. As we all know, Mr Bill Potts—great fellow and great solicitor that he is—is one of the legal defenders of these criminal bikie gangs, and I am sure they have paid him lots of money over the years to defend them as they carry on their illegal criminal activities. Oh, guess what? Mr Potts is the boss of the Law Society in Queensland. Isn't it amazing that he wants the existing laws of the LNP wound back and watered down? They were unashamedly tough on bikies—not anyone else that rides a motorbike, but on criminal motorcycle bikie gang members. I would like someone to explain to me why we are hiding this watering-down, soft-on-crime legislation under the guise of child protection when it really is about going soft on the bikies on the Gold Coast. We do not have any members on that side from the Labor Party on the Gold Coast. I wonder why. The fact of the matter is that when the tide went out for the LNP government we won the seat of Gaven, so that tells you how the Gold Coast feels about law and order on the Gold Coast. We are very, very protective of our family-friendly city, and this will put the image of the Gold Coast at risk and will put the bikies back in town.

I cannot understand why anyone would take members from the RAP squad, for instance. Twenty members have been moved for other duties. The RAP squad has been very successful. In fact, as we all know they had a very successful leader in Jimmy Keogh. All members on the coast would know what a great copper he was and what a great service he provided to the Gold Coast in cleaning up crime. I would like anyone over there to come forward and say that Jim has not done a great job for the Gold Coast. What happened immediately after Labor got in? They shifted him out and put him somewhere else, tied him up behind a desk in Brisbane. Basically, all this government has done for their mates, either in the CFMEU or the lefty lawyers, is make the Gold Coast a worse place to live from a law and order point of view. It absolutely amazes me that the Attorney-General can stand up in this House and claim that this law is as tough as the laws that the LNP put in place. It makes no sense whatsoever. As I understand it, they have a seven-year mandatory sentence in this new legislation.

I cannot understand why they would pick on the Gold Coast mayor, Mayor Tom Tate, who is a great supporter of the city and has been in that industry—he knows the night-life on the Gold Coast—and knows the problems that these characters cause in that particular industry. Why a Labor government would pick on a mayor for defending his city amazes me. It is beyond belief. Councillor Paul Taylor, who I work closely with in the Broadbeach area, is all over the problems we had with the bikies in the area. He was a very popular member of the Kurrawa Surf Club, and to pick on him was absolutely in the poorest taste and below the standard that is expected of a proper parliamentarian or a proper party in the state of Queensland.

Please, Attorney-General, explain to the Gold Coast why you are going soft on crime and why you are making it an easier place for the Gold Coast bikies to open up their clubhouses. I had one right next to Pacific Fair that the businesses around it were very, very frightened to say anything about. Fortunately, Jimmy closed it down with his RAP squad. If we see the tattoo parlours back and the clubhouses back again it will be thanks to the Labor Party, this Attorney-General and Premier Palaszczuk's soft-on-crime government. It is an absolute disgrace that the Gold Coast has to wear it.