




Speech By  
**Shane Knuth**

**MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 29 November 2016

**SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (9.07 pm): I rise to speak to the Serious Organised Crime Legislation Amendment Bill. I listened to the member for Whitsunday and I must say that there is an element of fact in what he was saying about crime and illegal activity among outlaw bikies. There are many cases of thuggery. I have to say that an element of good did come from the introduction of the VLAD laws and that part of what the member for Whitsunday and other members have said is true; however, the problem with the LNP laws was the process that they went through. At that time under the Newman experiment the LNP government believed that they were the saviours of this state. They believed that they were different to Labor, so they came in and declared war on everybody; however, then they realised that the polls were not looking good for the LNP.

The LNP parliamentary leadership team and the party leadership had to come up with a strategy. They met in the Strangers' Dining Room. They said, 'We are in trouble politically and we have to do something. So that it is perceived that we are doing something we could go tough on bikies.' Their great strategy was to say, 'We can smash legislation through hard and fast to give Queenslanders the perception that we are doing something and we are tough on crime and then hopefully our polling that is down will climb and we will look a little bit more presentable at the next election.' This was their strategy. They had the perception that the strategy was going to work. They fast-tracked the legislation and smashed the laws through. They said that they were going to put the bikies in pink pyjamas.

The LNP promised that they were not going to be like Labor. They promised that they were going to be different—that they were going to be honest and accountable and a government that was going to deliver. They promised they would be different. They said, 'We will not be like the Beattie-Bligh government. We will be different.'

The polling was bad. They fast-tracked the legislation. They did not even have the bill printed. They said, 'We have to do it now because the sky is falling in.' As we were receiving a briefing and were being told by the department how good the legislation was and why it had to pass, we did not even have the legislation in front of us. The sky was going to fall in. There was an element of good in it, but it was all about politics. At the same time their polling went down—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! We are having a bit of fun, but the interjections are getting a little bit too loud for me to hear the member.

**Mr KNUTH:** There were elements of good in the legislation. As it was smashed through—

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr McEachan** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Pine Rivers, you have been interjecting quite a lot tonight. The member for Redlands and the member for Pine Rivers, this is not about your conversation. The member for Dalrymple has the call.

**Mr KNUTH:** I would probably like the Attorney to address some of the issues that I have concerns about. We have concerns with regard to the laws that impacted law-abiding motorcycle riders. The police and law enforcement officers targeted them. Places like the Herveys Range Heritage Tea Rooms lost business for five months. We had people like Noel Evans, a member of the LNP, who was impacted. His wife died and he had motorbike riders at her funeral as a guard of honour. The police pulled them up and harassed them to check to see whether they were members of an organised motorcycle gang. These are the ridiculous things that happened. What they were hoping to achieve was that this legislation might build a bit of credibility for them across the state. It really did backfire.

Labor is known to be soft on crime. I acknowledge that these proposed laws cover amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act, the Criminal Code relating to child exploitation over the internet and stronger enforcement measures for drug trafficking. Another good aspect is that the police union has come out and supported the measures. I do not know about now, but in the past the police union has always been pro the LNP. I think that might have changed. I am not quite sure. The police union have come out and said that the laws are quite strong and worthy of support.

I would like the Attorney to address the issue of patches and colours. My concern is that we do not want police seeing legal bike owners in coffee shops and public places and going in and harassing them. This is very important and I ask the minister to address that issue.

There were some elements of the VLAD laws that were good, but the way the opposition went about introducing the laws was overdone. I wanted to bring that to the attention of the House. I ask the Attorney in her summing-up to respond to the issue of protecting law-abiding bikies who are wearing patches and colours.