




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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PENALTIES AND SENTENCES (QUEENSLAND SENTENCING ADVISORY COUNCIL) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (5.36 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker Millar, I also say congratulations on your new role. I rise tonight to speak on the Penalties and Sentences (Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council) Amendment Bill 2016. I want to limit my comments to the late amendments to the bill that the Attorney-General has introduced in the last 24 hours. Specifically, I rise to speak against the deferral of amendments to the Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations Disruption) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013. If there was any further evidence that we on this side of the House needed about this Labor government going soft on crime, I cannot think of a better example. The original amendments that were to commence on 1 July this year were about excluding participants of criminal organisations from working in certain licensed occupations. How could anyone possibly argue against that particular amendment and why would the government defer it?

The former LNP government took a stand against criminal organisations and in particular criminal motorcycle gangs. We did that because the public of Queensland demanded that we do it. Let us just briefly go over again the circumstances that led to the laws that we brought in that were the toughest in this country—and we were proud they were the toughest in this country.

Mr Minnikin: Broadbeach.

Mr MANDER: I will take that interjection from the member for Chatsworth. We will begin at Broadbeach. Families were out having dinner on the main street of Broadbeach when a brawl broke out between criminal motorcycle gangs, causing terror and trauma in those streets. Once the police came and in and made the necessary arrests, the next thing a posse arrived at the police station demanding that the people who had been arrested be released.

Mr Walker interjected.

Mr MANDER: That is exactly right. I will take that interjection from the shadow Attorney-General. They were demanding that the people who had just caused havoc be released. They were scenes like from the wild west. A couple of weeks later at a shopping centre on the Gold Coast there were shots fired in public and an innocent member of the public was shot and wounded. Somebody doing their shopping in a supermarket was wounded by a member of a criminal motorcycle gang.

These are the people who proudly say they are part of the one percenters—the one per cent of people who do not have to worry about the law—and the people of Queensland, particularly people on the Gold Coast, were demanding that we do something about it. The previous laws were not working. The previous laws were treating the symptoms; they were not getting to the core of the problem. We were not interested in controlling criminal motorcycle gangs; we were focusing on eliminating them—

Mr RYAN: I rise to a point of order. On the point of order of relevance, the member is clearly speaking to an amendment which is yet to be moved in the House. There is nothing in the bill which relates to criminal motorcycle gangs, and I wish to draw the member's attention to the standing orders on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Millar): Order! I call on the member to stay relevant.

Mr MANDER: We were not interested in controlling criminal motorcycle gangs; we were focusing on eliminating them, and that is why we brought in the toughest laws in the country. Yes, they were tough, but they needed to be tough in order to rid ourselves of the scourge of criminal motorcycle gangs. The *Courier-Mail* at the time said that these were extraordinary laws for extraordinary circumstances, and they definitely were extraordinary circumstances.

What were the results of the laws that we brought in? The results were clear for everyone to see. Criminal motorcycle clubs were closed. I know that I had one in my electorate in the suburbs of north-west Brisbane, and people were glad to see them gone. Hundreds of motorcycle gang members from all around the country were going through the suburbs of Everton Hills and Everton Park. Gangs stopped coming to Queensland because they were scared off by these laws, and that is exactly what they were meant to do. They were meant to be a deterrent.

What were the other positive results? Small businesses had the confidence to speak out about extortion rackets right across the Gold Coast and the state because they knew that the state would back them and they knew that the police now had the resources to address these particular issues.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. The amendment that has been foreshadowed by the Attorney-General relates to a law that is not in force and does not exist. I ask for you to provide guidance to the member for Everton to ensure that he speaks to matters that are before the House rather than the enforcement of a range of laws that are not being debated before the House, which are those matters that he is referring to.

Mr SEENEY: Not only is the government trying to introduce an amendment without consultation but they are trying to introduce it without debate in this parliament. Of course it is relevant to the legislation, and for the government to try and avoid debate in the parliament is an indication of their embarrassment. There is no point of order and you should rule accordingly.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is no point of order.

Mr MANDER: Thank you for your ruling, Mr Deputy Speaker. One of the other great outcomes of the tough laws that this government brought in is that families once again, particularly on the Gold Coast, felt safe to take their children out to a restaurant without the fear of some brawling bikies coming in to disrupt them and cause danger. The message was clear from this government that we would not tolerate criminal motorcycle gangs, and our laws showed that.

Relating to the issue we are discussing now, the work that we started was not completed. We had to eliminate these gangs from every influence that they have in society. Every bit of intelligence that we received from law enforcement agencies told us that bikies had infiltrated a whole range of sectors, so we needed to look at areas like tattoo parlours to make sure that they were licensed so that criminal motorcycle gangs did not have undue influence in those areas. Then we come to the influence that they had in the building and construction industry and the electrical sector, and the member for Mansfield has already outlined that extremely well. It was a known fact that criminal motorcycle gangs were being used as enforcers in these sectors, and ordinary working people were too frightened to speak out against union thuggery because they were using these criminal elements to enforce that type of thuggery in those sectors.

This bill was about not only criminal organisation disruption but also elimination. With the rhetoric that is coming from across the chamber, it is now apparent that the doors are open again for criminal motorcycle gangs. They now feel free to come back to assemble and resume operations as normal.

An honourable member interjected.

Mr MANDER: Absolutely. We are unashamedly against criminal motorcycle gangs. We are proud of the laws that we introduced and the people of Queensland, particularly the people of the Gold Coast, do not want to see any weakening of these laws whatsoever. I strongly speak against this bill and specifically these amendments that the Attorney-General has brought in at the last moment.