

Queensland Parliament Hansard Green

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SUBJECT: (no subject found)

MEMBER: Mr LANGBROEK

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (5.02 pm): I rise to speak to the Serious and Organised Crime Legislation Amendment Bill. I thank the committee for its work in assessing this bill. I was pleased to attend one of the committee hearings held in my electorate. I thank the shadow Attorney-General, the member for Mansfield, for his assessment of the bill. I confirm that, along with the LNP, I oppose this bill.

Gold Coasters need only look at this bill to confirm that this Brisbane-centric Labor government does not get the Gold Coast. Drugs, guns, gangs and money: members opposite may think it sounds like a bad movie, but we on this side of the House and Gold Coast locals know that it was a reality on Gold Coast streets. We remember the terrifying Broadbeach bikie brawl in 2013. In fact, I was there, in the vicinity of the entrance to the Oasis. We remember the bikie related shooting at Robina Town Centre when an innocent bystander was shot and we remember the ballroom blitz at the Royal Pines Resort. In fact, in his contribution the member for Mermaid Beach forgot to mention—it is unbelievable that he could forget to mention this—that one morning in 2013 he and his wife came home from a night in Brisbane and could not get into their apartment block because someone had been shot or stabbed to death on the footpath outside. The bikie-related gang member who committed the crime absconded to America, was brought back and subsequently went to jail. Those are the sorts of issues that we on the Gold Coast faced year after year.

Until 2013 bikies knew that they ran our city and they let us know it. I table the article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, which the member for Broadwater mentioned, that has the very vivid headline, 'We run this town'.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'We Run This Town'.

That Friday night was the start of the September school holidays. People in my then department were there with their families, in the heart of Broadbeach. It is why the LNP brought in the strongest criminal gang laws in the country and they were working to keep Queenslanders safe. Those laws ultimately empowered the community. Finally it felt like the police were back in charge.

Those of who were here in the 53rd parliament will remember then Deputy Premier Paul Lucas and then police minister Neil Roberts saying that there were no problems on the Gold Coast. They denied that there were any problems, yet in 2011 those problems culminated in the tragic shooting of Damian Leeding at Pacific Pines, which really galvanised the Gold Coast community.

As we have heard from other members, the South Australian Labor government has duplicated the laws, with Attorney-General John Rau saying—

Since they have come into effect in South Australia, police advise that there has been a dramatic decrease in both the visibility and the number of incidents involving members of organised criminal groups.

In his commission of inquiry report on the bikie laws, Commissioner Michael Byrne QC indicated that there had been a reduction in OMCG or criminal motorcycle gang membership numbers since the VLAD laws were introduced. In this place and outside we have heard outrageous statements from the Premier and the Attorney-General, suggesting that the extra police resources that we provided to Task Force Maxima, in our attempts to sort out this problem, meant that we turned a blind eye to other crimes, including paedophile gangs. Those were outrageous slurs that the police had to come out and reject.

There are apologists for criminal gangs. Terry Goldsworthy, a Bond University criminologist, has constantly drawn the simple conclusion that bikie gang members are responsible for only a small portion of crime, 0.52 per cent being the amount quoted. Some members opposite have quoted that statistic today. He ignores even the experts who point out that proportionally criminal gang members are overrepresented in the damning crime statistics. Terry Goldsworthy is harming the outstanding reputation of Bond University with his ill-informed persistent pro-criminal-gang statements. He is as bad as Alexander Douglas, the former member for Gaven, who spruiked the same puerile statements as a Palmer United Party member and as an Independent member of this House.

In what can only be described as a politically motivated move, the Palaszczuk Labor government has sought to water down these effective laws. The bill before us will mean that bikie clubhouses can reopen, bikies will be allowed to carry weapons and they will be free to run licensed premises. In September, former Southport Court District judge, Judge Wall, said that Labor's new laws will not stop the bikies. I table a copy of that article for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Judge says new laws won't stop bikies'.

Mr Bleijie: A judge.

Mr LANGBROEK: Yes, the hanging judge, Judge Wall. We will miss him on the Gold Coast. There is no doubt that Labor is weak on crime. However, those are not my words. Even the Crime and Corruption Commission has said that the laws are being weakened by Labor. It is a shame that the CCC was not represented on the task force that reviewed the 2013 laws. In fact, not only was the CCC unrepresented on the task force that advised how to repeal and replace the laws; not one Gold Coast local was invited to join the task force. I note that in his contribution the member for Southport discovered that, of the members of that task force, none had worked or lived on the Gold Coast and none had any knowledge of what those of us who do live there have experienced. It is outrageous that that not one Gold Coast local was invited to join that task force. It is perplexing that Gold Coast locals were not invited to weigh in on the future of laws that were implemented because of the serious issues we were facing in our city. Then again, it is typical of a Labor government to not consult with Gold Coasters.

Commissioner Michael Byrne QC learned that outlaw motorcycle gangs play a major role in illicit drug markets in Queensland and are involved in other illicit activities. He said that outlaw motorcycle gangs use violence to extort money and assets from legitimate business owners, non-affiliated drug dealers, rival gangs and people operating in gang territory. We saw that in the lead up to 2013, as people involved in tattoo parlours, tow truck operations and locksmith businesses were being extorted. That then extended to other reputable businesses, such as restaurants, which gang members took over saying, 'I want cash from people who come here every week'. I mentioned locksmiths, tattoo parlours and tow truck operations. The fourth business was massage businesses, which the gangs discovered they could open along the whole length of the highway. Unfortunately, due to city council planning provisions, they were allowed to open. Supposedly we had the strictest prostitution laws in the country, yet they were allowed to open along the length and breadth of the Gold Coast Highway.

038

This bill and associated task force report is nothing but a kick in the guts for Gold Coast locals. To begin with, this bill is built on the false premise that these laws need to be repealed or replaced. This is an outcome that was determined by a task force that was asked to conduct a review into the laws. Upon closer inspection, the terms of reference actually asked the task force to determine 'how best to repeal or replace, by substantial amendment, the 2013 legislation', not how effective the laws were. The task force was nothing more than a closed shop review with a predetermined outcome. Labor must take Queenslanders for fools.

To add insult to injury, we had the chair of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, the member for Ferny Grove, mounting an extraordinary attack on a Gold Coast City councillor and mayor in the committee report. The *Gold Coast Bulletin* certainly hit the nail on the head when they described the member for Ferny Grove as a weak on bikies, tough on antigangs, councillor bullyboy. I table for the benefit of the House a copy of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* headline 'Bully boy'.

Tabled paper: Media article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 2 November 2016, titled 'Labor MP weak on bikies, tough on anti-gangs councillor: Bully Boy'.

While the member for Ferny Grove says that he now regrets those comments, the member for Capalaba made it clear that he does not regret them. The member for Ferny Grove criticised Mayor Tom Tate as well, suggesting that it was inappropriate influence that stopped representatives of the Surfers Paradise Alliance and the Broadbeach Alliance from appearing before the committee. What outrageous statements. The member for Capalaba also tried to discredit a Gold Coast councillor and Mayor Tom Tate. It took all of five sentences before he started attacking our local elected representatives.

Bikies are revving their engines because everyone knows that Labor is weak on crime. We as local MPs—10 state and five federal—as a contrast to no local resident Labor MPs, will fight the Labor government on this issue every day until the next election because nothing is more important to our community, parents, families, workers and visitors than keeping the Gold Coast the best place to work, live, play and raise a family. I want to put the Premier and Labor on notice: we will make Labor wear their soft on crime attitude like a crown of thorns all the way to polling day.