



Motor Cycle Riders Association Inc. Of South Australia

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Media release by the MRA (SA) 30 September 2008.

In response to the "Secret Police" and other developments.

The MRA continues to not only monitor events that affect motorcyclists but in many cases voices vehement dissent. Most recently of course was the MRA's stance on the Serious and Organised Crime (Control) Act 2008, a.k.a. the "Bikie Act". Previously, such things as the Rann Government's concept of allowing retirees to "spy" for SAPOL and refusal of this government's appointment of an ICAC type police complaints authority are things that we also voice concerns about.

As we have stated before and will state again, the MRA is not opposed to good government which may include a reflection in executive (police) powers, nor do we support organised crime or even any crime, but we cannot stand by when motorcyclists bear the brunt of this governments media spin, as all motorcyclists are being tainted with the image so vividly and forcefully presented. We know- as does the government- that the criminal elements are called the "one percenters" for sake of definition. Most motorcycle clubs, groups and organisations that we speak with also hold similar views to us and are just as concerned about the "one percenters" and their activities. The MRA - as the RAA speaks for all motorists, members or not - speaks for and on behalf of all motorcyclists.

The latest from the Rann Government is the new "Secret Police" bill which will go for house approvals shortly. We support anything that will make the maintaining of proper law and order by the executive achievable but not at the expense of basic human rights, significant erosion and even removal of civil liberties and freedoms, dispensation of laws developed over 800 years since the signing of the Magna Carta at Runnymede and the positioning of our society for a totalitarian [police] state.

The problems we face here are the lack of police supervision, and even more importantly, the total lack of police accountability. We as electors of this state cannot just vote a police officer in or out of office. This Rann Government continues the trend of ignoring the Judiciary in its legislation but increasingly gives more and more power to the Executive (police) but with little or no accountability.

We have no doubt that serving members of SAPOL and our current politicians are honest and trustworthy individuals but when accountability is removed then corruption is able to exist with impunity. This is occurring because of continual passing of bad laws, bad legislation and the removal of the third arm of good government, the judiciary in the determination of administration of these bad laws. (For clear example, changes to both the Bail and Warrants Acts have removed the judiciary from determining validity of the request and the police can issue their own warrants and make bail determination – there is no third party check and balance.)

We have had many reports now of motorcyclists of all types- not just the “typical” biker image types- being harassed and pestered. This trend seems to be on a significant rise since the “Bikie Act” was first mooted about a year ago. Every case we hear of causes us concern because it seems some members of the executive are revelling in their new found authority and no longer acting “ultra vires” (beyond their authority) but are encouraged by bad legislation to do so! Where are the checks and counter balances? There aren’t any.

There are an ever increasing number of two wheelers on the roads as petrol prices increase and people need to find cheaper alternatives to commute and travel. Scooter sales are “through the roof” in the last couple of years and so on. The last thing needed is to attack this large two wheel base of road users, some of whom we know only ride because they have no other choice due to economic factors. The media spin put by this government is placing ALL two wheeled road users as unsavoury criminals whom this state should destroy by any means.

This is why the MRA will continue to speak out against this government’s media spin, which it seems is eagerly accepted and supported by various media outlets. There is no such thing as an “outlaw” anything and is a word coined by the media spin doctors to present motorcycles as a criminal group. We believe this word to be an official government reference even though it is totally incorrect and depicts motorcyclists in an inappropriate manner. Criminals should be called criminals and just because they ride a bike or drive a car or fly a light aircraft makes them no less than what they are. To target bikes, motorcyclists and bikers is simply unfair, both to motorcyclists in general and the general public who have been led to believe all motorcyclists are bad.

The MRA will continue to voice dissent in these matters.

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For further reading and references:

'Secret' police to use fake IDs:

<http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,24377910-5006301,00.html>

Govt defends police bikie law inaction.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/09/30/2377661.htm?site=adelaide>

Mike Rann takes anti-gang message to Kiwis

<http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,24418309-5006301,00.html>

Concerns over the Haneef matter.

<http://www.independentweekly.com.au/news/national/national/general/concern-over-antiterrorism-laws/1279520.aspx>

Mick the unpopular:

<http://www.independentweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/mick-the-unpopular/1278994.aspx>

Anti-bikie measures 'draconian'

<http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,23444236-5006301,00.html>

Gouger St shooter 'an Iraqi Gulf War vet', Adelaide court told

<http://www.news.com.au/adelaidenow/story/0,22606,24424240-5006301,00.html>