

PERSONAL EXPLANATION
Member for Braitling

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have given my leave for the member for Braitling to make a personal explanation. I remind you that a personal explanation is usually listened to in silence. It is not a debate.

Mr GILES (Braitling): Madam Speaker, I make a personal explanation against comments that were directed against me on 7 May 2009 by the member for Macdonnell in the debate on the Appropriation Bill. She was referring to my proposal to build boarding schools in large remote locations. During this debate, the member for Macdonnell made the assertion that, by my approach to providing increased school facilities in the bush, I would be taking the children away. She said: 'I reiterate that he has said he will remove children'. This is completely untrue, and an abhorrent statement to make. I reject it absolutely.

The approach of the Country Liberals is to increase and improve educational facilities and outcomes in the bush. If government has a different policy approach, that is fine to debate but, to make such a disgraceful statement – it is the lowest statement I have heard in my life. I was ashamed to hear this comment and personally embarrassed that such a claim was made in a parliament of Australia. It further reflects my views of this parliament in both its low standards of professionalism and its arrogance of due process to serve the people of the Northern Territory.

The proposal to build boarding facilities in large remote centres is motivated by a desire to save children by providing better access to education. I place on the public record that in no way am I trying to remove children, and that I am only trying to improve educational outcomes for the future.

SERIOUS CRIME CONTROL BILL
(Serial 48)

Bill presented and read a first time.

Ms LAWRIE (Justice and Attorney-General): Madam Speaker, I move that the bill now be read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to restrict and disrupt the activities of persons and organisations engaged in serious criminal activity, whether it be inside or outside the Territory. The objective of this is to protect members of the public from violence associated with these persons and organisations. To achieve this objective, the bill provides for the making of declarations about

organisations, control orders, public safety orders, and fortification removal orders. These actions are designed to disrupt and restrict the activities of organised criminals engaged in serious crime.

The bill clearly sets out that it is not intended for the powers provided in the legislation to be used in a manner that would diminish the freedom of people in the Northern Territory to participate in advocacy, protest, dissent, or industrial action. The bill does not impinge upon this basic freedom and right of society. Rather, the bill is intended to restrict and disrupt the activities of persons and organisations who are engaged in serious criminal activity. Such activity, ultimately, harms members of the public. This bill protects members of the public from this activity.

Police are aware that organisations in the Territory are involved in drug trafficking. Organisations have also interfered with witnesses and juries, thereby diminishing our criminal justice system. The Northern Territory is home to a small number of motorcycle gang members who, generally, belong to chapters of large interstate groups. Nevertheless, Northern Territory Police have expressed the view that their membership is significant and has effects beyond what their numbers might suggest.

Police intelligence in other jurisdictions indicates that some outlaw motorcycle gang members are involved in criminal activities including: murder; drug manufacture; drug importation and distribution; fraud; blackmail; intimidation of witnesses; serious assaults; organised theft and re-identification of motor vehicles and motorcycles; public disorder offences; firearm offences; and money laundering. These gangs operate criminal organisations which vary in expertise, sophistication and influence.

Recently, in other jurisdictions we have seen significant risk to public safety due to violent incidents, where it is suspected that motorcycle gang members and their associates have been involved. There is a concern that these outlaw gangs have the potential to increasingly infiltrate society and use legitimate industries to camouflage criminal activity from law enforcement.

This is a serious issue that needs to be addressed now. Indeed, the issue of serious criminal organisations was included as an item on the agendas for recent meetings of the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General, the Ministerial Council on Corporations, and the Council of Australian Governments.

Whilst outlaw gangs are targeted by this legislation, the measures contained in the bill also extend to other criminals who engage in serious