

M.R.A.

MOTORCYCLE RIDERS ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 64, Collins St.,
Vic. 3000

26 October 1982.

To all Branches and Registers.
In reply to Qld.'s letter of Sept. 23rd.
Copies available on request.

M.R.A. Qld. Committee,

your letter was recieved here on Sept. 27 th. It was read at our Committee and General meetings. The letter demonstrated your Committee's ignorance of or contempt for the M.R.A. Constitution. Your letter was not only incorrect, it was an insult to the ideals and Constitution of this Association.

You claim that Vic. is an undemocratic, Orwellian dictatorship. Wrong. You claim that a National Body "is considered undesirable" because it could be too easily guided "in subversive activities". Wrong. Each State would have equal votes so Qld. would have the same voice as Vic. on National issues, even though we have more than double your membership. At present we have far more influence than Qld. in most issues. A National Body would mean little change in the running of the Association. However, you would not know this as you seem to have no idea of what happened at the last National Conference.

M.R.A. Vic. founded this Association and is proud of its aims and achievements. It seems to us that you no longer have any idea of what its all about. As agreed at the last National Conference, the next National Conference was to be held in Melbourne in November. M.R.A. Vic. offered to go anywhere in Oz at any time to attend the next Conference if a majority decision on date and venue could be reached in a reasonable time. We tried to fit in with the desires fo the other States so that letters like yours would no longer be recieved by this Branch.

M.R.A. A.C.T. has indicated that it is willing to host the next Conference. But it seems the height of arrogance that your Branch invites other Branches to attend a Conference that recieved no written majority support and was against a democratic vote from the last National Conference

The last Conference clearly set the date and venue. That vote has been overturned but at the next Conference we want to see Register Observers in attendance. If your Committee was not informed of the proceedings of the last Conference and Vic.'s "hon interference" attitude, then how can anyone be sure of what your Registers will hear after the next one.

In reply to your "matters of concern"

1/ There is no National President and cannot be until a National Body exists. Clippings were sent by Vic. to ALL Branches and Registers as a matter of communication. They were intended to be information on activities in other areas of the country. The words National President have never been used by this Branch since one does not exist. As you may be aware even the bike mags seldom get everything right in a story. When quoting National membership figures to promote the Association as a National Organization, some journalists may have been over zealous in seeking sensational aspects to their stories. Remember, most of those clippings were from small, country newspapers.

2/ The M.R.A. Vic. considers itself to be the founding Branch of a non formalised National Organization, M.R.A. Australia. Branches and Registers and eventually the National Body, are all part of an organization whose role is to protect motorcyclists safety and rights as set out in the Constitution. That includes helping people like Mr. P. Medling whose modified bike was put off the road by Qld. Police under your "no mods" laws which Bevan Simm assures us do not exist. Mr. Medling wrote to us, enclosing a photograph and copies of material, which 2/

Let those who ride decide.

we sent to the Brisbane Branch. Mr. Medling had written to you twice and failed to get any form of reply. We asked to be kept informed of the progress of the case. To date we have recieved a one liner saying it is being looked into. Several months after the Police action and after several letters your move would seem a bit late.

Similarly, some 5 months ago, mention was made in your minutes of work being done by your branch on A.D.R.'s. Letters and phone calls over several months, requesting information, produced nothing until your letter was recieved this morning. Your letter confirms our worst fears, that M.R.A. Qld. is working in a Federal area, A.M.C., area without informing either the A.M.C. or other M.R.A. Branches. We are amazed that other Branches are not as worried as we are about this move since it affects all Australian riders. A copy of the first page of the letter is attached.

Victoria does NOT consider other Branches and Registers extensions in the sense you mean. We are all equal. Considering what Vic. will contribute and give up we feel that the only way our members can gain from a National Body will be by considering themselves Australians first and Victorians second.

3/ The Constitution clearly states that the aims of the M.R.A. are: Road Safety/ A better image / Fair and sensible legislation. Any organization whose basic aims are to protect its members safety and rights and to improve their conditions is surely, in concept, a union. That is the spirit of the constitution and that's why we called it an Association not a club. Clearly the M.R.A. is not a TRADE UNION. However, the Maquarie Dictionary, 1982, defines the word UNION as a number of persons, societies, States or the like, joined together or associated for some common purpose. This Committee is not prepared to disagree with a major Australian University or Dictionary. The M.R.A. is a front line fighting unit even if we use pen and paper not weapons. Our job defined by the Constitution is to protect motorcyclists, ALL motorcyclists, safety and rights.

4/ The figure given to Bike Oz was as per our last newsletter, which, presumably you recieved. At the end of the '81/'82 Fin. year the Vic Branch was \$12,094 in dept. The figure of \$20,000 was what we said we needed to get all functions operating e.g. the Rescue Unit. Editing is a problem discussed earlier.

M.R.A. Vic. is now out of debt and, as abonus has recieved a Dept. of transport grant of \$9,500 for research and road safety work. Once again Vic. has set a precedent that could be of real benefit to your members. IT WAS AGREED

5/ At the last National Conference, that the exchange of minutes and newsletters would improve communications. Yes we did request minutes and newsletters from all Branches and Registers and we SEND TO ALL Branches and Registers. Why is it that only the Brisbane Committee is worried about this? There was no problem apparent apparent when Kevin Trevarthen attended the last Conference.

Re letters to non Committee members. I send newsletters etc to personal friends in other States. I gather what happened was that one letter was mistakenly put in the wrong envelope when a routine mailing of several hundred letters was being prepared. I apologise for that. However, knowing the integrity of that Brisbane member I have no doubt that your Committee got the letter in question post haste.

6/ M.R.A. Vic. was concerned that after letters and phone calls failed to produce the required information that there might be some delay in your post box system so some mail was sent to the box as well as to individual Committee members. We saw no harm in better communications.

7/ Orwellian? It is not yet 1984. This Committee finds it particularly insulting that you write in such a manner, especially considering some Qld. legislation. It is obvious that M.R.A. Vic. is prepared to abide by majority decisions and work through the A.M.C. and defend members rights far more than Qld. Should we push for proportional representation at the next Conference. On financial members we would have a right to more votes than any other State. We oppose such a move.

8/ Once again journalists will put things their own way. Write to the papers and publish the fact that Qld is financial.

M.R.A. Vic. was asked by concerned riders in other States if they could start their own M.R.A. The attached Constitution is 5 years old and was given to them on the condition that the new M.R.A.'s upheld the spirit and image of the Association according to the Constitution. That Constitution was only to be altered in a major way by majority vote at a National Conference. It was a moral agreement that Vic. has

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stood by.

In your letter of the 14th of Oct. you imply that we are doing the attacking. That is not true. We are merely abiding by the only official M.R.A. constitution.

It is our opinion that any group not willing to abide by that Constitution or a new one for M.R.A. Australia as agreed on by majority vote at the next National Conference should cease calling themselves M.R.A. and operate separately from the official M.R.A.

M.R.A. Vic. will take no further action on these matters until after the National Conference in Canberra in January 1983.



Damien Codognotto
President
M.R.A. Victoria.



MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION

QUEENSLAND STATE BRANCH:
P.O. Box 238, Paddington, 4064

23rd September, 1982

Secretary,
M.R.A. (Victoria Branch).

For Information: All Qld Registers
State Branches

M.R.A. AUSTRALIA

Reference: Your letter dated 13th September, 1982.


Your letter is acknowledged and is viewed with deep concern.

M.R.A. (Queensland) is to attend the Australia Day 1983 National Conference in CANBERRA as previously arranged. Your Branch is invited to attend if it wishes.

Your attitudes and opinions as expressed reek of a dictatorship and are undemocratic. They are not concurred with or supported.

In your effort to expand the M.R.A. you are proposing the creation of a body which is considered undesirable and not in the interests of Australia. Such a body could be too easily guided in subversive activities if power, vested in a central committee or individual, was misused for personal gain or political ambition.

Your letter will be tabled at our next General Meeting. You will be advised of the Membership reaction and their support for your stated intentions.


M.R.A. (Queensland) Branch
Executive Committee

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MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION

QUEENSLAND STATE BRANCH:

P.O. Box 238, Paddington, 4064

23rd September, 1982

Secretary,
M.R.A. (Victoria Branch).

For Information: All Qld Registers
State Branches

MATTERS OF CONCERN

This branch seeks detail regarding a number of aspects causing concern to members of the newly elected committee, namely:-

1. Who is the National President as quoted in newspaper clippings forwarded to M.R.A. (Qld)?
2. Does the M.R.A. in Victoria consider itself the Victoria Branch of M.R.A., or, as newspaper clippings suggest, are State Branches and their registers considered extensions of the M.R.A. which is based in Victoria?
3. Explanation of the statement that the M.R.A. is a union (Page 5, Sept 82, Bike Australia).
4. Confirmation that the M.R.A. (Vic) debt was \$20,000 as at Sept 82 (Page 5, Sept 82, Bike Australia).
5. Confirmation that M.R.A. (Qld) Registers have been requested to direct minutes of Register meetings direct to M.R.A. (Vic).
6. Explanation as to the purpose of addressing correspondence to individuals within the Qld Branch and not to the committee.
7. Is it the intention that the Orwellian attitude of M.R.A. (Vic) cease regarding internal M.R.A. (Qld) affairs?
8. Articles designed to attract attention to the M.R.A. (Vic) debt have been misinterpreted by many people who believe that all Branches are unfinancial. This is due to continued reference to the financial state of the M.R.A. as opposed to M.R.A. (Vic).

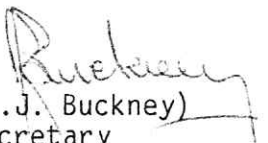
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This Branch wishes it to be known that National identity is considered desirable, however, Branch autonomy is vital. This ensures that a national infrastructure of identically uniformed, motivated and mobile force can in no way be directed or used to the benefit of any person or group. Such misuse of well intended organisations is well documented in recent history.

It is felt that M.R.A. (Vic) still believes in a centralised power base, with that power base in Melbourne, and only pays lip service to real autonomy at Branches.

It was believed that Branch autonomy was resolved 12 months ago.

A written statement addressing the above matters is requested from you for our future reference.


(P.J. Buckney)
Secretary
M.R.A. (Qld Branch)



MOTORCYCLE RIDERS' ASSOCIATION

QUEENSLAND STATE BRANCH:

P.O. Box 238, Paddington, 4064

Secretary,
All State Branches
All Qld Registers

11th October, 1982

DRAFT AUSTRALIAN DESIGN RULES

Again M.R.A. (Qld) finds itself defending our right to deliberate on matters that effect us as motorcyclists.

Defending ourselves against an attack, not from ignorant Government or public bodies, but from within our own ranks, another State Branch. This attack was initiated by the contents of our meeting minutes.

It is a paradox that the attacking State Branch does not so openly circulate its minutes.

The offending item was a reference to the M.R.A. (Qld) determination on the "Draft Regulations Defining Vehicle Construction, Equipment and Performance Standards for Road Vehicles" as set by the Federal Department of Transport.

In our deliberation on these Draft Regulations, M.R.A. (Qld) has merely given assistance in framing the Qld Government's response to the Federal committee.

We cannot, and will not, be held responsible if other Branches do not have the same rapport, or command the same respect, with their State Transport Department as in the case with this Branch in Queensland.

We have stated repeatedly that we are in no way deciding or establishing Australian Regulations from Queensland. We are only assisting our State Government in framing their response to the Federal Department of Transport.

It is our understanding that should any of the Queensland recommendations be adopted by the Federal Committee it is not mandatory that any of the other State Governments accept them. Therefore, before any determination is made by the Federal Authorities they will have to review and consider the views and responses of ALL STATES - not just Queensland.

Considering the Queensland Government's reputation throughout Australia as being a bunch of "Peanuts" it is ludicrous to suggest or ^{attempt} ~~assert~~ that Qld singularly would ever be allowed to decide on matters which affect the rest of Australia.

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