



MEDIA RELEASE

PETER RYAN

LEADER OF THE NATIONAL PARTY

Wednesday, 23 October 2002

NO NEED TO PANIC ON GUNS – VIC NATS

The National Party has called for calm, rational thinking in the debate on gun laws in the wake of the tragic shootings at Monash University this week.

Vic Nats Leader, Peter Ryan, said knee-jerk reactions were not helpful in the wake of such a terrible event.

“We all need to feel safe in our communities and everyone is completely horrified by the events at Monash this week.

“But we also need to think through these things rationally before making any decisions. We already have some of the tightest gun laws in the world here in Victoria and I don’t think it serves anyone well to go rushing off and make legislative changes based on one incident.

“Clearly, community safety has to come first and every effort must be made to ensure that we are safe. But broad legislative change will not necessarily improve our security.

“We need to look closely at the prevalence of guns in our society and ensure that we take the right steps to control the flow of illegal weapons. Tightening laws or banning certain types of guns will never erase the problems in our society.”

Mr Ryan said it was more important the community tackled the issues of why these types of shootings occur.

“We have to work harder to ensure the disenfranchised, the lonely and the mentally ill are properly catered for in our communities and that signs of anti-social behaviour are identified as early as possible.

“The Vic Nats will be prepared to look at any legislation to improve community safety but we urge all sectors of the community to step back from the heat of the moment and think about the issues calmly.

“Tightening gun laws may have some merit but it is not the answer to all our problems.”

Media contact: Danny O’Brien (03) 9651 8536 or 0418 390 229