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Does Rees Protest Too Much?

“The latest moves by Premier Rees for new laws and state-wide watch teams make him an object of ridicule. It involves nine government departments in eight regions to combat elusive figures like blind pensioner **Dennis Ferguson**. Clearly nobody has mentioned to him that 95% of sex offenders aren't known to police” said Justice Action spokesperson Brett Collins.

The Premier talked tough politics: "I want the community, I want the children in our community to be as safe as possible. If that means watching these convicted criminals then that's precisely what we'll do."

“He can't realise that **frightening children with that power will prevent them complaining**, as they know it will destroy their family where almost all of it happens” said Mr Collins.

“Unfortunately community problems where 1:4 women and 1:8 men are sexually abused need real solutions not political posturing. A consultative group put proposals based on **international best practice** to him last week in the wake of the vigilante actions at Ryde, but were **ignored**. Mr Ferguson's counsellor approached him but was ignored” said Mr Collins.

“Premier Rees especially needs to look tough. Rees was Chief of Staff to Minister Milton Orkopoulos, now serving 14 years in prison for child sex offences while Rees was working for him. After Rees became Premier, his prisons commissioner granted special permission for the media to ask Orkopoulos whether Rees knew of Orkopoulos' sex and drug abuse of young boys. <http://tinyurl.com/ydnumw7>

“Why would a Premier **rely on the word of a convicted child sex offender** to clear him? Why was the **whistleblower**, secretary Gillian Sneddon sacked from her job instead of acclaimed for protecting children. <http://tinyurl.com/nkqdr7> <http://tinyurl.com/y8m7n2y>

“Rees breeding hatred and kowtowing to vigilantism is the worst kind of response. Driven by ignorance and fear, it gives the illusion of protecting children while insidiously putting them at further risk. If you discovered that your adolescent son was abusing your friend's daughter, where would you turn? After what we've seen happening to Dennis Ferguson, and the response we've seen from our politicians, certainly not to the police.

Politicians like Rees need to stop acting from their own self-interest and **seek expert help** in how the state can act in the best interests of children” said child protection campaigner Barbara Biggs.

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