

## **INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC DISTURBANCES AT MACQUARIE FIELDS**

**Organisation:**

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**Position:** [-]

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**Date Received:** 01/04/2005

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**Theme:**

**Summary**

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SUBMISSION TO STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL ISSUES  
FOR INQUIRY INTO PUBLIC DISTURBANCES AT MACQUARIE FIELDS

My observations and recommendations are as follows:

- 1 The advocacy of "police going in hard" is reprehensible, destructive and delusional. Alternatives must be tried and found. Police use must be available but as a last resort and used sparingly.
- 2 The avoiding and diffusing of disturbances could be countered by eg use of expert, non-uniformed but distinctive Crowd Counsellors using loudspeakers to quieten and communicate with upset people. Some such practices have had success overseas
- 3 It is the responsibility of the community and its representatives to listen to grievances and find solutions. Eg some localities may be lacking in available resources or may have a preponderance of under-privileged or other sectional groups. We must ask whether the community is dealing adequately with such issues since these may be a legitimate sources of grievance.
- 4 Steps taken to quell disturbances and restrain protesters must themselves be balanced and lawful.
- 5 To repeat, it is appropriate to question whether the community is using sufficient resources to research the legitimate needs of communities such as Macquarie Fields, to distribute resources more fairly, to listen to grievances and to handle disturbances on the principle that violence begets violence.

  
John P McAuley  
30.3.05

