

# STRIKE OUT



## Truth Weekender asks if the three-strikes policy is fair

**THE three-strikes policy will come into law this year.**

When passed it will mean a person committing their third major violent or sexual offence would receive the maximum prison sentence term for their offence and can be stopped from ever receiving parole.

It's a move which will polarise the opinions of all Kiwis.

Only those over 18 could be sentenced under the controversial new laws.

And only if the crimes they commit – after the law is passed – are punishable by five years prison or more, would it count as a strike.

The hardliners welcome Rodney Hide's "three strikes" and view it as a victory over the former Labour government's liberal policies.

But critics label the policy a hollow gesture which goes against efforts to reform and rehabilitate offenders. **John Key** (above right with **Rodney Hide**) announced the watered-down policies last week.

*Truth Weekender* asked Garth McVicar from the Sensible Sentencing Trust and Diana Taylor from the Howard League to outline their group's opposing views on the three-strike policy.

The Sensible Sentencing Trust advocates the rights of victims and their families of crime and is behind tougher sentences for the worst offenders. The Howard League looks to promote rationale debate about penal reform and help families of prisoners.

The two sides are poles apart and most Kiwis are in one or the other camp or simply don't understand what is a fair sentence any more.



**WHAT a magnificent start to 2010!**

My New Year wishes were answered with the announcement New Zealand will have a "three strikes" law.

Yes I know Prison Fellowships, the Howard Leagues, and all the liberal criminal loving fraternity will be predicting the end of the world.

But they have had their day!

Under their corrupt ideology New Zealand has deteriorated from being one of the safest countries in the Western world – to now being among the most violent.

Thousands of innocent people have been raped, beaten, mugged and murdered by repeat offenders, on bail, parole or simply released at sentence end even though everyone knew they would reoffend.

My one regret is those who have promoted this pathetic failed social experiment will not serve time in jail for their crimes against humanity – and New Zealand. We do not need to look far to see that tough law and order policies work.

Singapore was once little more than a swamp with no natural resources and a spir-



ralling crime rate, New Zealand was a wealthy nation with a very low crime rate and the envy of all other countries.

Singapore decided to get tough on crime and has become a safe, patriotic and prosperous country.

New Zealand on the other hand adopted warm fuzzy criminal justice policies. Crime has spiralled out of control, patriotism is a thing of the past and economically we now languish near the bottom of the OECD countries. One thing is obvious; the current system is NOT working.

In 1951 with a population around two million there were two murders, the population has now almost doubled but last year there were 109 murders. So what went wrong?

As various theorists implemented policies that treated crime as an illness that could be cured, violent crime has spiralled out of control but rather than look at history and learn from mistakes the theorists continued to promote their soft-on-crime agenda.

Crime is a choice and prison is entirely voluntary.

"Three strikes" may not solve all our crime problems but it will expose the corrupt liberal ideology for exactly what it is.



**THE new three strikes law, in combination with the current legislation, will mean the prison population will undoubtedly continue to increase, meaning more prison officers will need to be employed, more prison beds required, and ultimately more prisons. The seeming "popularity" of prisons ultimately means money spent on prisons is not available to be spent on healthcare, roading, etc.**

We acknowledge there are always some people who need to be locked up. But imprisonment is generally overused in New Zealand, despite what most people think.

We imprison far more than almost any other of the countries we would normally compare ourselves to and worryingly this trend is continuing.

And the trend of imprisonment doesn't look set to change anytime soon because it's what the public want.

The politicians are not about to do anything about it because if a politician looks soft on crime it's a political death sentence.

The politicians have been very receptive to public opinion, for instance the Clayton Weatherston trial.

Within a few weeks of his sentencing the provocation defence disappeared. There was no particular analysis from the past few years of how it is working, if it was working

or how can we fix it, or questioning if we do need to fix it. Instead one high-profile case and politicians stepped in.

When the three strikes legislation first came in we put in a submission opposed to it.

The current legislation is not as bad as what the original was – it's certainly being watered down a lot which we are pleased to see. But still it's a step backwards, not a step forward in our view.

At the end of the day by the time people are committing these types of serious crimes generally you've missed the boat. If you want effective intervention the earlier the better and so many people assume criminals think rationally. There is the assumption if they know it is their third strike and they get the maximum then that will deter them.

It doesn't – prison doesn't deter anyone. Mostly because people don't think about it at the time of committing crime. They think about it when they are before the courts. They don't think at the time "is this robbery? Or is this aggravated robbery? And what's the maximum for that?"

It is interesting to note that even the Corrections Association, which is not traditionally known for its "soft on prisoners" attitude, has pointed out that the three strikes law is just "populist politics".

## Chriqui is voted most desirable

**IT'S official.** The world's most desirable woman is Canadian actress Emmanuelle Chriqui, according to AskMen.com's annual poll.

The 32-year-old usurped last year's winner Eva Mendes, due to the stunner not banking in on her beauty in celebrity gossip rags.

"We don't see a lot of her. She is not a public person so it leaves some room to the imagination. She is not out there making a spectacle of herself which could sully her image," said AskMen.com's editor-in-chief James Bassil.

Known for her role in the popular TV series *Entourage*, Chriqui embodies the qualities men most want in a girlfriend or wife.

More than eight million men took part in the survey. They voted Victoria's Secret model Marisa Miller in second place, while British actress Kate Beckinsale came in third.

Socialite Paris Hilton and all-over disaster Lindsay Lohan failed to make an appearance in this year's list because their lives have become tacky tabloid fodder.

Even racy *Transformers* star Megan Fox fell from second place to outside the top 10 after being overexposed in the media.

The top 10 most desirable women in the world are:

- Emmanuelle Chriqui
- Marisa Miller
- Kate Beckinsale
- Alessandra Ambrosio
- Jessica Alba
- Beyonce
- Penelope Cruz
- Cheryl Cole
- Eve Mendes
- Miranda Kerr



TV STAR: Emmanuelle Chriqui.