



Speech by

JEFF KNUTH

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

Hansard 24 November 1999

LIQUOR AMENDMENT BILL

Mr KNUTH (Burdekin—CP) (8.59 p.m.): I have listened to the contributions of members on both sides of the House and I have heard some emotional speeches. I agree that there would not be one person in this Chamber who has not lost a family member to war or who has not known of somebody who was lost in war. War is a terrible tragedy that has befallen the human race. I am quite sure that every country respects its fallen—those who gave up their lives for our future. We can show our gratitude by remembering them in ceremonies and by reflecting on past hostilities, praying that they will never happen again.

Some members of the Government say that they have witnessed this early morning revelling by some disrespectful and sometimes mindless people. I believe those members to be honest. To be quite honest, I have not witnessed this problem. The reason for these disturbances is most probably the close proximity of a nightclub to a dawn service. Here we must acknowledge that in some cases disturbances are occurring and, unfortunately, we must cater for the grievance of those in some parts of the State in which this is occurring.

Because the dawn service is held only once a year, surely this amendment will not hurt the liquor industry that much. Has greed become such an issue that we as a Parliament cannot lay aside half a night in respect for our lost diggers? Will society suffer from this closure of half a night per year? I cannot see how it will. How many lives will be influenced for the better by this closure of this small fraction of a night? Just how many drunken brawls will be avoided? How many alcohol-related crimes will not occur? How many parents will not need to know that their son or daughter has been involved in an accident? This is all because we closed a nightclub for just half a night, once a year. The Government has the numbers to defeat this Bill, and I know that I am probably wasting my time. However, I appeal for commonsense to prevail.

I was quite interested in the speech of the member for Tablelands. I think he covered it all. I remember that the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Racing raised an interesting point in relation to Custer's last stand. While I have got the chance, I will fill the Minister in.

Mr GIBBS: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I appreciate it, but I do not need the lesson in history. I am aware that his big mistake was using the Henry single-shot rifles. That was the problem.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Clark): Order! There is no point of order.

Mr KNUTH: I will fill the Minister in. After the Civil War—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Burdekin really should confine his comments to the Bill. I ask him to make sure his comments are relevant to the Bill we are debating.

Mr KNUTH: I think this is relevant. After the Civil War, the army was left with a huge surplus of precision cap rifles, so they re-chambered the rifles to a calibre .45/70—into a Martini action rifle. The army had only these single-shot rifles. Many of the young braves of the Sioux nation were actually getting jobs on cattle properties and getting money in their pockets. They were going out and buying themselves Winchester lever action rifles and Henry lever action repeating rifles. Not only was General Custer outnumbered; he was outgunned. He was outgunned by a superior military weapon of the time. I hope that answers the Minister.

Mr Hamill: I reckon you are a single bore as well.

Mr KNUTH: I might be a single bore; all my rifles are single-bore rifles because this Parliament took those semiautomatics off me.

Mr Gibbs: But they reckon in your electorate that you are a big shot.

Mr KNUTH: I am a good shot. I always hit my target. I cannot see how a closure of half a night per year is going to hurt the liquor industry. I think it will benefit so many families. We have an overalcoholised society as it is. What harm will this amendment do?
