



Speech by

JOHN KINGSTON

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

Hansard 11 March 1999

ANZAC DAY TRADING HOURS

Dr KINGSTON (Maryborough—IND) (5.44 p.m.): I rise to support the motion moved by the honourable member for Gladstone. I have worked in over 15 countries which have a day on which they honour the soldiers who have fought for their country. On many such days in those other countries I have been embarrassed by the contrast, by the respect and reverence for the soldiers who went before them, and to whom they owe a debt, whereas in Australia I think we are steadily losing the realisation of what Anzac Day is all about. It is steadily becoming just another excuse for a holiday—not a day of respect and remembrance.

Days such as Anzac Day with parades of old and younger soldiers are, to my mind, events with a unifying influence when we, young and old, can be together and proud to be Australian. We need such days. The dawn service and the playing of the last post are spine-chilling moments when we think about those people who died, those who suffered, and maybe are still suffering, pay them homage and say thanks. I personally would like to see our citizens experience more events that give rise to a strong feeling of pride and allegiance. In my electorate, as in others, the attendance at Anzac services and parades has been steadily decreasing—

Mr Roberts: It's been the reverse in the Nudgee electorate. It's been increasing significantly over the last few years.

Dr KINGSTON: I accept that. Further, late revellers do not add to the atmosphere of a solemn dawn service. To go further, late licensing disrupts our CBD on too many occasions, causes problems for the occupiers of CBD premises and gives the police unnecessary work. I realise that it is harder for hotels and nightclubs to make a living, but I and the majority of citizens do not enjoy the sight of drunken people wandering about the streets and indulging in unseemly and damaging behaviour. Too often I am reminded of living in South-East Asia, in areas with many great nightclubs, which I enjoyed, and very rarely seeing a drunken person. Surely it is not too much to ask that licensed trading is restricted to midnight the night before we honour those people who have given so much for our country. Thus I commend the motion to the House.
