



Speech by

**Dr LESLEY CLARK**

**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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Hansard 27 October 1999

**LIQUOR AMENDMENT BILL**

**Dr CLARK** (Barron River—ALP) (9.21 p.m.): Tonight I wish to make a contribution to the debate on the Liquor Amendment Bill. We have now twice heard from the member for Gladstone on this issue. Nobody could be under any illusions about how important this issue is to her. No-one could be—

**Mr Wilson:** And to everyone else. She hasn't got a mortgage on it.

**Dr CLARK:** I know the member does not have a mortgage on it. To my colleagues on this side of the House I say that we need to show respect for her feelings. There is no denying that members on this side also have strong feelings about this issue. However, tonight's debate is not about who feels the most passionate about this issue. I can understand it if my colleagues feel put out at the suggestion that we do not care about the diggers. Tonight is not about not recognising people's emotions or the sacrifice that people have made, it is about what is the rational thing to do. That is why members on this side of the House have responded in the way they have. There is no evidence—

**Mr Nelson:** So you have a mortgage on rational thought?

**Dr CLARK:** No. We are talking about an appropriate response to this issue.

**Mr Nelson:** So you have a mortgage on appropriate responses?

**Dr CLARK:** There will be different views on this. Tonight I wish to put on the record some of the thoughts that I have about this issue and some of the things that I think need to be on the record. Both of my parents were involved in the war. Today my son started his first day as a member of the armed services. He started his basic training at Wagga Wagga. I am very committed to what our armed service personnel do. I attend Anzac services each year and I recognise fully the sacrifice that they made. I wish to remind the House of the contribution of our only returned serviceman, the member for Fitzroy, when we last had a debate on this issue. It is worth reminding members of some of the things that he said. Hansard records him as stating—

"I have attended as many as four services in my electorate, sometimes travelling for four hours after a dawn service just to get to another service. Never have I seen a service disrupted by a member of the public.

I want to be quite honest about this—and there will be people out there who will challenge me and will not be happy with what I am going to say—and I say this without disrespect to any of the diggers and their families, but the only disruption that I have seen at a service has come from some of the diggers themselves, not through disrespect but because they have had a couple too many and they were out there enjoying themselves and had to be pulled into line a little bit. I have never seen a member of the public do that."

He continued—

"I am upset, as a returned serviceman, that this has become a political issue. It should not become a political issue. There is no need for it to become a political issue. The issue has got out of hand because people on radio stations have been telling the people of Queensland to get on their telephones and ring their local members at home and complain about the issue that was raised by the member for Gladstone."

Interestingly, that was what the only returned serviceman in this House had to say. Members would know how he would feel about this issue and the respect that he would have for Anzac Day and the feelings of the diggers.

Going back to what I said before about how we respond to this issue, I am pleased to hear the member for Gladstone say that she appreciated what the Government did last Anzac Day insofar as there was a rigorous response by licensing officers. Obviously, the police were alerted. She told the House that, if we could guarantee that type of response every year, we probably need not be having this debate. That is what I was trying to convey, that is, we need an appropriate response to this type of issue. I do not think there will be any problem with having that type of response every year. It is only one day in the year. That is the sort of measured response to this issue that is appropriate. It is not that we do not recognise people's feelings on this issue; it is not that we do not acknowledge the sacrifices that people have made; it is about finding a way of responding appropriately.

In conclusion, we are about taking an appropriate response to this issue. I feel very comfortable with my position. Honourable members opposite are welcome to have theirs. We should have some mutual respect. That is all I am saying.

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