



Speech by

**PETER WELLINGTON**

**MEMBER FOR NICKLIN**

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Hansard 11 March 1999

#### **ANZAC DAY TRADING HOURS**

**Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—IND) (5.36 p.m.): It gives me great pleasure to second the motion moved by the member for Gladstone. I thank the Government for allowing this motion to be debated this evening as it appears to me that it certainly would not have been debated with support from the Opposition. I also urge the Government to seriously consider the motion before us.

Anzac Day is the time when we remember with deep gratitude those of our countrymen and women who fought for this great nation of ours. It is time to cherish the memories of the people who gave their lives so that we might live.

Until people have attended an Anzac Day dawn service, they cannot begin to understand how important this day is not only to our veterans and their families but also to a whole range of other people—small children, teenagers, mums and dads, the old and the infirm. People who attend the dawn service are there to be part of the Anzac spirit, to show support for the Anzac legend. When the bugle sounds the Last Post and the invocation "lest we forget" is said, there is not a dry eye to be seen. Who is not moved? Old diggers have tears running down their faces, women weep and children wipe their eyes thinking of grandparents they never knew, lying in far off graves.

Lest we forget. Well, I can tell honourable members that the people of Queensland will never forget their debt of gratitude to those who gave their lives for this country. In fact, some 15,000 people took part in Brisbane's Anzac Day march last year, watched by an estimated 100,000 spectators. In Nambour last year there were more than 300 people at the dawn service and 300 participated in the parade and memorial service later that day.

Anzac Day does not glorify war; it unites us as a nation in our shared grief. We comfort each other. Anzac Day is a serious day, a sad day—even a holy day. It is a day for sharing and for mateship. In fact, Anzac Day is one of the most important days on the nation's calendar.

But there is a problem with Anzac Day, and that is the parade of drunks that disrupt and ridicule the proceedings—drunks that are the leftover dregs from the licensed premises that close in the early hours of Anzac Day. The solution is to make those premises close at 12 midnight on the night before Anzac Day. Why should a few drunken louts be allowed to ruin this important occasion? Let us honour our veterans and pay them their due respect by closing licensed premises at a reasonable time. Let us never forget our great Anzac tradition. I commend the motion to the House.

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