

LIQUOR LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL 2001

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR EDWARDS (Greenough) [1.57 pm]: I have three minutes in which to begin my remarks before question time, so I will be brief.

Mr Kobelke: We will continue after question time.

Mr EDWARDS: I think someone mentioned the Rum Corps earlier. The history of liquor licensing began with the Rum Corps and it has improved over the years with specific liquor licensing laws. When I came to Australia in the mid 1960s, the six o'clock swill and other fairly dubious drinking hours were the norm. I think we had to drive about 30 miles from the town centre to drink in a pub on Sundays.

In comparison, even today, Europe's attitude is a long way ahead of Australia's attitude. Almost 40 years ago people could drink alcohol in Europe for 24 hours a day. When I was in the port of Calais in France I was invited to breakfast at five o'clock in the morning, after having done some business with some colleagues. We sat down with some French gentlemen and were asked what we would like to eat and drink. We requested an egg and duly received a very soft-boiled, runny egg, the sight of which you would appreciate, Mr Speaker. In our broken French we also requested a drink, which looked like water.

So we carried on with our breakfast and ate our very runny eggs, which I dislike anyway, and followed it up with a large swig of what I thought was water and found to be neat gin! I can therefore say that I have had some experience of drinking at five o'clock in the morning. In all seriousness, it is most important that licensing laws be relevant to the times that we live in, and it is good to see special facility licences, which have obviously had some failings, being addressed in this Bill. This Bill covers many other issues, and the amendments suggested are designed to satisfy those concerns, particularly in respect of special facility licences. The member for Kalgoorlie was very eloquent when putting his case, so I probably do not need to continue. However, I will support the Bill, with those amendments, as part of the process of making the liquor licensing laws more relevant.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Mr Ripper (Deputy Premier).

[Continued on page 2217.]