

COLUMN FROM MAYOR TIM SHADBOLT

SOUTHLAND EXPRESS, 15 OCTOBER 2009

The public meeting held on alcohol abuse at the Civic Theatre was both informative and inspiring. The guest speaker was Professor Doug Sellman who passionately believes that the Law Commission Report on 'Alcohol in our Lives' is our country's greatest opportunity to control the demon drink. He believes you can't just blame alcohol abuse on our youth. The liquor industry that spends millions of dollars targeting youth with designer drinks and promoting booze with sex and sporting heroes are responsible for the death and violence that is ripping this country apart.

He pointed out that 'P' causes 20 deaths per year; swine flu causes 20 deaths, but alcohol causes 1,000 deaths per year and 600 children are born with brain damage because of alcohol consumption by pregnant mothers. We've seen how students in Otago get drunk and then riot. We've seen dozens of tragic car accidents involving alcohol. Our society is spinning out of control. Something drastic has to be done. In New Zealand the breweries spend \$200,000 per day promoting booze. In France advertising alcohol is illegal and sponsorship of sport and culture is illegal.

If you want to have your say; head up a sheet of paper "Submission to the Law Commission: Alcohol in our Lives"; write your name and address; write your thoughts and post the submission to Liquor Project Co-ordinator, Law Commission, PO Box 2590, Wellington by 9.00 pm, Friday, 30 October 2009. Make it personal – say what you think.