

Mr Phillip Pendal; Mr Mike Board; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Deputy Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Arthur Marshall; Acting Speaker; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bernie Masters; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Dr Janet Woollard

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**RAILWAY (JANDAKOT TO PERTH) BILL 2002**

*Referral to Joint Select Committee*

Resumed from 18 September on the following motion moved by Mr P.G. Pendal -

That the Bill be referred to a Joint Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, for consideration and report by Thursday, 19 December 2002 on -

- (a) what viable route options exist for the railway;
- (b) relative costs for all viable options;
- (c) whether the route option proposed by Mr Peter Bruechle was fully examined by the Government and if not, why not; and
- (d) any other issues relevant to the railway proposal.

**MR P.G. PENDAL** (South Perth) [10.03 am]: This speech of mine, even to me, and I am very enthusiastic about it, is becoming something of a parliamentary version of *Blue Hills* or *When a Girl Marries*, because this is the fourth time I have been on my feet in three days.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: We suggest you go on a honeymoon!

Mr P.G. PENDAL: My days of honeymoons have well and truly passed! Nonetheless, I want to express my remarks as forcefully in this fourth instalment as I attempted to express them in the second and third instalments, because I believe it was remiss of the Government to not only proceed down the path of a public works infrastructure program of this magnitude but also to proceed down that path without having been seen to canvass all of the available options.

I will recap, because this debate has been disjointed. For several years the previous Government took a view that the railway from Perth to Mandurah would run via what we now know as the Kenwick option. However, we had a change of government. Every person in Western Australia had an expectation that that option would continue under the new Government. I say that because there was no disclosure on the part of the new Government of what it intended. There was no suggestion that the Kenwick option would be abandoned. There was certainly no suggestion that the rail line would be re-routed through South Perth and Como and across the Narrows Bridge.

That decision, which was made within 18 weeks of the new Government taking office, was made in haste. I say also - and nothing that has happened in that time on the matter of options persuades me to think otherwise - that no other option, or options within that option, was looked at in even a cursory manner. It was simply a case of the Government saying that if it were to put the rail line straight along the freeway between Perth and Mandurah, it would save 12 minutes. On announcement day in July 2001, and on every subsequent occasion, the justification for the change was that the Government will save 12 minutes on the route between Perth and Mandurah. On the face of it, I have no difficulty with that. I have stated my support for an extended rail system within the metropolitan area. I also have no difficulty with the principle of reducing by 12 minutes the travel time between Perth and Mandurah. However, I have difficulty with decisions that are made on the run, in secret and without consultation and that may have a horrific impact on the urban amenity of the city for the next 50 or 100 years. My complaint is not that we will have a railway, and it is not even that it will go through South Perth and Como. In summary, my complaint is that the Government, in secret and without consultation, chose that option as though it were the only option available to it. I have spent the past 15 months trying to get across to the Government that the other options deserve more than just a cursory dismissal such as has been given to the option of lowering the railway between Canning Bridge and the Narrows.

One of the points I have not touched on in the past few days is that what began even under this Government as a non-negotiable position on the central business district of Perth - namely the question of whether to sink the railway in the Perth central business district - has now become a matter of widespread public debate. Another option that was not an option in the first instance was lowering the railway along the foreshore on the Perth side of this equation. However, they are now being considered as options. For the Government to say that one option is to lower the railway beneath the central business district or along the Perth foreshore, but that it will not consider a similar option for South Perth and Como is, I think, playing politics at its worst. In 1959, the State Government made the decision to construct the freeway - the first in Australia - between the Narrows and the Canning Bridge. In the context and ignorance of the time, the idea of putting something like that at ground level was simply never part of the debate; we were just so grateful to get it. The world has moved on in that 50-year

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period. Ideas on urban design, architectural appreciation, and the protection of the environment and river scapes have all moved on. The one group that has not moved on is the Labor Party in Western Australia. It is stuck in this time warp in which if a railway is to be built, it should go along the shortest possible route and be built at the least possible cost.

Mr R.C. Kucera: What's wrong with that?

Mr P.G. PENDAL: What is wrong with that? That comment demonstrates that we have a Neanderthal in charge of the health system. I am not surprised at the minister's attitude, coming from the background that he does.

Mr R.C. Kucera: You were happy to use my background as a policeman.

Mr P.G. PENDAL: Absolutely. The minister was an excellent policeman. But, my God! the Government turned the member for Yokine into the Minister for Health, and he has an attitude like that! The problem with doing something in the cheapest possible way is that it is not done in the best possible way. It would have been just like building the Perth to Kalgoorlie pipeline with the cheapest possible pipe that was going to be full of leaks within 25 years. That is the sort of time warp that I am speaking about. The minister's timing today was impeccable. He confirmed all my worst fears. He backed up my view that this Government, and in particular the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and three or four of her advisers, are stuck in a time warp. No comparable city in the world experiences that sort of time warp.

I remind members of what I said about the New South Wales Labor Government's current plans for the Chatswood to Epping railway. A person from my electorate was not entirely convinced of my views on the railway until she was introduced in Sydney to a Brisbane railway engineer who is in charge of the New South Wales Government's plan to put a rail link between Epping and Chatswood, which is an inner city area. She asked how much of the rail line would be above the ground. The engineer looked down his glasses at her and said, "For goodness sake, none of it's above the ground. That is not the way you build railways in cities anymore." That rail line will be underground. No-one sat around in New South Wales, and, I must say, in the confines of a Labor Government, and said that they would do it the Kucera or MacTiernan way under the special formula of the Western Australian Labor Party, which is to do it quick, do it cheap and damn the consequences! Thank goodness that they did not do that. They did not do that because the people in those parts of Sydney would have gone ballistic at the idea that they were going to re-enter a time warp which most comparable places in the world left behind 50 years ago. That is one reason this Government has got it wrong. That is one reason we need to look at options.

I have mentioned Boston until I am almost sick of hearing about it myself. Boston is one of the most beautiful cities in the world; however, it was divided by an elevated freeway at the same time that Western Australia put in its freeway, which was also done in a very insensitive way. The Bostonians later realised what a dreadful mistake they had made. However, they woke up to that fact a generation ago. Now, after 25 years, they are calling back people from around the world, including an architect from Perth, to celebrate the fact that they have retrieved what was to them an urban design disaster. What are we doing here? We are ploughing on regardless, and saying that it does not matter what is done in Sydney, Washington DC, Düsseldorf or Boston - all places that have a lot of civic pride. Western Australia will do it the good old-fashioned, discredited, outmoded Labor Party way. It was good enough in 1959, so Western Australia will just keep ploughing on.

I know that whatever I say will not make any difference, but I also know that the comments made and positions taken in this place eventually catch up with members. I know that when people come to write the history of some of these things, and examine in depth the decision that this minister has made, they will point a finger at the minister and her colleagues and say that they got it badly wrong, not just in the first instance, but also when they went against all the advice they received, even from someone as insignificant as the member for South Perth. They will know then, but it will be too late. We will then be doing a Boston. Twenty-five years from now, this place will pass legislation to correct the failure of this Government to look at all the options. That is what this motion is all about. It has a reporting date for the committee of 19 December. That is not a lot to ask.

The Government has the right to do what it wants; however, it did not have the right to spring these things on people in the way that it did, with no warning and in secrecy. It should have learnt that lesson from the WA Inc days. Even at this late stage, the Government has the opportunity to correct itself and allow this Bill to go to a joint select committee, which would report back by 19 December. There are other options. I have canvassed but a few of them here during the past two or three days. This is the last call for the Government, because there will be no turning back once construction begins. Once the blight begins, particularly across those parts of the southern metropolitan area that I represent, there will be no turning back until it is too late. I appeal to the Government, even at this late stage, to agree to the Bill being referred to a joint select committee to consider the options and report back by December. I commend the motion to members.

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**MR M.F. BOARD** (Murdoch) [10.19 am]: I support the motion moved by the member for South Perth. In doing so, I will reflect on the passion and the information that has gone into the debate on this Bill. A number of people have already spoken on that matter. I will also refer to the contentious nature of the Bill. The railway project is important to people who live in the Perth metropolitan region and along the southern corridor to Mandurah. In effect, a wider corridor than that will be affected. Many transport links and much planning and urban development in that southern corridor will be guided by the decisions that we make on this railway line. The amenities, enjoyment and long-term planning for the City of Perth will also be affected.

Previously, the Parliament, particularly the Legislative Assembly, has acted to ensure that contentious issues that have massive interest in the Western Australian community and that cause division between members of Parliament on both sides to some extent, have been given due consideration. As a result, to a large degree, bipartisan decisions have been made that reflect the interests of the whole community of Western Australia. The history of this Parliament is paved with contentious issues that have been referred either to standing or select committees for consideration. I can speak on behalf of all members who have played a role in the committee processes when I say that the committees are regarded as constructive, with the odd exception of some contentious issues from time to time that might be political in nature. Generally, those committees have handled issues that needed to be resolved for the long-term interests of the community with care and sensitivity. More often than not, they have not resulted in minority reports being presented to Parliament. A minority report occurs when the Government has more members on a committee and the opposition members make their own recommendations that contravene the recommendations of the majority government members. Most select committee reports have been united.

Over the past 10 years, many contentious issues of the day have been dealt with in committees. Many recommendations of committees have required changes to government funding or government policy. Changes have even been made to legislation as a result of the committee process. I remind members of the select committee on road safety, for example, which tabled reports in 1994-96. It dealt with very contentious issues, including licensing, education and training, drugs and alcohol, helmets for bike riders and the safety design of pedestrian crossings for school children. The road safety committee supported many of the changes to road safety that operate today. The select committee conducted detailed examinations of some contentious issues in a bipartisan way.

I remind the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure of the select committee on heavy transport. That committee dealt with very contentious issues in a bipartisan way. As a result, it recommended changes to heavy haulage that met the expectations of both sides of Parliament and the community. I remind the Government of the 1995 Select Committee on Heritage Laws. I played a significant role on that committee. If many of its recommendations had been implemented, we would not need to deal with as many contentious heritage issues as we do today, which cause so many difficulties in the community. That committee considered the views of representatives from both sides of Parliament. Therefore, the report it delivered met most members' expectations.

I remind the House also of the Select Committee on Metropolitan Development and Groundwater Supplies. Today, debate takes place in the community about the need to maintain and add to the existing water supplies. However, back in 1994 there was a lot of pressure on the Government of the day to allow development over ground water mounds. Pressure was applied to allow development at Jandakot and Gnangara. The then Opposition expected that the Government would kowtow to that pressure and provide additional space for development over ground water reserves. A select committee was established and, as a result of its examination of cases where development had occurred over ground water reserves in the belief that, despite the development, the pristine nature of the water would not be affected, the Government reversed its direction and strengthened the protection of ground water mounds and maintained clear passages for pristine ground water to reach those catchment areas. Today, we see the wisdom of those decisions. We see also the wisdom of establishing a select committee to take a bipartisan approach to examining the long-term and contentious issues that face the community.

The Select Committee into Child Migration had a huge impact on closure and difficult issues facing British people in particular and also a large section of the Rockingham community. The Select Committee on Perth's Air Quality also dealt with some very contentious and difficult planning issues, including where the future development of industry should be and the long-term air quality of Perth. That committee made very substantial recommendations about industry emissions that affected urban planning and transport links. I refer also to the select committee that inquired into the Human Reproductive Technology Act. That committee was set up to consider a very difficult issue that directly led to good legislation being passed through this House in a bipartisan

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way because of the work that the Parliament had put into making a controversial and contentious issue meet the community's expectations.

Only rarely do members call for the establishment of a joint select committee. In this instance, the issue is contentious and important and has potential financial liabilities. More importantly than those transient issues, it will affect the long-term future of the City of Perth, particularly the foreshore and access to it. Many members on this side of the House have spoken about the extent to which people around the world are paying the price for making decisions similar to the Government's railway proposal. Governments around the world are spending billions of taxpayers' dollars to remove train lines and freeways from foreshores and to restore public access to foreshores, whether by sea or river. They are taking away some of the planning blights of the past. This Government is compounding those planning blights in 2002 against all the advice that has been received from not only the experts but also the community. The previous Government accepted that advice in good faith from the very people who sit in these agencies. I do not know how they could change their minds in a short time; it was no doubt under political pressure, which on its own needs further investigation.

Today I am talking about coming together on a contentious issue. This issue is all about whether the Government is convinced that it has got it right, and that it stands up to environmental and financial considerations. When I say financial considerations, I am talking about value for what we get and about the long-term amenity for the people of this city. That is what it is about. It is not about a few people who live in Mandurah or Rockingham. It is about the amenity of the whole community of the Perth metropolitan region and the southern corridor, not just isolated pockets.

With all of those matters in mind, I ask the Government to please look at the long-term constructive nature of this project. If the Government's project comes out tops and ultimately gets ticks from all of the bodies, including the community, I will say that the right decision was made; but why will the Government not examine this contentious issue? Why will the Government not go through a conciliatory process? Why will the Government not involve in a bipartisan way members of Parliament, as we did when we were in government on many contentious issues of the sort that are facing this Government? We did that and it led to many changes and to good legislation.

Mr J.B. D'Orazio: Will you take an interjection?

Mr M.F. BOARD: I certainly will from a constructive member.

Mr J.B. D'Orazio: Can you tell me how the decision was made to put the rail down through Kenwick? Did the minister come into the Parliament and say, "This is where it will go", or was it decided by consensus?

Mr M.F. BOARD: First, the decision was made over a three-year period, after many submissions, after large numbers of consultations with the community, after consultation with local authorities and their acceptance of the project and after acceptance of environmental considerations. The decision was made after advice from the transport and planning departments and all of the other authorities that were involved in the project. That is when the decision was made. This Government has brought contention into this issue, and that contention must be resolved.

Several members interjected.

Mr M.F. BOARD: The Government wants to turn this issue on its head. Madam Deputy Speaker, you can see the contentious nature of the issue which points out and strengthens my case. A long-term project like this that should be celebrated in our community now has become an issue that is dividing the community. What is the point of that? Why would the Government, which wants to spend massive amounts of public money, want to divide the community? It does not make sense when there is a vehicle available through the Parliament by the use of a joint select committee to resolve such a contentious issue. A select committee could take advice from the experts, receive further submissions, give people the opportunity to come to grips with various proposals and come back to the Government in a bipartisan way.

Mr R.C. Kucera: Given the opposition that there was to the Kenwick route, did you consider having a select committee?

Mr M.F. BOARD: There was no contention in that issue.

Mr R.C. Kucera: Was it suggested to you?

Mr M.F. BOARD: There was no suggestion of contention. There might have been a bit of whipping up by a couple of members of Parliament. However, if the member examines the media at the time, he will see there was a general consensus about the three years of decision making on the submissions that the Government had

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received. The issue went before the Cabinet on a number of occasions and the Government accepted all of the good advice it had been given. In fact, the proposal to go down the centre of the freeway was considered as a priority. Cabinet members and many other members suggested that the rail go down the freeway. However, we accepted the advice on the environmental considerations and the advice of the good experts in the government agencies. That is why the decision was made. Hallelujah, what happened on 10 February? All of that advice that was given to the previous Government disappeared and somehow is now wrong. With the contentious nature of this issue affecting the long-term amenity and planning of the city, in particular, I recommend strongly to the Government that it support the amendment of the member for South Perth and that it come up with a constructive, bipartisan approach to resolve the issue.

**MS A.J. MacTIERNAN** (Armadale - Minister for Planning and Infrastructure) [10.35 am]: The Government will not be supporting this delaying tactic. The Opposition did not build one centimetre of rail during its eight years in government. The Opposition constantly failed the people in the south west suburbs. We have no intention of perpetrating that fraud on the people of the south west suburbs of this city. There have been no arguments of any value; indeed, the cant and hypocrisy of the members of the Opposition defies belief.

In 1997, the time scale of the previous Government was to build the rail to Jandakot by 2005. With that eight-year margin I made a plea to the Government. The promise at that stage was to build the rail to Rockingham by 2020 and certainly to Jandakot by 2005. There was an eight-year window of opportunity and I suggested to the Government, supported by the then member for Rockingham, that there was controversy over the issue; to deny that there was any controversy is absolutely absurd. The route of the Government's rail was strongly opposed by many of the leading commentators, by the City of Fremantle and by the people of Rockingham and Mandurah, who did not want the rail to go via a 12-kilometre deviation. There was therefore strong opposition to the project with complex and difficult issues to get across to the community.

I want to note in *Hansard* that the member for Murdoch always speaks, then races out of the Chamber and never listens to the response. He does that all the time, even with motions he raises himself. I suspect he is not interested in the debate.

We put the proposition to the previous Government that, because there was eight years to go and because it was a huge project about which there would be political argy-bargy, we would be realistic and contain the arguments to only timing and priority to be given to the project; but we wanted bipartisan support on the notion of the route. That proposition was refused outright by the previous Government. This project is now time critical. We must let contracts next year. If we are to meet the commitments that we have made to the people of the south west suburbs - we will meet those commitments - we must allow those contracts to be let next year.

Mr P.G. Pendal: Regardless of the consequences?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: No. We will not allow the conservative troglodytes on the other side to put this city on hold for another eight years. Members opposite had their go. They did nothing except build more and more roads. We will not allow that approach to continue.

I will respond to a number of issues that have been specifically raised by the member for South Perth. He said that no-one these days would build a freeway along the foreshore. That is probably true, and I agree with the member. However, let us face it, the freeway is there. I tried to get some insight from the Opposition on whether it will commit to spending somewhere between \$500 million and \$800 million to lower the freeway, and there was silence. Of course, members opposite will not spend that money.

Mr P.G. Pendal: How can they do that in New South Wales?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: I will tell members about New South Wales, if the member for South Perth will give me a moment.

Several members interjected.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: The former Premier of this State was probably a pretty wise judge of character when he made a decision not to appoint the member for South Perth to his Cabinet. I believe this is because this man, as they say in Texas, "Is all hat and no cattle." I listened to the member without interjecting, and I am trying to answer his arguments.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is far too much conversation going on across the Chamber. Those who wish to interject know the appropriate way to do it, and the minister may choose to respond or not.

Mr Phillip Pandal; Mr Mike Board; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Deputy Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Arthur Marshall; Acting Speaker; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bernie Masters; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Dr Janet Woollard

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Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: I have listened on two occasions now without interjection to the contributions - if we can call them that - of the member for South Perth. I have tried to pay him the courtesy of responding to the issues that he has raised. All we get is a misogynistic response. As I said, the member is all hat and no cattle; he is all bluster and baritone. We have moved on. Bluster and baritone will not have the impact the member wants.

Mr P.G. Pandal: Put the abuse aside.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: I was attempting to answer the member's questions when he came with his misogynistic rubbish. The member needs to look at himself.

I will now address some of the issues that were raised, and which I was going through. I agree that in this day and age no-one would agree to build a freeway along the foreshore. However, let us face it, no-one will spend \$500 million to \$800 million to sink the freeway.

The member for Murdoch said this railway would stop access to the foreshore. I do not know whether the member for Murdoch has driven down the freeway; there is no access. People cannot walk across the freeway or the bus lanes to the foreshore; they have to use the overhead bridges. The way these members talk one would think we had pristine bushland with a little goat track running down the centre that one could meander across at will. We do not have that. To some extent, we have to accept the city as we find it. We can change some things, and the Government will change some things. However, we have to be realistic. What Government will spend \$500 million to sink the freeway to provide enhanced views for a couple of hundred people who have chosen to buy properties along the foreshore?

The next issue that was raised was Peter Bruechle's proposition. We set up a highly respected committee in November last year to look at the options of getting the rail through to the city. We recognised that over the master plan phase we needed to get the detail right, and we have had a substantial rethink. There were concerns in the community whether that process was on track, and in order to deal with that we appointed a highly respected committee made up of members of the Perth City Council, the Property Council of Australia and leading planners and engineers. That committee called for submissions. It received and assessed 51 submissions. Mr Bruechle did not choose to put in his submission at that stage. The committee then reported in January or February of that year. Having made some interim decisions, we reconvened that committee; Mr Bruechle did not make any submissions to the reconvened committee. Indeed, Mr Bruechle did not make his submission until after the Government had made its decision in June on which route it would take.

Mr P.G. Pandal: He was a consultant.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: I agree; Mr Bruechle was providing advice.

Mr P.G. Pandal: How open were you, when even your own consultants were shut out of the process?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: They were not shut out. This plan was not dreamt up by Mr Bruechle until after the Government had made its decision, which was the first anyone heard of it. At Mr Bruechle's own admission, it would cost at least another \$70 million, and we suspect probably more. At some point the Government had to make a decision and move on. We cannot allow these delaying tactics to continue to deny the people of the south western suburbs access to a first-class rail system. We cannot put the proper, orderly and environmentally sound development of this city on hold.

The member for South Perth is also a very keen fan of the Parramatta project, and he says that I should do what was done in Parramatta, which he says was really creative. It is an interesting exercise to look at this Parramatta plan. It was originally going to be the Parramatta-Chatswood plan; it was 28 kilometres of rail, mainly underground. That was because it was going through Lane Cove National Park. It was not going down the centre of a freeway.

Mr P.G. Pandal: That is more important than the river is it?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: The member for South Perth and I have a very strong difference of opinion. I do not see an eight-lane freeway as the equivalent of a national park. That could be a failing on my part. However, most people would agree that an eight-lane freeway is not the equivalent of a national park. The proposed cost of this project was \$1.4 billion.

Mr P.G. Pandal interjected.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to address this issue.

Mr P.G. Pandal interjected.

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Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: I listened in absolute silence during the two contributions of the member for South Perth on Tuesday and today. I have listened to his points so I could respond to him.

Mr P.G. Pandal interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for South Perth to order for the first time.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: The Parramatta-Chatswood project was costed at \$1.4 billion for 28 kilometres of rail line. Our project is \$1.4 billion for 70 kilometres of rail line as well as the provision of 93 railcars. Members can see the difference. However, when the NSW project went out to tender, the cost of this creative project was in excess of \$2 billion, so NSW had to cut the rail project in half. This is the project that has been held up as the model that we should accept. For \$1.4 billion, the Parramatta project will deliver at most 14 kilometres of rail. That would have meant our project would have cost something in the order of \$8 billion, but the member for South Perth should not worry about that; he is an Independent and does not have to worry about things like budgets. All I can say is, no wonder Richard Court made his decision. We will not be spending \$8 billion on the south-west rail project, so we will not be following the example of the Parramatta rail link.

I now wish to address some of the absolute misunderstandings that occurred when many other members on the other side were probably not even in Parliament. When did the member for Murdoch get into Parliament? There was no consultation about the decision to go down the Kenwick route. The member for Ballajura could tell us how that happened. It happened early in 1994. Hon Richard Lewis made a unilateral decision and told the Western Australian Planning Commission not to even bother talking about it, that they were going down the Kenwick route.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Nonsense! The Western Australian Planning Commission gave briefing after briefing to Cabinet. How many briefings did your Cabinet get?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: We had many briefings.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members know that to interject across the Chamber is totally unparliamentary. I ask members to desist and I draw attention to the minister who has the call.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: The time has passed when we are going to allow further delay on this project. I want to defend the Perth urban rail development team because some comments made by the member for Murdoch today might reflect poorly on them. I am sure the member for Carine understands that the reason the freeway option had to be considered as not financially viable was that the previous Government determined that it was not going to countenance the rail going down the centre of the freeway, so an additional box would have had to have been built at the side. I agree, if that was the only way it could have been done and it was to cost, as was projected, an extra \$500 million, then we would not have done it, but this was all predicated on a presumption that was completely wrong. The Premier commissioned two secret reports into the possibility of putting the line down the centre of the freeway; so it was known to have been technically possible.

Following our announcement of this proposal, an interesting comment was made by a very prominent person in the Canning area, who said, "Oh my gosh, this is so unfair; what will it do to Westfield Shopping Centre?" Some people may think that part of the reason for this choice may have been the desire to deliver to a particular shopping complex a greater volume of people that would otherwise have been destined for the city. In our view that is not a reasonable way of making planning decisions.

There was plenty of opportunity in 1997 to establish a select committee. We put the motion before this Parliament for such a select committee. The establishment of that committee would not have interfered with the delivery of the rail in a timely way. That proposal was rejected by the then Government - the now Opposition - and we need to move on with this project. Contracts need to be let by next year, and we will be doing that.

**MS K. HODSON-THOMAS** (Carine) [10.54 am]: I support the member for South Perth's motion moved on Tuesday, and about which he spoke at length on Wednesday in the absence of the minister. I also felt it was inappropriate that we should deal with that motion in the minister's absence. However, given the minister's comments this morning, it appears that she has tried to respond to all of the issues raised by the member for South Perth. This morning, the minister asserted that we are denying the community rail. No-one on this side has made that assertion. If anything, we have constantly stated that we support the delivery of a railway to Mandurah. The member for South Perth has made that known; the member for Murdoch made that known during his address; and I also support that proposition. During the minister's address this morning, she made the point that she did establish a committee - the Perth City Rail Advisory Committee - to look at options for the delivery of rail into the city, but during that process, she denied the opportunity to look at the section between

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the Narrows and Jandakot. The member for South Perth has rightly raised this issue about how this will impact upon his electorate, just as it will impact upon other electorates in the southern suburbs.

I am of the view that, had the minister established that advisory committee and looked at options not only about how the rail would enter the city from the Narrows but also had opened it up for greater discussion and debate, we may not be here today discussing this issue. Yes, the minister did say that she moved a motion on 15 October 1997 to establish a select committee, and she, as the member for Armadale, and the member for Rockingham spoke at length and with a great deal of compassion and concern about the railway route.

I also found it interesting that the minister made a comment about the establishment of that select committee. In closing, she stated -

By the time this project is ready to be implemented, we will be in the driving seat. We do not want to see hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars directed to a planning process which must be discarded

By the time this project is ready to be implemented, we will be in the driving seat! She was obviously correct in saying that, because this Government is in the driving seat. The minister continued -

We do not want to see hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars directed to a planning process which must be discarded

I am glad the minister commented that we had already invested and expended millions of dollars in the planning process for the master plan, because I keep raising that in this Parliament. The two-year process, the two tunnels -

Mr M.P. Whitely interjected.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: That is the member's view. That is why this issue should go to a joint select committee for consideration of what is a viable route option, what are the relative cost options and whether the route options proposed by Mr Bruechle were fully examined by the Government. If Mr Bruechle was a consultant for the PURD, I imagine that would have precluded him from making a submission to the Perth City Rail Advisory Committee. I may be wrong, but from my perspective, if he were acting as a consultant, he could not make a submission to the Perth City Rail Advisory Committee. He obviously has a great deal of experience. During his address on Wednesday, the member for South Perth outlined his credentials at great length. I repeat, it was most unfortunate that we had to deal with that matter yesterday. Given the member for South Perth's intimate knowledge of his own electorate and his discussions with Mr Bruechle, it was important that the minister be present in the Parliament.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: I read every word he said, and responded to it.

Mr P.G. Pendal: It is a pity you didn't understand it.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: I think that reflects on the calibre of your argument rather than on the calibre of my intellect.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: While the minister was not in the Chamber, I said that I thought she had addressed those issues because she had read the member's speech. Nevertheless, it makes for a more open debate when people are in the Chamber and can contribute. Some interjections are not very fruitful but others can be, and we can be open and discuss alternatives.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: I do not interject on the member for South Perth. I do not want to be responsible for a heart attack, so I have made a policy decision.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: The minister's heart attack?

I anticipated, as did the member for South Perth, that we would deal with the issue of the railway line today. That was my understanding also. The member for South Perth foreshadowed on Tuesday that he would move this motion. He subsequently stated that he would seek leave to speak on the motion today. It was unfortunate that the motion had to be addressed yesterday.

There is a raft of concerns and misgivings about the route, largely because people who live along the route feel they have not been given an opportunity for consultation. Certainly, a joint select committee could engage those communities in further consultation and look at different viable options and other issues relevant to the railway proposal. I have no hesitation in supporting the member for South Perth's motion to refer the Bill to a joint select committee. I hope the select committee will look at the money that has already been expended on the railway tunnels, the master plan and the busways. The Government is duplicating an efficient service which



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works and which provides public transport commuters with an opportunity to get into the city in a very efficient manner. The Government will demolish a section of the Canning Bridge interchange. All those issues are of great concern to the people who live in and around those communities. As I have said, I have no hesitation in supporting the motion to refer the Bill to a joint select committee.

**MRS C.L. EDWARDES** (Kingsley) [11.02 am]: I also support the motion to refer this Bill to a committee. It is an important motion, because it refers to a joint select committee on this occasion. We believe the Bill should be referred to a joint select committee because of the lack of alternatives that have been sought or properly consulted on. There also has been a significant increase in the cost of this project.

The election was held on 10 February 2001. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure was sworn in on 16 February 2001. Lo and behold, on 16 July, five months later to the day, this huge capital infrastructure plan was announced. It was a major change, but it took only five months to establish. What involvement did the members of the communities through which the railway line was to be constructed have in the consultation during those five months? None. Now the railway line will not be built through those areas. What consultation took place with the people from the communities through which the line was not to be constructed but through which it now will be? What about the consultation with the City of Rockingham? In the five months it took the Government to change the route, the City of Rockingham was left totally out of the loop in the consultation on the change. The Government forgot about Rockingham. Subsequent to the minister's announcement, a little committee was established and it was decided that there would be a bus route or whatever. No final decision has been made or costing given on that. Those areas will be looped in so that people will have to get on a bus to get to the train station. Very few people like to get on and off and on and off public transport just because they do not live exactly along the route.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan interjected.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: The minister should listen. Who else was consulted in those five months? Was the City of Perth or the City of South Perth consulted about the change? Was the City of Gosnells or the City of Armadale consulted? No. On 17 July, the Premier was reported in *The West Australian* as saying -

"This is without doubt the single most important capital decision the current Government will be making," . . .

And it made that decision in five months! That is fantastic! Nothing else will get done in this State. Do members know why? Because the capital costs of this railway line will blow out, and if the Government wants to keep its AAA credit rating, it will be able to do nothing else in this State. The railway line will absorb every single dollar that will possibly come its way. Why was the desalination plant put on the backburner? Because the Government must keep its AAA credit rating. However, it is constructing a railway line, for which costs are already starting to blow out, so it will now have to add in the costs of the Rockingham loop, because nobody was consulted beforehand. That is the point of referring the Bill to a joint select committee. No alternatives were even contemplated. When the minister announced the change to the route, everybody was up in arms, so the Government established a Rockingham committee. It even sent the mayor and a couple of the local members of Parliament overseas to look at what is possible.

Ms K. Hodson-Thomas: The members for Rockingham and Peel.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: Yes, those two members. That was after 16 July, the date of the announcement. The route had been determined. However, whoops, the Government forgot about Rockingham. Members of the Rockingham community and the mayor were a bit upset and they attacked the Premier on a talkback program on 6PR. The committee was then established, because the Government needed to find a solution to what needed to be done in Rockingham. Then the people in the city of Perth got upset, and then the people who are building the convention centre, the tourism industry and the planners, engineers and architects got upset. All of a sudden, the railway line was to be built along the foreshore! What did the Government do then? It formed another committee, but after 16 July when the decision was made. What did that committee do? It looked at some of the issues. It even privately paid some people to get independent results, find alternatives and determine the costings. It did what the Government should have done, after the Government had made the decision. The people who were really angry and upset over this decision put their hands in their pockets to pay for what the Government should have done.

Then another committee was established to come up with some alternatives, because the minister discovered that a few people were a bit concerned and were making a bit of noise. This all occurred after the decision was made on 16 July. Those people, in good faith, spent their time and money on coming up with three alternatives for the city route. Amazingly, the proposal for the eastern route was immediately thrown out, because it would cost too much. There was no long-term vision, or considering whether it might have been the best decision. There were

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two other proposals. One would never have been accepted, because on 16 July 2001 the Premier and the minister announced that the railway would go along William St come hell or high water. It was never intended that a considered decision would be made by people outside the Government. The minister and the Government, in their estimation, made the best decision. They did not worry about the cost, or what anyone else might think.

The Government did accept one of the alternatives put forward - the William Street option, which just happens to coincide with the option agreed to on 16 July 2001. In an attempt to pour water on some of the people who were a bit angry about the route, the Government decided to sink the railway along the foreshore and change the stations. The decision to make some of those changes in the William Street option was accepted and everyone said the minister had done a damned good thing. They knew that the Government would not change its decision on the route made on 16 July 2001, five months after the minister had come to office. What the Premier described as "the single most important capital decision the current Government will be making" was made five months after the Government came to office. The Premier said it would cost over a billion dollars, and that the Government had to get it right. It was never really interested in getting it right. It had made the decision, come hell or high water. It forgot the community that would benefit from the busway. The minister's media statements show that, every time there was a bit of criticism, it was dealt with by another committee. A few more people were asked to examine the city rail options. In relation to the busway, a press release states -

The Kwinana Freeway will not be widened to accommodate an additional bus lane between the Canning Highway and the Narrows Bridge, when the direct rail link between Perth and Mandurah is built.

It was put forward to the Government, but the Government will not do it. There was obviously concern because, two to three days later, another press release quotes the minister as saying -

"Now we are working to ensure that as much of the bus-related infrastructure as possible is incorporated in the master plan,"

What decision did the Government make on 16 July 2001? At that time it did not take into account Rockingham, what was happening in the Perth central business district, and that the bus lane would be ripped up, depriving some people of access. The people in Mandurah wanted that rail service and they wanted the journey to take 12 minutes less.

Before announcing on 16 July 2001, "the single most important capital decision the current Government will be making", did the Government survey the people to whom it was marketing the railway, asking them whether they would use the rail service instead of their cars, if the route were changed and the trip took 12 minutes less? If such a survey was done, it has not been brought forward. If it was done, what are the figures? Are we talking about an extra three per cent, or an extra five per cent? The comments of the Premier must be kept in mind. If he were in the Chamber, he would support this motion because he knows that viable options for this railway were not considered. He knows that the relative cost of those options was not considered, and that Mr Peter Bruechle's option was not considered, along with other issues relevant to the proposal. He knows that it is "the single most important capital decision the current Government will be making". It is over a billion dollars and we have to get it right.

The SPEAKER: Order, members to my right! Conversations between members in the Chamber at that level are not parliamentary, and I ask them to please desist.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: The minister and the Government of the day made the decision on 16 July 2001, five months after the Government was sworn in, without taking into account all the possible alternatives, and the possible costs of those alternatives, and without properly considering the extra cost that would be involved in the direct route. The costs are blowing out. Will the House receive the same response from the Government as it did for the Joondalup railway; that is, the cost blow-out resulted from the consumer price index? It will be a nonsense, because we know the proper costing of the direct route was never taken into account. Whenever the stakeholders, the planners, the engineers, the architects, or the local governments raised their heads the minister established another committee. Every time such a committee came up with a solution, it would never change that direct route decided on by the Government on 16 July 2001. Everybody else was kept out of the loop, the Government made the decision on the direct route into the central business district and there would be not change to that.

I absolutely and totally support the motion, so that this Parliament and the people of Western Australia can learn the real cost of the decision made by this Government, the alternatives that were not considered, and the cost of those alternatives. Those processes have not been properly covered by the Government, and it is incumbent on

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this Parliament to support the motion of the member for South Perth, to ensure that all alternatives and their costs are disclosed.

**MR J.C. KOBELKE** (Nollamara - Leader of the House) [11.18 am]: The House is dealing with a procedural motion to refer consideration of the Railway (Jandakot to Perth) Bill 2002 to a joint select committee of both Houses of the Parliament. That is a procedural matter, and only touches on the details of the proposed railway. The House has, however, used the opportunity to have another fairly wide-ranging debate on the pros and cons of the rail proposal. That, to me, has gone far beyond discussion of the motion. Others may judge it differently, and I accept that because it is a big issue with many aspects. The minister rose to her feet today to answer those questions about other proposals, and matters of substance that a committee could look into, but the proposer of the motion did not even want to listen to her. This brings me to the point that I wish to make - that this is nothing more than a time-wasting measure.

In the second reading debate there were 24 speakers, which is far more than is normal, but that was appropriate for a matter of the significance of this rail construction. It indicates a high level of interest, and the Government welcomes the contribution of many members to the debate. However, we have now had a fairly lengthy debate, which will continue for a bit longer, on a motion to refer this matter to a committee. The way in which this has been handled allows no other conclusion than that it is intended to delay, thwart and frustrate the Government in building the southern suburbs railway. We can only speculate, therefore, whether members opposite are opposed to rail as an important element of our public transport system or whether they are opposed to the alignment. It might be a mixture of both. Clearly members opposite have not really committed to building rail. In their eight years of government they did not build one extra centimetre of rail. Prior to the 1983 election, the conservative Government closed down a major rail leg here in Perth. It is a party that has shown by its past actions that it is opposed to the development of metropolitan rail transport. This motion illustrates again that the Opposition wants to thwart the Gallop Government's proposal to construct the southern rail link. Members opposite have changed their tune slightly from opposition to rail to apparent support; nonetheless, their actions reveal that they want to sabotage the progress of that rail. The proposed Kenwick route was a bid to sabotage the potential for providing an efficient, effective rail system for Perth.

Mr R.C. Kucera interjected.

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: I accept that interjection. According to the member for Kingsley's argument, we cannot afford that rail link. In the light of that argument, a coalition Government would have said it could not afford that rail link.

The motion seeks to establish a joint select committee. The process of establishing that committee, in itself, would cause a delay. It would not be a committee of this House. Further delay would occur while agreement was being sought between the two Houses, which may not eventuate. This proposal is another attempt to thwart progress and potentially destroy this Government's attempts to build the southern rail link. The motion seeks to have the committee report in December when the Parliament is not sitting. It would therefore be delayed by five or six months until February or March when Parliament resumes. Members opposite want to prevent construction of the southern suburbs railway. They want to abuse the procedures of this House and filibuster with spoiling tactics to stop the passing of this Bill, which will enable the Government to build the southern suburbs railway. Let us be clear: that is what this motion is about. It is not about being interested in getting the best rail system. It is about frustrating, delaying and preventing its construction.

I read the contribution of the member for South Perth, who moved the motion, when he was debating the Perth-Joondalup Railway Bill in 1989 as a member of the Legislative Council. In *Hansard* on page 6891 Hon P.G. Pandal is reported as saying -

... I wonder whether the Government is going down the right path in extending the rail system to Joondalup.

In the same debate on page 6894 he said -

However, I have the gravest doubts about whether a railway system is the answer.

His comments were echoed by many conservative members of Parliament at the time who were opposed to the construction of a major rail system in metropolitan Perth.

The only thing that has changed since then is their rhetoric. They still do not believe in rail. They know it is popular; they opposed the northern suburbs rail, which has been an outstanding public transport success. They can no longer speak openly of their dislike for public rail transport so they committed to building a railway line some time in the never-never. They were caught out because, politically, they could not get away with constant delays. They therefore made a commitment to build a rail line to Mandurah, but said, "We will include a little

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bit of a tunnel to make it look as though we are sincere, when in reality, if we are re-elected, we will do everything we can to make sure it does not proceed." As members opposite know, the Gallop Government has a clear commitment to the rail system and the minister is an effective and determined minister who will deliver an outstanding rail system to this State. The Opposition is seeking to obstruct and delay its progress.

The Opposition's tawdry tactics to stop the Government getting on with the job are another example of its lack of support for the extension of the metropolitan railway. The Government will not be frustrated; it will ensure that, before the House rises tonight, this legislation is passed and transmitted to the other place. That will enable us to proceed with a complex project, which will deliver a first-class public rail system for the people of Perth.

**MR A.D. MARSHALL** (Dawesville) [11.25 am]: Contrary to the comments of the Leader of the House, I do not disagree with a proposal to build a rail link.

Mr R.C. Kucera: But you are happy to delay it.

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: The people of Mandurah have now become accustomed to the delay. I said in my previous speech that in 1992 the Labor Government created a political expectation when the figures did not stack up. In 1996 the Liberal Government promised that a railway would be built to the southern suburbs. In 2000 it undertook the planning and made a commitment to complete it by 2005. However, at the whim of this Government, plans have been changed and the rail line's completion extended to 2008. Members opposite must understand the mathematics attached to the time frames. If delay is what is required to ensure this rail link is right, it is very important that delay occur. That is why I have risen on this occasion to indicate my support for a joint select committee to examine this Bill. We should seek a second opinion on its merits.

I do not agree with the changes to the original rail route or with the haste with which they have been made. I am not confident that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has the leadership skills necessary to take responsibility for such a major project. I have those concerns because I support a rail link. As was the case with the Joondalup rail line, the rail link from Mandurah to Perth will prove to be one of the most successful projects this State has ever put its money into. However, members opposite should understand that, after four years of planning that involved some of the best engineers that I know of, the previous Government decided to build a rail link through Kenwick to be completed by 2005. However, the Government changed hands and within six months that four-year planning period was thrown out because this Government believed that it knew better.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: Within five months.

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: I said six; I was wrong. I am sorry. Five months it is then. Do members know why it was thrown out? The reason is very hurtful to me as someone who has been around for many years and watched proposals for projects come and go. It was thrown out through sheer cussedness. We have heard from the floor repeatedly that the railways of Western Australia belong to Labor. What an egotistical comment. We have been asked whether we have ever laid a sleeper.

Mr J.B. D'Orazio: You've had 100 years to prove us wrong.

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: That interjection reflects the egotistical vanity of members opposite which will cost the taxpayers of Western Australia up to \$400 million in delays. The Leader of the House should not talk about delays. Already, a tick has been put in the box alongside \$400 million for the cost of five months of irrational planning. How can changes of that nature be made in five months? It is not possible. The excuse I keep hearing is that it will save 12 minutes travel time. How many people will take the train for the full Mandurah-Perth trip? The trip from Rockingham to Perth will save eight minutes. How many people will take that trip? Bearing in mind that the route will be changed to encourage more commuters to travel by train, from South Street to Perth the trip will save four minutes. The amount of \$400 million has been spent to save four minutes. Of course, more people will travel by train from Mt Henry to the city because of the dramatic change to the route! That trip will save one minute. Have members ever travelled on trains? I have travelled on the Amtrak trains in New York and all over America. They are magnificent. After sitting down on a train with a newspaper, book, or one's work, research or laptop computer, there is sometimes a wish that the train did not reach its destination so quickly - another 10 minutes would have enabled some work to be finished. All these changes are being made to save 12 minutes. It is a 12-minute change for the most limited population that will use the train.

I was involved with the engineers who are working on this project when they were employed by the Liberal Government. I have a lot of respect for them. The word distrust is not the right one to use, but I believe that this change, made in five months, to a very good and well-researched plan is not a strong way for a Government to begin a major project. A second opinion is needed.

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The Government has said that the change is being made so that more commuters can access the trains. The Kenwick route would have done just that. The Kenwick route would have offered Mandurah people another opportunity for employment, because that is where all the opportunities through the Kwinana strip are going. The decision not to take the route through Rockingham is another detrimental step, because many people are employed between Rockingham and Mandurah. To remove the Kenwick route will prevent people from accessing employment opportunities. People in that eastern area will also not have the opportunity to catch trains to Perth.

The delay to the project concerns all members. Under the previous Government, the train line would have been completed by 2005. Now, due to hasty changes made over five months, its completion has been delayed until 2008. I do not believe that it will be completed by 2008. The planning of and infighting on these changes around the State, and a lack of confidence in the Government on this project, will mean that it will not be completed until after 2008. I want another opinion. Anyone who is smart should never think that he or she knows everything or anything.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: Could you please tell us where you are getting 2008 from?

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: Does the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure remember that when she first announced these changes, we made a wager for a bottle of Mœt champagne that the rail link would be finished by 2006? The minister lost. Rather than embarrassing the minister, and being a sport, I gave her another chance by suggesting that the wager be double or nothing that the rail line would be completed by 2007. Somewhere along the line, an announcement was made that 2007 was not within the realms of possibility either, and that the project was being extended to 2008.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: That is absolute rubbish! This is a seniors' moment.

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: Does the minister want another bottle of Mœt on the wager?

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: I actually thought that you were better than that. You know perfectly well that the Government has said that the railway will be completed by 2007. Where did you get 2008 from?

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: The Government failed on the commitment to build the railway by 2006. The more we look into this project, the more we realise that it cannot be completed by 2007.

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: You just said that we made some announcement.

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: That is my estimation. The previous Government was going to complete the southern railway project by 2005. The new Government, after five months of planning, said that the project would be completed by 2006; however, it has failed to keep to that date. It is now suggesting that it will be completed by 2007. I believe that the Government will fail in meeting that commitment. I am willing to have another wager on it.

I want an opinion that does not come from the engineers who are working on this project and who are very dear to me. They designed the Kenwick route. That plan was acclaimed. Everyone was pleased, particularly in my electorate, that the train line would at last go in. The route was thoroughly planned. However, the engineers who designed that route have now come up, after five months, with another option. The new route looks good on paper. However, sometimes one can be too close to the operation and a second opinion is required. That is all I am asking for. Why is the Government so scared? We have been told that there will be a delay. I would rather have a delay of another three months - after all, there is already a delay -

Mr R.C. Kucera: You intend to push this project out for another year while you play around with this silly committee idea, just to win a wager. What sort of support are you giving to the constituents of your area by playing around with silly things like that?

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: The Minister for Health knows my constituents in Mandurah well, because he served there for six months or a bit longer.

Mr R.C. Kucera: I know that they want a railway and that they will object to these silly delays that you are trying to make.

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: No; they want it right. They want the rail line to go to Rockingham and through Kenwick. They do not want this delay. Again, I repeat that I want a second opinion. If the Minister for Health were extremely sick and was told that he had no hope of surviving, would he seek a second opinion, or is he so egotistical and vain that he would take that advice? Of course he would seek a second opinion! This is one of the most important projects in Western Australia. Five months of planning deserves a second opinion. Why is the Government so scared of getting a second opinion? I will tell members why. It is because the Government

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knows that it is wrong. Its members are screaming like stuck pigs. A second opinion is important. A second opinion is needed because the philosophy and thinking of the Labor Government is so dogmatic that it worries everybody in the community who is following the progress of this rail link.

The rail link is very important, particularly to my constituents. Not all are happy with the way this project is going. We have heard how local governments have been upset. In five months the Government has upset the local governments of Rockingham, South Perth, Thornlie and Perth.

Mr D.A. Templeman: The City of Mandurah supports this project. Why not tell that to the House?

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: Am I hearing another fairytale?

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! Order, member for Mandurah!

Mr A.D. MARSHALL: The people of Mandurah are not disappointed that there could be another alteration to this link. Six months will not make any difference to them; they have waited long enough. Thanks to the previous coalition Government, they were able to get an excellent bus service. The current Government is mucking around and changing the plans for the rail line. Those bus services will be thrown out of the window, at more cost to the taxpayer. The route through Kenwick would have been, and still will be, a great success. I support the motion for a second opinion.

**DR E. CONSTABLE** (Churchlands) [11.38 am]: The first and most important point to make, given some of the interjections that have been made in this Chamber this morning, is that it is important for this Parliament to remember that it has a duty to be vigilant and to scrutinise the plans of government and the spending of taxpayers' money. That is what this motion is about. It seeks to refer the Bill to a joint select committee of the Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council, whose task would be to diligently and vigilantly scrutinise this Bill. I, for one, support that that is a major task of this Parliament in all matters that come before it. At stake in the construction of the railway is \$1.4 billion, which is a huge amount of money. Arguably, the railway is the biggest publicly funded project undertaken in the history of the State. If it is not the biggest, it is close to the biggest. The project amounts to one-tenth of the annual state budget; it is a huge amount. The railway is an important project, and one that I support. I do not support all aspects of the proposal, but I certainly support the concept of a railway between Perth and Mandurah. However, we have to ensure that we, including the Government, get it right. We have a duty to the people of the State to scrutinise the project and to be diligent. The committee process is the mechanism that members of Parliament can use to achieve that aim.

If BHP Billiton Ltd were entering into a project of this magnitude, it would do so with diligence, and it would probably take longer than five months to consider all the available options, and to ensure that money was being spent in the interests of its shareholders. That is not too different from the situation faced by members of Parliament. We have a duty to protect the interests of our shareholders - the taxpaying constituents of Western Australia - by ensuring that the money for the railway will be well spent. I am not convinced that the money will be well spent. One way that I might be convinced is by establishing a select committee to scrutinise the Government's plan. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has not given Parliament that opportunity.

Issues of concern raised by some of my constituents include whether the Government has its priorities right, whether the State can afford to spend \$1.4 billion on the capital costs involved in building a railway, and whether we can continue to afford the \$47 million that it will cost to run the railway every year, a figure to which the minister recently referred when she was answering a question. Forty-seven million dollars is a huge amount of money. Is there a better way? Is there a more economical way to construct the railway? Such questions must be answered before Parliament can agree to the Bill.

Yesterday during another debate, we were reminded of the Royal Commission into Commercial Activities of Government and Other Matters. The construction of a railway between Perth and Mandurah is a commercial activity of government. I took the time to refer to the royal commission's report. Paragraph 2.4.3 states that -

Our concern -

That is, the concern of the commissioners -

must be to enhance Parliament's roles as the gatherer of information about government and as the public's informant.

The commissioners considered Parliament to be the mechanism by which information is gathered and the place in which answers can be sought from the Government. Indeed, it must be the conduit for the public. Parliament must ensure information is released into the public arena. The construction of a railway is a prime example of an activity of government that should be scrutinised in every single detail, and this should be done before

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construction of this railway begins. As members of Parliament, the committee system is our mechanism of scrutiny. The committee system should be strong and it should be used for such purposes. I totally support the member for South Perth's motion.

Perhaps a question that has been raised with me can be answered by one of the Government's ministers. How does the railway project, which will be a huge expense, fit in with the Gallop Government's sustainable development policy, a policy about which the Premier waxes lyrical? Such an issue should also be assessed via a committee process. There is no doubt in my mind that it is essential that Parliament have the opportunity to scrutinise the plan of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and the Gallop Government to spend such a huge amount of money on the railway, when work must be carried out on many other capital projects. Old schools need upgrading, new schools must be built, old hospitals need upgrading, and our Police Service's old facilities must be upgraded. All such works must be attended to in order of their priority. We must ensure that we can find the \$1.4 billion - or whatever the cost blow-outs will make the figure - to pay for the railway, and that the Government's proposal is the right way to go.

**MR R.F. JOHNSON** (Hillarys) [11.45 am]: I support the motion moved by the member for South Perth, because it is a good and responsible motion. As has been stated by many other speakers, the huge expenditure of taxpayers' money by the Government should be properly scrutinised. The responsible minister, the Leader of the House and the Premier want to ram the Bill through Parliament as quickly as possible, because, as was stated by the Leader of the House in his contribution to the debate, the Government wants the Bill to reach the upper House quickly. The Bill will not reach the upper House today, because it has to be considered in detail. I am sure that the Leader of the House will not support the motion moved by the member for South Perth. He has already warned me that we will be sitting late tonight, and that is fine. The Opposition will sit as long as it has to, because its job is to scrutinise every bit of legislation that comes through Parliament. The Legislative Council probably will not sit late tonight, so the Bill will not reach the upper House until some time next week. The threat of making us sit late is fine; however, the Opposition will not be bullied.

Members on this side of the House are tremendously concerned about the speed at which the Bill is being progressed through Parliament. We have been accused of delaying the construction of the railway between Perth and Mandurah. That is totally untrue, because if the Liberal coalition Government did not put in place virtually all the planning for the railway prior to the 2001 election, the Government would be way behind the eight ball. A lot of the work the Opposition did when it was in government will be used by the present Government. It is using many of the engineers and planners that the coalition employed. Therefore, the Government should not say that the Opposition is delaying the project. We are not delaying the project; however, we must scrutinise the changes that have been made by the Government that will save 12 minutes of travelling time for the people of Mandurah.

Mr J.N. Hyde: That legislation has already been passed. There is no problem with that. We are talking about this legislation and how we must get it through quickly.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am glad the member for Perth said that the Government needed to get the Bill through quickly - that is a very telling comment.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The Government wants the engineers employed! The engineers are already employed, and I am sure they are doing a fantastic job.

The people of Mandurah would have had a railway to Perth by 2005 under the coalition's scheme. They would have been able to catch a train to travel to Perth. What will the 12 minutes of saved travelling time cost the taxpayers of Western Australia? I did a rough calculation -

Mr R.C. Kucera: He is an accountant now.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: No, I am not an accountant. I made my calculations on the back of my copy of today's Notice Paper. By today's figures, each minute saved will cost \$25 million, because that is the blow-out between the Opposition's costings of \$1.1 billion and the Government's costings of \$1.4 billion. I have already stated in this House - I have made the same prediction today - that by the time the railway is finished, the blow-out will take the total to \$2 billion.

I want the people of Mandurah to get a first-class railway system.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Dean): I call the member for Mandurah to order for the first time.

Mr Phillip Pendal; Mr Mike Board; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Deputy Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Arthur Marshall; Acting Speaker; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bernie Masters; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Dr Janet Woollard

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Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I believe that the -

Mr J.B. D'Orazio: You believe that the people of Mandurah are second-class.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: What stupid comments from the members for Ballajura and Mandurah. The people in Mandurah deserve a first-class railway system, which is why the previous Government proposed to put one in via Kenwick. Yes, it may have taken 12 minutes longer for those people to get to Perth, but members should consider some of the other railways throughout the world. I know that two members opposite did just that. The members for Peel and Rockingham went to the United Kingdom and other places to see what their railway systems were like. The member for Peel comes from the UK; he would have known what its system was like without having to go there. From what I can gather, the members were specifically looking at the light rail system, which was introduced in the past 15 years. It is like the old tram system that the UK used to have and that we used to have along Hay and Murray Streets. We have gone back to considering that sort of system. I am not saying that is bad; it can be very useful in certain areas. However, those members went all the way to London to check on that and I have not yet seen a report on their findings. We already have a first-class rail system designed here. However, it gets worse. For the journey from Mandurah, the current cost to the taxpayer will be a minimum of \$25 million per minute of travelling time saved. As we get closer to the completion of the project, that cost will blow out even more, because the fewer the minutes saved, the higher the proportionate cost. That is the case under this Government's system. I absolutely support this motion because not enough thought has gone into this proposal. It has been rushed and rammed through Parliament -

Mr D.A. Templeman: It has been railroaded!

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member is absolutely right. This Parliament has been railroaded. What a truthful expression. We have seen democracy go out the window over the past couple of days.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Please do put my photo up; I am sure they would love to see me. I will tell them that we had a first-class rail system.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I am sure the member will. I will tell the rest of the taxpayers that this Government proposes to charge them \$25 million per minute of travelling time saved. The member for Mandurah is being selfish, but I do not blame him for speaking out for the people in his electorate; that is his duty. However, other members in this House have a duty to speak up for the taxpayers of Western Australia.

Mr A.P. O'Gorman interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Is that a voice I hear from the vegie patch at the back of the Chamber? I quite like the member for Joondalup; he is a good friend of mine. However, I must keep telling him to shout if he interjects because I cannot hear him.

Mr A.P. O'Gorman: I am sorry you are so old that you are going deaf. I will speak up when I need to interject.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: If the member interjects, he should at least make his interjection worthwhile. He should say something sensible, which he does not do very often, loudly enough so that we can hear it.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr A.J. Dean): The member for Hillarys should address his comments to the Chair.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will now address every one of my comments to the Chair because I am also getting sick and tired of the inane interjections.

The other reason this Bill should go to a joint select committee of both Houses is that there has not been enough consultation with the public on this proposed deviation from the original plan. Before the last election the Gallop Labor Party said that it was a party of consultation, openness and accountability. We have seen none of that displayed in this Chamber. We have seen debates gagged time after time by the Leader of the House and by members on the government benches because they do not want the truth to be heard in this House. However, as a responsible Opposition, we will always ensure that we scrutinise every bit of legislation that comes before this House because that is our job. Members on the other side are run by the Executive; whatever the Executive says stands. Caucus never overturns the Executive; the Executive just has its way. This is a worry because there are inexperienced ministers in Caucus, like the Minister for Health. He has the largest portfolio, but he does not know what he is doing. I have more faith in Bob the Builder than the Minister for Health.

The point is that people have not been consulted about this proposal. Has this Government truly consulted the people in Armadale or Rockingham? Has it consulted the people in all the towns along the route? No, it has not,



Mr Phillip Pendal; Mr Mike Board; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Deputy Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Arthur Marshall; Acting Speaker; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bernie Masters; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Dr Janet Woollard

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which is disgraceful. Those people should be consulted because this is virtually the biggest capital project this State will undertake. The project will cost about one-tenth or one-eighth of the annual state budget. It required a big budget when we were in government and put forward the proposal, and we organised the funding for it. However, we have now seen a cost blow-out. Parliament should closely examine such a massive expenditure because we have a duty to the taxpayers of Western Australia. We have a responsibility to scrutinise the legislation and consult with the taxpayers. Members on this side of the House will not just rubber-stamp this legislation and allow the Government to ram it through without proper scrutiny. The main Bill has only three clauses, but they are very significant because they deal with the construction of the railway. This Government wants to ram this legislation through before teatime. If we on this side of the House are good boys and girls, we can go home at 5.00 pm. However, if we question the detail of the Bill, we will be kept here for as long as it takes. We do not care how long we stay. If that is the threat from the Leader of the House, we will stay here all night, because we will not be derelict in our duty to scrutinise this sort of public expenditure and these sorts of proposals put forward by this Government. In real terms we have spent very little time on the Bill. We have had the second reading debate, but the minister was missing in action for most of that time, which was a shame because she should have been here. The minister responsible for the expenditure of \$1.42 billion, which I predict will blow out to \$2 billion, should have been in this place when we discussed the matter.

Mr J.B. D'Orazio interjected.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Members opposite should learn a lesson. The Acting Speaker tried to help them out by telling them not to interject and by telling me to address the Chair, which I intend to do. Sometimes I must turn to the side, because I like to move around when I speak. However, when someone squawks from the other side, I am slightly distracted.

Even areas like Croydon have the light rail system to which I referred earlier. It is very important that both Houses of Parliament scrutinise this Bill and take submissions from the public, so that all members of the public are consulted and not just a chosen few. This proposal should not be carried out on the whim of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure or the Premier, who have made the decision to go ahead, come hell or high water, with this particular route.

I hope the Government will support the motion put forward by the member for South Perth, because it is an attempt to achieve the best possible outcome for a railway from Perth to Mandurah. There is no question that a railway would have been established under our Government, but it would have been ready by 2005. I am sure one will be established by this Labor Government, but it will not be finished until 2008. I accept that it will happen, but let us do it right. I urge members opposite to support this motion so that both Houses of Parliament can genuinely, honestly and openly scrutinise all the detail in this Bill. The committee could talk to people and allow time for submissions, so that the people of Armadale and Rockingham and all the other suburbs that will be adversely affected can put their cases. The only people who will be beneficially affected - to the extent of a saving of 12 minutes on a journey from Mandurah to Perth - will be those from Mandurah, and that is good, but the cost of the Government's proposal is far too high.

**MR B.K. MASTERS** (Vasse) [12.01 pm]: I support the motion put by the member for South Perth for a number of reasons. Did I hear some members on the government backbench interject to say that they cannot wait to get engineers and others to work implementing the southern rail line? I thought I heard someone say that we were holding up the employment of engineers and other people who might be employed on the southern rail line. I politely suggest to the Government that if it wants to get engineers back into the work force, how about funding the infill sewerage program to its full and proper extent? Housing developments in the Capel townsite cannot proceed, firstly, because the sewage treatment -

*Points of Order*

Mr A.P. O'GORMAN: This debate is about the Jandakot to Perth railway and not the infill sewerage program in the Vasse electorate.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member is speaking on a procedural motion to refer this Bill to a select committee of both Houses of Parliament. We are not talking only about the Railway (Jandakot to Perth) Bill 2002, other than saying it should go to a select committee of both Houses.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: It is totally unrelated.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Will members please address themselves to the point of order?

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The member for Vasse was alluding to a comparison in costs and expenditure; and, under the standing orders, that is perfectly acceptable.

Mr Phillip Pendal; Mr Mike Board; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Deputy Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Arthur Marshall; Acting Speaker; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bernie Masters; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Dr Janet Woollard

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. However, I had some concern about where the member was going with this argument, although I was sure he was about to return to the motion at hand.

*Debate Resumed*

Mr B.K. MASTERS: I was going to speak only briefly on the topic of the infill sewerage program, because I believe some government members on the backbench were saying things along the lines that we cannot refer this Bill to a joint select committee of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council because it will delay the speed with which people will be employed on engineering and other activities associated with the construction of a rail line. If government members on the backbench have that concern, all they have to do is agree to fund the previously agreed infill sewerage program. By way of example, I had mentioned that Capel's sewage treatment plant was too small to accept any further inflows, and some urban lots cannot proceed because infill sewerage will not be available. That was the extent of my comment. It is amazing how much time we have wasted because of a fairly irrelevant point of order.

Turning specifically to the motion before the House, I note that on many occasions in the past the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has interjected and said that she has no problems with parliamentary scrutiny of every aspect of the Railway (Jandakot to Perth) Bill 2002 and associated government decisions. Let us say that we on this side of the House put forward an overwhelmingly convincing argument that the rail line should not come up the freeway. Is there any chance at all that the Government will say, "Gee, members of the Opposition and non-government parties, we have listened with keenness and strong intent to what you have said and you have convinced us that we should not put the rail line up the freeway; we will change it back to the Kenwick route or some variation of that"? Does anyone honestly believe that this Government would make such a profound decision; namely, not to take the rail up the freeway but to follow the Kenwick route? The reality is, of course, that the Government would not make that decision.

While the minister is partly correct in saying that she supports the strong and overwhelming scrutiny by this Parliament of what the Government is trying to do, the reality is that the Government has the numbers; it can force through any legislation that it chooses. In concert with the Greens (WA), it is able to force through any legislation that then finds its way to the upper House. Parliamentary scrutiny by itself is not sufficient. When we are talking about the expenditure of \$1.3 billion, \$1.4 billion or \$1.5 billion of taxpayers' funds, on a project that is clearly controversial, as pointed out earlier, and when there are valid reasons for suggesting that the Government has got it wrong in wanting to bring the rail line along the freeway route rather than the Kenwick route, parliamentary scrutiny should be added to by the establishment of a joint select committee. That is my first and most important reason for supporting this motion.

Secondly, I have stood up in this Parliament previously and talked about the fact that even the Government's advisers, such as Professor Peter Newman, say that any new rail line must be integrated with planning, and that the Government should look at the best place to build the rail line so that it fully integrates with land use planning considerations. I have made the point many times that the Government is ignoring advice it receives from, I believe, people who not only have always been sympathetic towards the Labor Party and the Labor Government, but also are reasonably unbiased and very professional about putting forward ideas that make an awful lot of sense. To the best of my knowledge, the responses I have received from the minister, either by way of interjection or other comments she has made in the past, indicate that she does not accept that there is a need to better integrate land use planning with the rail line.

I will briefly run over, once again, what I am talking about - the integration of transport and land use planning. Professor Peter Newman, when he made a submission to the Select Committee on Perth's Air Quality in 1997, of which I was a member, pointed out that it is entirely appropriate and extremely desirable when planning for greenfield rail lines that Governments sit down with land-use planning authorities and private developers and say, "If you will assist us financially in the construction of rail stations, rail lines, infrastructure and so on, we will give you favourable planning considerations that will allow you to create high-density urban development within walking or cycling distance of individual train stations." Because of those favourable planning considerations, the developer will get more than its fair share of economic return, commensurate with the amount of money it puts in to assist the public purse in paying for the rail line and the associated infrastructure. However, in turn, the Government will get the benefit of a catchment population within walking or cycling distance of each individual rail station, which catchment population will use the public transport system to a far greater degree than if people were forced to either walk very long distances or drive to a Park 'n' Ride station.

That opportunity effectively has been lost by this Government's proposition to construct a rail line in a metropolitan area, along one side of which there is water for a distance of about 10 kilometres - namely, either the Swan River or the Canning River. Regardless of density, it is absolutely impossible to build on that side of

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the rail line. On the eastern side of that section of rail line there are far more restricted opportunities to build at medium and high densities in order to increase those catchment population densities, which would assist in making the rail line less of a loss-making concern and more of a potentially profitable activity. On the east side of the rail line, where it adjoins the river, there is established housing. The ability to convert 1 000 square metre blocks into much higher density blocks is restricted, but not impossible. Certainly, in South Perth and Como a trend has been under way for quite a number of years - I hope the trend continues - whereby there will be higher urban density by way of flats, apartments, units and so on. There is some ability to do that, but it is restricted because it is an established urban area. As I said, on the west side of the rail line is water. Unless the minister brings in a new policy on high-density houseboat construction in Perth, we must accept that on the west side of the rail line, alongside the freeway next to the river, there will be no housing whatsoever and, therefore, no catchment population.

I strongly agree with each of the four points in the motion put forward by the member for South Perth. The first point refers to the viable route options that exist for the railway. As I have said in a previous debate in this place, to the best of my understanding the Government has made the decision to construct the rail line along the freeway because it wants to put its stamp of authority on the southern rail line. It does not want the rail line to be seen by future generations as the brainchild of the Richard Court coalition Government. If that is true, it is a terrible reason for wanting to change the rail line from a line that made an awful lot of sense to one that makes a lot less sense. If a select committee considered the viable route options that exist for the railway, it would be able to quantify both the benefits of the southern rail line, as proposed by the current Government, and the non-benefits of the Kenwick option, which the previous Government, of which I was a member, supported. Rather than the Government saying that it is all about saving 12 minutes travel time and basically not giving much other justification for it, the committee would be able to look at the fullest range of reasons that one rail route is preferable or objectionable when compared with another.

The second point in the motion refers to the relative costs of all viable options. We have heard in this place that there are some significant additional costs, which this Government appears unwilling to tell us about; for example, the \$40 million that I understand is needed to buy land to allow construction of the William Street station to go ahead. The Government has said that once that station is built and the land is reinstated, it will get its money back. That may well be true. However, the bottom line is that we are taking the Government's word for it. There has been no independent review. There are great concerns about whether the Government has it right on not only the overall costs of the major decisions associated with this rail line - namely, constructing the line along the freeway or out to Kenwick - but also some of the lesser costs; for example, the cost of buying land so that the William Street station can be built.

The third point is whether the route option proposed by Mr Peter Bruechle was fully examined by the Government; and, if not, why not. I am not the shadow Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, and I am not aware of the route option that was proposed by this gentleman. However, it shows that there are viable alternative options that have not properly seen the light of day in public. We as a Parliament can talk about options, costs and everything else until the cows come home, but until the Government examines the full range of options, including the route option proposed by Mr Peter Bruechle, this Parliament will be ignorant to a certain extent of all the options and issues.

The final point in the motion refers to consideration of any other issues relevant to the railway proposal. I hope that, under that point, the select committee will look at the main issue that I mentioned a moment ago; that is, the need to integrate planning with public transport.

About three years ago, I stood in this place to respond to the Liberal-National coalition Government announcement that there would be a \$1 billion expenditure on roads over the next 10 years. I said that I hoped that would be the last time I would hear of a major expenditure on roads by any Government. There is no doubt in my mind that over the past 50 years, too little money has been spent on public transport and too much has been spent on inappropriate or well-intentioned but misguided road infrastructure. Having said that I am philosophically opposed to more road expenditure, it therefore can be deduced that I am a natural supporter of public transport, and I am. I strongly support a southern rail line that will service people from both Rockingham and Mandurah and create the opportunity for people to use public transport, be it bus or rail - primarily rail in this instance - to the maximum possible degree. If we do not integrate land use planning with public transport initiatives such as the southern rail line, we will truly waste a great opportunity. For that reason I very strongly support the motion put forward by the member for South Perth.

**DR J.M. WOOLLARD** (Alfred Cove) [12.19 pm]: I support the motion of the member for South Perth. Some time ago in the House, I asked whether the costs associated with this railway could be examined by the Public Accounts Committee. The minister was not happy to refer those costs to the Public Accounts Committee. Many

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people in the community are very concerned about the cost of this railway. I looked today at the breakdown of the \$47 million it will cost annually to run the railway. I believe that the minister has said that this cost is exclusive of the estimated income from passengers. I would like to see a breakdown of that \$47 million because I wonder whether the figure also takes into account the costs of labour, electricity, track maintenance, stations and rolling stock. The \$47 million annual figure works out to approximately \$903 000 a week, or \$129 000 a day. That is a big cost to the community when there are so many problems in other areas, such as the health care system. This Bill is not about health, so I will not go too much into that area, but it has serious problems, and \$903 000 a week, or \$47 million a year, would go a long way to resolving some of those problems. As I mentioned earlier, I am very unhappy that the Government is selling off prime riverfront land, such as Duncraig House in my electorate, to fund this railway. I will not go into that issue too much today, because I will speak to this motion.

The first point in the motion asks what viable route options exist. Like you, Madam Deputy Speaker, I was not in the House when the previous Government placed the Kenwick option on the table, so I have not had the opportunity to compare in a detailed manner the costs of that option with those of the route along the freeway. The freeway route has very specific environmental costs which the other route did not have, because it is along the river foreshore. When examining costs, we should consider both the environmental and the economic costs.

Mr P.G. Pandal: Of course we should. The Government is prepared to squander that.

Dr J.M. WOOLLARD: I agree with the member for South Perth that the Government is squandering the environmental costs. A construction cost of \$1.4 billion, followed by an annual running cost of \$47 million, or \$903 000 a week, is not small bickies. It is a big cost to the community. We live in Perth because it is such a beautiful city. This Government seems intent on destroying Perth. It is selling off heritage buildings and foreshore around the Swan River, and now it is planning to build a railway line along the river.

In other cities and countries people are moving to light rail and to hybrid trains, which can travel around corners quicker and do not need overhead powerlines. On the subject of the overhead powerlines, one of my constituents who has an engineering background has pointed out to me that one of his major concerns is that the salt froth from the river may short-circuit the railway. If that happens in a few years time and the rail system breaks down, what will be the reaction of the Government? Would it build another lane on the freeway just for emergencies, which would mean an encroachment on the river foreshore? I am disappointed that the minister has not responded to my constituent to explain what measures the Government has taken to ensure that that is not a problem in the future. I have been meeting with a group of people, several of whom are engineers, to discuss the railway options.

Another question that group has raised, which the Government has not adequately explained, is why the Government is proceeding with a track gauge that is not used in other States. Why will Western Australia have a track gauge measuring three feet and six inches, rather than one measuring four feet and eight inches? People who travel to Perth on the *Indian Pacific* must change trains. Surely any rail that is built in the future should have that consistency. It is being looked at in other areas. If there is mutual recognition for professions, why does it not apply for transport as well? Why is this Government making Western Australia the backward State?

I return to the route options for the railway. I have mentioned the Kenwick option, but another option that has been put to me by people in the community, especially those in the Fremantle area, is to extend the railway from Fremantle to Rockingham and then to Mandurah. The Government seems determined to bring the debate back constantly to a battle between its choice of the freeway route, and the previous Government's Kenwick route. That is why this motion is very good. The member for South Perth is asking what the viable route options are, and it may be that the Fremantle route is a better way to go or that the Kenwick link should be kept as well as the Fremantle route. I have discussed this railway line with officers from the City of Melville, who showed me diagrams that they had presented to the Government. I am not supporting this as an alternative, because it would need to be looked at carefully, but the option these officers had attempted to discuss with the Government was a railway line which came from the city, through Nedlands, and was then tunnelled to Garden City and later linked up with the freeway.

I am pleased to see a group of schoolchildren in the gallery today. Those students will know that when they write essays, they must assess various options and make notes of what they will include in their essays. The Railway (Jandakot to Perth) Bill does not appear to be based on any assessment of transport planning needs for Perth. Surely planning involves undertaking assessments based on the needs of the community. Members on both sides of the House agree that transport in the metropolitan area should be improved. However, surely any transport system should be built to operate within a community that can take advantage of it.

Mr Phillip Pandal; Mr Mike Board; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Deputy Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Arthur Marshall; Acting Speaker; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bernie Masters; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Dr Janet Woollard

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I advise members on my right that I am having difficulty hearing, as I am sure is Hansard.

Dr J.M. WOOLLARD: The route for this railway line is from Mount Henry Bridge to the city. That section of the freeway will have a couple of stations, but very few people will use the train because the area is not highly populated.

Paragraph (c) of the motion queries whether the route option proposed by Mr Peter Bruechle was fully examined by the Government. I believe Mr Bruechle's preferred option was that the Perth end of the railway line be tunnelled through South Perth. The people in South Perth might appreciate the ability to access the city via a train that goes through a tunnel. Likewise, the councillors and staff from the City of Melville hoped the railway would pass through a tunnel in that area to provide access to the city for the constituents within the city of Melville. The proposed route has not been assessed thoroughly. It appears to be a knee-jerk reaction by this Government.

During the coalition Government's term, the community was very unhappy about the cost of the belltower. This Government is building an icon for itself at a cost of \$1.4 billion, which is the amount on the table at present. The minister has assured us the \$1.4 billion will be the total capital outlay and that it will cost \$47 million a year to run. If the Government is so sure of its calculations, why does it not allow the Public Accounts Committee to scrutinise them or provide in the legislation that the overt and covert costs can be examined by the Auditor General? If the Government is happy to include something like that in the Bill, we will have an assurance that the full costs will be made public. People do not trust this Government to spend appropriately the amount of money the Government has estimated that this railway line will cost.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I draw members' attention to the member for Alfred Cove.

Dr J.M. WOOLLARD: The community believes that many other vital areas such as health care need those funds. The Government took office with a promise to improve health services, education, and law and order and to stop logging old-growth forests. The \$1.4 billion plus \$47 million a year will not address any of those core issues.

The students in the public gallery will see for themselves that at election time, both major parties promise the same things: they will improve health services, education and law and order. We have not heard that an extra \$1.4 billion will be spent on the health system. Earlier this year, a full bench order was made for workloads in the health care sector. It has not been implemented by the Government. Why? It claims it does not have the money; yet it has the money to build a railway line along the middle of the freeway, which will destroy the amenity enjoyed by the beautiful city of Perth. Many people visit Perth because they have heard what a beautiful city it is. People live in Perth because they think it is a beautiful city.

[Leave granted for the member's time to be extended.]

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr J.M. WOOLLARD: The tourist industry promotes Perth by displaying scenes of the river. People are encouraged to take boat tours of the river. What will they see at the end of this Government's term if it continues to sell prime riverfront land, such as the Heathcote site on which Duncraig House is located and the land on which Sunset Hospital is located, for redevelopment? That land should be sacred; it is our heritage, as is our river. That land is being sold to fund a railway for which the Government has not undertaken a proper assessment to gauge community transport needs. The development of a transport system should be based on population densities and preferred destinations. If the proposed railway line were built through densely populated areas, it might not cost as much as \$47 million a year. The cost could possibly be reduced to \$20 million. That would enable an extra \$27 million to be added to the health budget each year, which would prevent the need to sell heritage listed houses and river foreshore to fund health.

This year, the Department of Health will sell Duncraig House for 0.16 per cent of the health budget. That building and land has heritage value and is used by residents of both the north and south of Perth. However, it is being sold off to fund, for one year, 0.16 per cent of the health budget. What does \$4 million mean in the \$1.4 billion cost of this railway line? People are not convinced that \$1.4 billion is the true figure. I said earlier that the full costs of this project should be examined by the Public Accounts Committee or the Auditor General. I hope that the Government will consider that option, because the community does not believe that the Government is managing the economics of this project appropriately.

Mr Phillip Pendal; Mr Mike Board; Ms Alannah MacTiernan; Deputy Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Arthur Marshall; Acting Speaker; Dr Elizabeth Constable; Mr Rob Johnson; Mr Bernie Masters; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Dr Janet Woollard

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The Government should examine this Bill. I believe that previous Bills have been referred to the Auditor General for consideration; however, that has not occurred during my time in this Parliament. When a project will cost \$1.4 billion, and will have operating costs of \$47 million annually, it needs close scrutiny. I hope that the Government will consider referring the Bill to the Auditor General.

I also hope that the Government will seriously consider the motion moved by the member for South Perth to refer the Bill to a joint select committee; that is, one comprising members of both this Chamber and the other Chamber. If the Government is willing to consider this motion, I am quite happy to form part of that committee.

This Bill is important to the people who live in my electorate. They will be severely disadvantaged when the bus lanes along the freeway are ripped up for this railway line. As I mentioned the other day, six or eight buses that travel along Canning Highway access a dedicated bus lane into Perth. People in that area can currently walk from their homes to a bus stop where they can catch a bus that takes them within walking distance of where they work. Under this Bill, those people will no longer have that option.

The traffic jam of cars trying to get onto the freeway this morning was severe; however, it was not as severe as it can sometimes be. For a while I drove along the freeway at 30 or 40 kilometres an hour, but it may have been less; it was very slow. As I drove along I watched the buses go along the dedicated bus lane, and I thought that it was a shame that I could not catch a bus to Parliament House. I would have to make a couple of stops. I congratulate the previous Government on installing that dedicated bus lane. Many of my elderly constituents have phoned me because they know that this Bill is on the table. They waited many years for that dedicated bus lane. They feel comfortable catching buses into town. What will happen now? There will be traffic delays during the construction of the railway. If those people want to go into town, they will have to walk to the bus stop, catch a bus to Canning Bridge, get a ticket for the train, catch the train into Perth and then catch another bus to where they want to go. A 300 or 400-metre walk is nothing to some members of this House. We must remember, though, that in the winter months, these elderly people will have to wait at a bus stop to start their journey, then they will have to get off the bus and walk along the bridge to catch the train, and when they get off the train in Perth, they will have to stand in a queue to catch another bus. This will not just affect a few people.

When we analysed the bus routes along Canning Highway to Perth, we looked at only five of the bus routes. Since then we have been given the transport map that lists all the bus routes. The areas initially considered have a population of more than 100 000. All those people who live in the southern suburbs will be disadvantaged. How many people travel to Perth from Mandurah on a daily basis? I ask on behalf of my constituents why this Government is ignoring the transport needs of the people of Alfred Cove and the City of Melville and focussing on the needs of the people of Mandurah. This change to the route will provide a 12-minute difference in travelling time. I wonder whether the minister has costed all those factors into her equation. If she has not, that is one good reason for this Bill to be referred to a joint select committee. It is a good motion.

Debate in this House over the past few months has been on the two options - the Kenwick and freeway lines. If this Bill were referred to a joint select committee, all options could be put on the table. The joint committee would probably look at the geography of Perth and where people are coming from and going to. It would probably find that it does not make sense for the railway to go along a route that will not have any patronage. The Government is planning to invest in this project to the tune of \$1.4 billion. There will be an ongoing, annual cost of \$47 million, which equates to \$903 000 a week or \$129 000 a day. The committee would want to know whether Western Australia was getting value for money. That is why I support the motion moved by the member for South Perth. The community is concerned about the Government's lack of accountability and transparency, and it has a right to know whether the Government is being accountable and transparent.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 1324]