

RAILWAY (JANDAKOT TO PERTH) BILL 2002

Discharge of Order of the Day and Referral to Standing Committee on Public Administration and Finance

Resumed from 6 November on the following motion moved by Hon Simon O'Brien -

That the order of the day for the second reading of the Bill be discharged and the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Public Administration and Finance.

HON DERRICK TOMLINSON (East Metropolitan) [10.47 pm]: On sober reflection, I realised that at the latter stages -

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon George Cash): Order! It has been drawn to my attention that a notice of contingent motion was given today by Hon Peter Foss in respect of this order of the day. However, the President also indicated that he intended to rule on the matter. I assume that that ruling is being considered and will be delivered tomorrow. Under the circumstances, until a ruling is given, I believe the appropriate course is to continue with order of the day No 72. Therefore, I give the call to Hon Derrick Tomlinson.

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: I was saying that, on sober reflection, I realise that at the latter stage of my delivery the last time we discussed this legislation, emotion clouded my judgment and my selection of adjectives when I referred to the Government's action as unlawful. The Leader of the House challenged me to prove it was unlawful, and I now apologise to the Government for using that phrase; clearly, unlawful it was not. Everything that the Government has done in this case is well and truly within the law. Unlawful it is not. In the same sober reflection, I considered what other adjectives are appropriate. Unlawful is not appropriate. Unprincipled is appropriate, as are dishonest, unscrupulous, disingenuous, tricky, artful, opportunistic, slippery, snaky, sneaky, underhanded, devious, insidious, malodorous, fetid, fraudulent, dishonourable, infamous, ignoble, knavish, picaresque, spivish, scurvish, scabby, scurrilous, shameless, cheating, cozening, prevaricating, perfidious, scrubby, contemptible and reprehensible.

Hon Frank Hough interjected.

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: I do not think that would be a fair adjective to apply to it. However, all of those adjectives are appropriate words for a deal that is described in *The West Australian* of Thursday, 7 November 2002 as follows -

In return, the Greens will vote with Government MLCs to defeat an Opposition motion to send the Railway Bill to a parliamentary committee.

What an amazing way to deal with the parliamentary process: subvert the parliamentary process by a deal the single intention of which is to prevent parliamentary scrutiny of the Government's program! What a perfidious and reprehensible strategy! It is lawful, certainly, but it is perfidious and reprehensible also certainly. It is not only reprehensible. We also need to consider what we are doing. We are planning a railway. What a way to plan a railway! We plan a railway by saying we will put in a railway station to service the Royal Perth Golf Club, the Perth Zoo and Como Beach, at a cost of \$10 million, for the single reason of preventing parliamentary scrutiny of the Government's proposal. That is the way the railway is being planned. There has been no use of Como Beach since 1965. The reason is that in 1965 dredging commenced to fill the river for the Kwinana Freeway. Therefore, what was one of the most popular beaches along the Swan River in metropolitan Perth has not been used since 1965. The minister has said that a railway station at South Perth will provide access to the South Perth foreshore and the Royal Perth Golf Club. How many of the players at the Royal Perth Golf Club wheel their buggies onto a suburban train? They wheel them into their Mercedes, perhaps, but not into a suburban train. As for using a train to get to the South Perth Zoo, that is a possibility, but when I was a child the most popular way of getting to the South Perth Zoo was by the South Perth ferry.

Hon Jim Scott: Yes, but how did you get out?

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: God only knows, but if I am given enough peanuts I will do anything!

What is it that we are being prevented from scrutinising? Hon Peter Foss made considerable points about the 10-minute saving; so too did the minister. Shortly after coming into Government, the minister announced, without any other study, that if the railway were taken down the freeway and along the Como-South Perth foreshore and across the Narrows Bridge, 10 minutes would be saved on the journey from Mandurah to Perth. Where did she get that from? The answer was given to us by Peter Martinovich, the railways engineer. He said that he discovered that - he must have wet himself when he found it - in a report that had not previously been released. That was a report prepared in October 1996 by BSD Consultants Pty Ltd entitled "Kwinana Freeway Investigation Final Report - Perth to Mandurah". He said the previous Government had never released that report, and in that report was the proof that we could save 10 minutes on the journey. I requested Hon Graham Giffard to table the report; and, sure enough, the statement on page 9 of the report reads -

Over the segment from Perth City Station to a point just south of the junction between the Kwinana Freeway and the Fremantle/Welshpool railway freight line, a railway in the Kwinana Freeway Reserve would be about 12 kilometres shorter than the route via Kenwick and would reduce train journey times by about 10 minutes. This would result in significant savings in annual operating costs.

If the distance between Glen Iris - where the tunnel was built for the Kenwick deviation - and Perth station is 12 kilometres, at an average speed of 120 kilometres an hour we would save 10 minutes.

Hon Jim Scott: It does not stop at the stations.

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: That is an interesting point. I turn now to what this is predicated on. The proposed route that BSD Consultants had in mind had stations at Bibra Lake, Leach Highway and South Street, Murdoch. Those three stations are proposed to replace the stations at Canning Vale, Nicholson Road and Thornlie - the Sheila McHale station. Therefore, the three stations for the Kenwick route - which is nine minutes travel, or three minutes for each station - are proposed to be substituted for the nine minutes for the other three stations on the freeway route as far as Leach Highway; in the BSD Consultants' proposal there is no station beyond Leach Highway. Therefore, when we calculate those three stops, at 120 kilometres an hour we save 10 minutes on the journey. However, we will now have a station at Canning Bridge. Therefore, we will have to take off three minutes and will reduce the saving in travelling time to seven minutes. Therefore, to do the journey and save 10 minutes, suddenly we will have to go from 120 kilometres an hour to an average speed of 300 kilometres an hour. If the Government builds a station at South Perth, and that takes another three minutes off the journey, it will now take four minutes, so the train is travelling at 1 200 kilometres an hour down the freeway - whackety dack! That is not the only premise that we are arguing.

Hon Alan Cadby: What about the sonic booms?

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: We do not have the sonic booms, thank God, because this is predicated on two tunnels. BSD Consultants Pty Ltd referred to the Mount Henry Bridge.

Hon Jim Scott interjected.

Hon DERRICK TOMLINSON: Hon Jim Scott should let me finish; I have only got one minute left.

BSD demonstrated that the Mount Henry Bridge could not tolerate the weight of a train and therefore the railway line would require a railway bridge. That would require the train to leave the centre of the freeway, join the railway bridge alongside the traffic bridge and then return to the centre of the freeway. That can be done only by an overpass or an underpass. What did BSD consultants say? It said it would put a tunnel under the Mount Henry Bridge. The train will hit the tunnel at 300 kilometres an hour! I can hear the driver saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, we are about to hit the Mount Henry decline; please tighten your seatbelts and strap on your crash helmets because, yahoo, we are into the tunnel!"

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

House adjourned at 11.01 pm
