

MITCHELL FREEWAY EXTENSION

639. Mr A.P. O’GORMAN to the Premier:

I was very concerned to hear the Leader of the Opposition’s claims that the Government has made significant changes to the proposed Mitchell Freeway extension. Will the Premier please clear up this matter?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

Let us go to the issue of credibility. Let us go to the issue of trust. Whom can people trust when something is said in Western Australian politics today? This morning in a grievance on the Connolly part of the freeway extension, the Leader of the Opposition said that it was always the understanding of the people in that area that it would be constructed as a sunken structure because the vast majority of the freeway is of that form. He also said that this was the basis upon which everyone purchased their land and developed their businesses. The Leader of the Opposition went on to say that under the Labor Government - my Government - significant design changes had been proposed and that it was at the end of September that residents first discovered that the Mitchell Freeway section -

Mr C.J. Barnett: That is what they told me.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition is basing his comments on what the residents tell him, so he is not accepting responsibility for what he says.

Mr C.J. Barnett: I accept responsibility for everything I say. Unlike you and the member for Joondalup, I actually talk to the residents.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition claimed that it was at the end of September that residents first discovered that the Mitchell Freeway section through the suburb would not be sunk. What is the truth? The truth is always different when it comes to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Are you calling those residents liars?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I am talking about the Leader of the Opposition. Concept plans for this area date back to 1980 and to date have included four versions, including the Department for Planning and Infrastructure’s plans developed for the northern suburbs railway extension and the current preliminary design prepared by Maunsell Australia Pty Ltd in 2004. All four plans show a similar vertical alignment through the Connolly section, with the natural depression adjacent to the primary school being filled. Indeed, I have been provided with a map, which was put together in September 1989, that shows a virtually identical structure for the 500 metres of the extension through Connolly to that which is now in the design concept that has been released.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Tell the people of Connolly that. I believe them. I believe the member for Joondalup’s constituents.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I will tell the Leader of the Opposition what I will tell the people of Connolly. I will tell them the truth. The truth is that if we change the design, environmental, economic and safety issues will need to be addressed. Nevertheless, we are consulting with that group.

Mr C.J. Barnett: No, you’re not.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: We are until 5 November, and there will be further consultations on other sections of the planning for the freeway extension until February next year.

Several members interjected.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: There is no doubt that the Leader of the Opposition has come into this Parliament and said something about that issue that is not true. We find that happens quite often in debate in Western Australia. It is further confirmation -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Dr G.I. GALLOP: It is further confirmation of why the former Leader of the Liberal Party, Richard Court, tried to prevent the member for Cottesloe becoming Leader of the Liberal Party.