

FORRESTFIELD–AIRPORT LINK

277. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Transport:

There has been a lot of public commentary in recent days about the Liberal–National government’s Forrestfield–Airport Link. Can the minister please update the house on the status of the project, which will transform the eastern suburbs, including my electorate of Forrestfield?

Mr D.C. NALDER replied:

I thank the member for his question and for his ongoing interest in activities in the Forrestfield electorate. The Liberal–National government is committed to delivering the Forrestfield–Airport Link, because it will mean that it will take commuters from the communities in the eastern suburbs of Forrestfield, High Wycombe and that area 20 minutes to travel to the CBD. At the moment it is taking commuters in those areas nearly an hour to drive to Perth.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members for Armadale and Butler!

Mr D.C. NALDER: All that those on the other side are doing is confirming what we fear and the reason that we are acting so quickly. They have complained about this project from day one, and they are basically indicating that should they win the next election, they will scrap this project. They do not support this project that will open up the eastern suburbs—the long-forgotten suburbs in the east of Perth. It has taken this Liberal–National government to start putting development into the eastern suburbs of Western Australia, to provide some surety and some public transport and amenities that suburbs in other electorates enjoy. We are proud of the fact that we are opening up the eastern suburbs and providing a much more convenient proposition for the electorate in the eastern suburbs.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: The electorate?

Mr D.C. NALDER: The electorates. This project will provide not only world-class public transport to the airport, but also the people —

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: This project will provide not only a world-class transport solution to the airport and a fantastic public transport solution to people in the eastern suburbs, but also is expected to create up to 2 000 jobs. In these tough economic times, it is the responsibility of government to ensure that it puts in place the infrastructure that will provide for the future and also create jobs for people who are otherwise struggling. This is a fantastic opportunity.

I will not remind Labor at this time about its failed marginal seats rail program, or whatever it was going to call it, that was going to blow out by over \$734 million. It was never delivering a rail line to the airport.

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: They clearly do not like being reminded that they were building a railway nearly to the airport but not to the airport. In fact, they talk about how far away the Airport West station is from the airport, but I can tell them that it is twice as close —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members for Victoria Park and Cannington! You have made your point, member for Victoria Park.

Mr D.C. NALDER: It is twice as close as the station they proposed, which was going to be in the middle of Tonkin Highway, twice as far away from the Airport West station and with the inconvenience of sticking it in the middle Tonkin Highway. We are providing a much more suitable outcome for the people in the eastern suburbs, for the electorates of Belmont and Forrestfield and beyond into Kalamunda and to the people of Midland. We are thinking of all the people out there. By introducing the bill today, we are confirming our intention to get on and build this project. We are going to construct this railway, because we do not want to see a situation —

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: We would not want to ever see a situation such as the one created by the opposition's careless comrades in the east who have scrapped a project that the government had committed to at the time. What a careless and irresponsible act by the Labor Party.

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park!