

PERTH-BUNBURY — FAST TRAIN SERVICE

9. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Premier:

Can the Premier advise the house of the state government's latest initiative in building Western Australia?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:

I thank the member for Collie-Wellington for the question. It is an initiative that will eventually impact extremely positively upon his electorate. Yesterday, I talked about the capital works and infrastructure program that is being undertaken in Western Australia now, and about once-in-a-century projects. Several of them are happening in the space of a single decade at this time. This government is building Western Australia. The week before last, I announced that the state government would undertake a feasibility study into the provision of a fast train service between Perth and Bunbury. I was inspired to do that by the remarkably successful outcome of the government's project to build the rail line from Perth to Mandurah, which can only be described as a brilliant, visionary infrastructure project that all other states now wish they either had done or could do. That project has made us the envy of the nation, and I congratulate the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure for her vision, and her courage under fire from those ignorant enough to consistently denigrate the project. Where are they now? They are probably catching the train.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: It is quite remarkable that members of the opposition still criticise the project. It is quite unbelievable. I think I just picked up, by way of interjection, members opposite saying that they had started the project.

Dr K.D. Hames interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Dawesville to order for the first time.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: As I recall, the intention of the previous government was to build a railway line from Rockingham—at some stage, potentially, from Mandurah—not to Perth at all, but to Kenwick. That project would never have delivered anything to all those commuters who now catch the train from places like Bullcreek and Murdoch. It would have made Western Australia not the envy of the nation, but the laughing stock of the nation.

Mr J.H.D. Day interjected.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: What did the Romans ever do for us? What did they do?

Mr C.J. Barnett: That was Geoff Gallop's line. Be original.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: It was not, actually; it was a line taken from a film. It was not a Geoff Gallop line; it was a line taken from a film, as the member for Cottesloe might know.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: I find it difficult to defend the Liberal Party when people tell me that it is a rabble. These sorts of experiences do not do me much good in trying to mount that defence.

The Perth-Mandurah rail line was an absolutely outstanding success that continues every day of the week. Building on that, we believe that it would be appropriate to look at the feasibility of taking a fast train service all the way to Bunbury, not via Mandurah, but via the new transport corridor of the Perth-Bunbury highway.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call to order the members for Roe and Murray.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: That is what we will do. The information we have to hand at the moment leads us to believe that the project could transport people from the new underground Esplanade station in the heart of Perth to the heart of Bunbury in 90 minutes or less, at 160 kilometres an hour. I am certain that this development will take place, but it is necessary with a once-in-a-century project like this to make sure that it is done right, and to collate all the information before launching into the work, and that is what will happen. I went to Bunbury a week or so ago and we looked at the potential route of the rail line and the site for the station with the mayor, David Smith.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call to order the member for Roe and the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: I would describe the reaction from the people of Bunbury to the proposal as incredibly enthusiastic, and so it should be. I am grateful for the support that the member for Collie-Wellington has given during discussions about the benefit this project would deliver, and I anticipate that that benefit will be delivered.