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Question : AustralAsia Railway - Effect on Education Spending

Question Date : 20/02/2001
Member : Mr MITCHELL
To : MINISTER for SCHOOL EDUCATION

Status : Questions

Information :
This government is committed to developing the skills and knowledge that will enable us to build an economy that sees all Territorians benefit and prosper. How will the prosperity and growth generated to Territorians by the railway help provide young Territorians with the best possible education?

ANSWER

Mr Speaker, I welcome the question from the Member for Milner. Now the members opposite must really feel the pain today. You have got to feel sorry for them really when the word railway is mentioned. We have just seen the duplicity of the Leader of the Opposition and how close she is to the Federal Leader of the Opposition. She tells him to butt out on one hand, fork out $300m on the other hand. None of it ever happens. It doesn't happen. You're a joke. Then we had the federal member for the Northern Territory, Warren Snowdon call for an inquiry. I mean, if you ever want to undermine a project this is the active way to do it.

My colleague the member for Drysdale recently mentioned the Productivity Commission Report and he said that we spend the most per capita on health in the Northern Territory. You may also be interested in knowing we also spend the most on education per capita. We also have the best student/teacher ratios in the country. Now in order for a prosperous economy to keep going - and even you lot over there might understand there is a clear link between jobs, prosperity and happiness, lifestyle and the ability if governments to fund progress and to provide for their citizens. This money is reinvested into hospitals, into schools, into sporting infrastructure, lifestyle, training, and things of that ilk. That's good for Territorians. They understand that; the members opposite don't.

It's interesting to note that the memorandum of understanding and cooperation which was signed last December between eight of the Territories main public and private providers, that's the RTO's, Registered Training Organisation, is and has been in place for sometime to provide training for the railway. Now members of this network are the Centralian College, the Batchelor Institute, Julalikari Training, Tangentyere Council, Employment Training Services, Industries Services Training, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the NTU.

For the benefit of the members opposite, the NT University is located out at Casuarina. It's the same university you all opposed when the CLP pushed ahead and established it. It is part of the far-sighted vision of the CLP to establish training and to provide for its citizens, and we do it very generously as supported by the Productivity Commission. This is how we support Territorians. We push for economic development, we push for the railway. We have had set backs that's true, we've had set backs but it keeps going ahead. You don't give up. You don't drop the bundle. When you have the commitment of the three governments involved, it happens.

Mr Speaker, with thousands of jobs due to flow from this project and from other private investment that is going on, not only in this area but others, the CLP government will continue to deliver in jobs, in training, in education, in health for the benefit of all Territorians.