Mr Speaker, it really is worthwhile reiterating what the railway is going to do in relation to trade. Completion of the railway and the associated developments that the Minister for Ports has explained to us will transform Darwin's role as Australia's gateway to Asia. Obviously the opposition see that as a threat because, as you know, the opposition is a branch of the Australian Labor Party and their federal masters in Canberra want to stop the activity occurring here which is going to transform our port into an active port which plays an active role in moving product in and out of Australia, because their mates that run the ports down in Melbourne and Sydney and their transport companies down there, they're starting to become concerned. They have gone to their mate Ferguson, saying: 'You've got to stop this'. And this mob here, they're playing along with it. We heard Warren Snowden on the radio only last week saying it's a pig in the poke. That's the Labor Party's attitude to it.

As the member for Karama pointed out their record in promoting and supporting developments that create jobs for Territorians and lifestyle improvements in this Territory are abysmal. Every major job-creating project, every major project which advances the Territory, the Labor Party is on record as saying: 'We don't support it, we don't want it to go ahead'. That's the fact of the matter, and they're repeating their form at the present time.

We all know Darwin is the closest Australian capital city to the key South-East Asian centres of commerce and trade, including Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, Manila all within 4000 km.

Members interjecting.

Mr MANZIE: They're still bleating over there. They can't help themselves. They've got to knock everything that creates jobs and activities.

This railway will reinforce our strategic location and our potential as a transport and logistics hub of regional significance. The combined railway and port operations will be able to handle 500 000 shipping containers each year. That represents 20% of Australia's total sea freight volume. Once established, the new trade route to and from the southern markets of Australia into that South-East Asian area will make transit time savings of between 25% and 50% readily achievable.

Figures like those, coupled with Darwin's record of industrial stability, will make the new north-south route attractive to importers and exporters alike, in particular those dealing in time-sensitive and valuable product.

That's why the Labor Party doesn't like it. They are masters at saying: 'We're going to lose a bit of influence'. If they haven't got anything to say that's going to support it, they should at least keep quiet. But the sort of carry-on that we've been getting from these people, it really turns my stomach. We on this side of the House have been working on this project for many, many years. To have it come close to fruition and to see these people trying to undermine it and the Leader of the Opposition, there she is - 'Yes, Kim'll give $300m' - she should have heard old Snowden on
the radio last week. 'And what do you say, Mr Snowden, about Clare Martin's claim of $300m from a Labor
government? 'Oh, no, no, no! We wouldn't support that. That's a pig in a poke.' That's the Labor Party's real reaction
to the railway.

Every now and then when you scratch the surface, up it pops. Everything this mob do and say, it's put together to try
and stop development here. Otherwise why would they try and prevent everything that's created momentum and
economic development in the Territory. Why have they tried to stop it? You've got to ask yourself what are they
doing here.

I've been to South-East Asia many, many times. On the last trip I found a very, very keen interest in the railway and
other developments which are planned for the Northern Territory. The railway and the port will provide impetus to
establish Darwin as a key supply, service and distribution centre for the region, especially for the oil and gas
activities currently taking place in the Timor Sea and eastern Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. It will give a boost
to the Territory's mining industry. In fact, I've received a couple of approaches from mineral developers with
deposits located near the railway route about using the railway to transport minerals to Darwin for overseas export.

There are completely new operations that this railway may make viable and which will increase economic activity
and create jobs for Territorians - something this group don't want because they don't want to see success. They want
to be able to stand up and say, as we've heard for year after year the Leader of the Opposition say: 'Really, the
unemployment figures in the Territory are way above the official figures'. They love it. They love denigrating the
Territory. They love knocking job-creation project.

There can be no doubt the railway will give a tremendous lift to two-way trade between Australia and Asia, and
Darwin will be at the centre of the action. But there's no doubt the ALP are actively involved in trying to prevent it.

It's like their claims on the petrol. The Labor Party introduced that petrol tax and they kept quiet for 13 years about
it. Then when the Howard government gives all Australians on average salaries an extra $50 a week as a result of
taxation reductions through the GST, what do this mob do? They say: 'What's the government doing about fuel?' I'll
tell you what they're doing. They gave the average wage earner an extra $50 a week in income tax reductions and
this mob want to roll it back. They are a disgrace to the economic development of Australia. In particular, they are
really working to undermine the creation of jobs and activity in our Territory.

Mr PALMER (Leader of Government Business): Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the
Question Paper.