



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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BRISBANE AIRPORT PARALLEL RUNWAY

Mr FENLON (Greenslopes—ALP) (11.40 a.m.): I rise to speak about a matter that is of continuing concern to the residents not only of my electorate but of many electorates on the southern and eastern side of Brisbane. I refer to the matter of the Brisbane Airport Corporation's master plan.

Mr Purcell: Hear, hear!

Mr FENLON: Many honourable members, such as the member for Bulimba, who has just acknowledged the importance of this matter, and the suburbs which they represent are certainly going to be impacted upon.

Mr Roberts: And the people of Nudgee.

Mr FENLON: I take that interjection.

The draft report was released earlier this year to a somewhat enraptured media. I can clearly recall the front page of the Courier-Mail on the day that report was released. It carried an artist's impression of what the new runway configuration would be. I can remember with great glee seeing a very stylised set of inner-city buildings—the high-rise buildings of inner-city Brisbane—but the southern suburbs seemed to be depicted as rolling green pastures—land where one could imagine cows and sheep grazing serenely. That is not the case. The suburbs over which the flight paths are intended are some of the most intensively populated areas of Brisbane.

It is no coincidence that the electorate which I represent—Greenslopes—is the smallest electorate in this State. It is an electorate which consists of 14 square kilometres. Therefore, it is an area which has some of the most densely populated parts of this city and this State. Yet, as I said, there was that artist's depiction on the front page of the Courier-Mail of rolling green pastures. That did cause some glee. The other part of that artist's impression showed the runway having dual take-offs and landings at the same time from aircraft over the bay. So they are not even landing over the rolling green pastures of Greenslopes.

That was the start, and it went downhill from there, because what has been revealed in the weeks and months since the release of that report has been appalling. The BAC has not treated seriously my constituents or the constituents in the other southern suburbs of Brisbane. It has not treated them as intelligent human beings. The so-called consultation meetings that I have attended have been a farce. I have seen constituents shaking their heads in disbelief at the way in which they have been treated throughout the consultation process.

Mr Purcell: They wouldn't attend some of the meetings. That is what happens when you have community groups together. They wouldn't attend.

Mr FENLON: The member for Bulimba is quite correct. The BAC has shown complete arrogance from the beginning of this process by not treating seriously those constituents and their concerns. The plot is still unfolding, and it is my intention to alert this House to the smoke and mirrors and the bells and whistles that the Brisbane Airport Corporation has deployed in order to promote its proposal and, indeed, to stifle public debate.

In April this year, the Brisbane Airport Corporation released its recommendation for a parallel runway. Since then we have been treated to an unparalleled exercise in arrogance by a corporation whose conception of adequate community consultation involves the systemic removal of anything that

might provide us with the real clues as to its intention. Indeed, the motif that I believe is most pertinent here is that of a detective story. Contrary to all principles of transparency and due process, we have been left to discover the grubby details of what the BAC has planned over our suburbs. Let me outline the most important points on which we can charge the BAC not simply with culpable negligence but, indeed, outright deceit—deceit in terms of deceiving the citizens throughout those south side suburbs which are going to be deleteriously affected by this particular proposal.

The BAC has consistently refused to release draft flight plans that would enable local residents to assess the impact of the parallel runway. The reason it cites for this is its inability to predict with accuracy the exact flight paths for another two to three years. What arrant rubbish! In spite of this, it has been able to supply us with noise impact maps, which I will come to in a moment. The BAC stated on page 62 of the master plan that—

"... aircraft flight paths in the immediate vicinity of the airport have been constructed in consultation with Airservices Australia based on standard arrival and departure details."

Such a declaration is surely at diametrical odds with the proposition that flight paths cannot be predicted. Am I being a little pedantic?

Recently, Mr Kevin Rudd, president of the South-side Community Association and Labor candidate for Griffith, lodged an FOI inquiry with the Federal Department of Transport. What he obtained was very interesting. First of all, there was a letter dated 4 April 1998 from the aviation division of the Federal Department of Transport containing a recommendation that the BAC release flight paths. As yet it has failed to comply with that simple directive. Are we being unreasonable? The member for Bulimba and I and our constituents are impacted upon directly by this. We live in those electorates. We hear and feel the impact of those aircraft. Are we being unreasonable to ask that very fundamental question: what are the flight paths? As yet, the BAC has failed to comply with this directive.

The current Federal member, Mr Graeme McDougall, in a show of impotent bravado, promised that he would obtain the flight paths on more than one occasion, but as yet he has produced nothing and continues to be culpably inactive. Mr McDougall has indeed created a very fine impersonation of Inspector Clouseau wandering through our suburbs, ignoring what really is going on and pretending that he cannot make a decision on this. When something is so obviously and glaringly wrong, anyone who has any desire to properly represent his or her suburbs must stand up and say simply, "This is wrong." The Federal member to whom I refer has failed dismally in that very first simple and basic test.

The second unfortunate revelation arising from the FOI inquiry is the explicit advice that Australian noise exposure forecasts—ANEFs—are of no use in predicting noise impact for runway development. In effect, the assessment they provide serves to underestimate the magnitude of the impact, yet the Brisbane Airport Corporation continues to insist that they serve the purpose. As an interesting adjunct to this, it is worth noting that, in a private briefing to representatives of the business community, the BAC suggested that double glazing, just like in Holland, may be necessary to counter the noise levels which will follow from the proposed runway. That is perhaps fine for business and fine in Holland, where the company is based, but I ask members to ponder the logistics of double glazing a Queenslander.

The final point that I wish to stress is the BAC's failure to adequately canvass options other than the parallel runway. In over 240 pages of master plan documentation, a total of three are deemed sufficient to summarily dismiss other runway options. This is all we ask. The BAC continues to dazzle us with its heroic statements that, by 2006, the current airport will not be able to cope with the volume of increased air traffic and that it will provide us with the only means to forge ahead. If the assumptions on which this statement is based can be established——

Time expired.
