

GOVERNMENT'S OLD-GROWTH FOREST POLICY

**183. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage:**

I understand that the minister has been in my electorate today. I refer to the Government's old-growth forest policy.

- (1) Is it true that of the \$136 million timber industry restructure package, \$25 million will be spent on national parks, nearly \$4 million will be spent on public servants and departmental offices, \$48 million will be spent on closing businesses; and \$30 million will be paid to workers forced out of their jobs as a result of the Gallop Government's policy?
- (2) Is it also true that of the \$136 million, only \$11.5 million is budgeted to further develop the timber industry and provide jobs and that to date, only \$3.8 million has been spent?
- (3) When will the Government announce the timber volumes so that the federal Government's \$15 million allocated under the Regional Forest Agreement process can be spent?

**Dr J.M. EDWARDS replied:**

I thank the member for the question, but it would be better directed to the Minister for State Development.

- (1) The breakdown of the \$136 million package includes \$25.016 million for national parks; \$47.9 million for business exit assistance; \$30.6 million for the workers assistance package; \$3.45 million for the project director's team and the Manjimup office - this figure includes salaries, office rental costs, vehicle running etc.
- (2) The allocation for industry development, both timber and non-timber, is \$26.5 million of which \$11.5 million is the state contribution. I am not sure where the member obtained the figure of \$3.8 million as expenditure thus far but at 30 June of this year, expenditure totalled \$2.79 million. Other money is earmarked. In fact, this morning I was with what we hope is the purchaser and the vendor of Pemberton mill. We have allocated some millions of dollars and are working with them to try to sort this out in a speedy manner. A number of other projects are waiting to be carried out. If the member could put pressure on the federal Government, it would be very helpful. We are being held to ransom by a federal Government that is holding back \$15 million while we go through a process that is laid out in law. We cannot come up with a final yield until we have gone through the process laid out in the Conservation and Land Management Act. We are moving as quickly as possible.
- (3) The announcement will be made shortly.