

WATER TAX ON FARM DAMS AND MINING BORES

722. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to his failure yesterday to rule out a water tax on farm dams.

- (1) Is the Premier aware of the article in today's edition of *The West Australian* regarding a similar new tax to be levied on mining bores?
- (2) Can the Premier confirm that the Government intends to instigate a user-pays system for farmers and miners, despite the fact that they have already paid the capital cost of the water?
- (3) Does the Premier concede that in the light of these revelations, his so-called consultation process on this matter is nothing but a sham and the outcome is already predetermined?
- (4) Does the Premier intend to place a similar tax on backyard bores, or does he simply intend to levy the agricultural and mining industries, the backbone of our economy?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

Unless I am mistaken, I received the same question yesterday, and my answer today is exactly the same.

Mr P.D. Omodei: It is not the same question.

The SPEAKER: Member!

Dr G.I. GALLOP: There will not be any tax on backyard bores; in fact we are trying to encourage people in Western Australia to use bores to help us with the water problems we have in this State, and we are doing that through an incentive.

Mr P.D. Omodei interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, member!

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The discussions that are continuing between the department and the community following the recommendations of the water summit will continue. A report will be presented to the Government on the implications of those proposals, and we can then make a considered decision. It is not true to say that the Government has made a preconceived decision on this matter. We are waiting to get all of the information so that we can make a decision based on real information.