

OLD-GROWTH FOREST POLICY, IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

1109. Mr OMODEI to the Premier:

I refer to the Government's election commitment to look after timber communities most severely affected by its policy on old-growth forest.

- (1) Has a comprehensive social and economic impact study been conducted in the south west of the Government's policy decision; and, if not, why not?
- (2) When will the construction of the proposed sky jetty in the Donnelly Valley commence?
- (3) When will the funds committed by the Premier in 2002 be forthcoming for the Pemberton tourist community visitors' centre?
- (4) Given that it is 71 weeks since the Government was elected, how does the Premier explain his failure to personally face the people of Manjimup and Pemberton?

Dr GALLOP replied:

- (1)-(4) The member for Warren-Blackwood obviously takes great delight in asking me specific questions on our timber strategy when he knows full well that in this Parliament are the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for State Development who can give him comprehensive answers to those questions.

Mr Omodei: You are the Premier and you make great capital about the forest policy.

Dr GALLOP: I inform the member for Warren-Blackwood that I am not on the Government's committee that deals with this issue. I would be only too happy to give the member a comprehensive answer if he gave me notice of his question, or he could ask one of the ministers concerned. I will repeat what I have said many times in this Parliament and in community debates: the Government has a very clear policy to stop the logging of old-growth forests. I am pleased to say that we have carried out that policy, but it was carried out with the full understanding that it would have implications for individuals, businesses and communities. That is why the Government, on behalf of the taxpayers of Western Australia, committed \$123 million to manage the transition.

Mr Trenorden: How much has been spent?

Dr GALLOP: I will find out if the member puts that question on notice.

Mr Trenorden: You don't care.

Dr GALLOP: I do care. I care very much about this issue and that is why the Government has allocated \$123 million towards a successful resolution of the issue.

Mr Omodei: You don't care.

Dr GALLOP: The member for Warren-Blackwood asks a question every time he comes into the Parliament and then says that I do not care. The Government of Western Australia is delivering. I ask the member for Warren-Blackwood to put on notice questions about the sky jetty project and Pemberton and I will give him detailed answers.