

TIMBER HARVEST AND FURNITURE INDUSTRY IN MANJIMUP

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

I refer to Labor's 2001 election policy "protecting our old-growth forests" which promised "a holistic approach to forest policy: incorporating forest protection and management; new jobs for timber workers; timber industry assistance; the plantation industry; ecotourism; and the restructuring of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM)".

- (1) Given that the Labor Party has been in government for almost two and a half years, when will the Premier be making an announcement on the allowable timber harvest?
- (2) Will he support the establishment of a furniture industry in Manjimup?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

- (1)-(2) I am pleased to see that the member for Warren-Blackwood has defined our approach correctly. We have a holistic approach. We came into government with a policy of stopping the logging of old-growth forests. It was probably the most significant decision ever made for Western Australian forest policy, except perhaps for the decision of a former Labor Government in early times to put some muscle into the then newly-established Department of Forests when Mr Lane-Poole was brought out to Western Australia to get some scientific principles into forest management. It takes Labor to do these things because it has the vision for the future of our State. We have stopped the logging of old-growth forests. People in Western Australia stand a little bit taller today because they know that this State's ancient forests are not being cut down, as was the case under the coalition Government. We accept our responsibility to work with those people affected by the policy. We have developed an excellent relationship with local governments, local businesses, the timber industry and newly developing industries in that area. I congratulate the Ministers for the Environment, the South West, State Development, Forestry and Education and Training, previously the Minister for Training, for the work they are doing to ensure that holistic approach is carried through. A change is occurring in the timber industry in Western Australia. Only a few weeks ago I was at the opening of the new mill in Dardanup, which has up-to-date technology to deal with plantation timber. Plantation timber is now being used in the housing industry in Western Australia. Its use is expanding in leaps and bounds. Our policy has encouraged that industry to develop. We also want to encourage the high value-adding industry, which is the point the member for Warren-Blackwood addressed. We want to see those high value-adding industries operating.

Mr C.J. Barnett: When will you do something about Manjimup?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I do not know whether the Leader of the Opposition has been to Manjimup. I have been there twice in recent days. I have met with the shire council and economic interests there, as has the Minister for the Environment. We are really moving things along in that area. Do members know how we are doing that? We are doing it on the basis of win, win. Opposition members go to a community and ask themselves where they can create division, whether it be between black and white, country and city or employer and employee. They then think they can feed off that division. The division they have created in that area is between the greens and the foresters, but it is a false division. We have cut away all those divisions; we are uniting people throughout Western Australia for the future. Included in that future will be the furniture industry of which we are very proud. Its achievements in recent years have been magnificent. I was very proud to go to the United Arab Emirates with a major trade delegation that included representatives of the State's furniture industry. It is a creative, productive, export-oriented, excellent industry. We would like to see those sorts of things happening in the electorate of the member for Warren-Blackwood.