



Speech by

**Hon. J. ELDER**

**MEMBER FOR CAPALABA**

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Hansard 27 October 1999

### **FORESTRY INDUSTRY**

**Hon. J. P. ELDER** (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (6.21 p.m.): I rise to second the amendment and take head-on some of the claims that were made by the Opposition this morning during question time, particularly the claims made by the acting Leader of the Opposition, who has set out to destroy the RFA. The claims that he made this morning are unmitigated lies. First of all, there was Mr Carter who, members would recall, according to the acting Leader of the Opposition, had been destroyed by the RFA. I told the Leader of the Opposition that as yet there was no implementation, but this evening he has repeated that assertion.

I have found out that Mr Carter has never had a Crown allocation. On going a bit further in investigating Mr Carter's case, I found that over 12 months ago he did have access to some plantation material from Pomona—rose gum—for which he tendered 12 months ago and was unsuccessful. So he has never had a Crown allocation and some 12 months ago he was not successful in a tender for plantation material. However, knowing this, the Leader of the Opposition came into this Parliament and, in an unmitigated lie, repeated his allegation.

I refer to Mr Kluska. Again, there was an unmitigated untruth. This morning, the Leader of the Opposition said that Mr Kluska's access to material at North Arm was being withdrawn. That is true, because it is going into the reserve. However, the Leader of the Opposition did not go on to say that Mr Kluska has already been offered two alternative sources of timber, one at the Caloundra turn-off and the other at Gympie. He is determining on which of those particular resources he will actually conduct his business, based on the species. That was another outrageous unmitigated lie told in this Parliament, and the Leader of the Opposition knew it. He knew it this morning when he raised the point.

I turn now to the member for Noosa who this morning came into this House and referred to the activities of the Cooroy office of the Department of State Development, which has been in there working with the chambers of commerce, working with the council and working with those timberworkers. The member said that a timberworker walked in and all he got was a referral to Centrelink. The member has always been loose with his facts. I can rely on him never to check his facts. That was the case when he was a Minister in the previous Government and that is why he was disaster.

The facts are that early on Boral management asked the Cooroy office if it could prepare a list of counselling services because they felt, quite rightly, that those employees would need those counselling services. That list was prepared and given to some of those workers. In that list was a whole range of referral agencies, of which one was Centrelink—a counselling service. It was not a proposal to go to Centrelink to look for a new job. That is another unmitigated untruth from someone who knew the facts.

**Mr DAVIDSON:** I rise to a point of order. I find those remarks offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

**Mr ELDER:** If he wants them to be withdrawn, I will withdraw them. But a liar is a liar in anyone's language. That is the fact.

The members opposite find it hard to accept that we have delivered on something that they had neither the intestinal fortitude nor the intellectual capacity to deliver, and that is an RFA for Queensland that has the support of all of the players—the timber board, the union, the conservation council, the timber town of Monto, the Mayors of Murgon, Maryborough and Gympie—all of those who were impacted upon. All of them are supportive of the outcome in regard to the RFA.

I turn now to the issue of the workers. The member opposite is certainly no friend of the workers in his area. Already they have seen through him. Today the AWU regional organisers rang me and told me that he is no friend of those workers. They have seen the member's opportunism. They see quite clearly right through him. His little dilemma is that, as a former Minister for Tourism, he is saying, "We will not knock over the RFA, we will knock over jobs and we will go back", which means that he will log Mapleton and Conondale. The member should see if he can live with that on the Sunshine Coast.

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