

SYNERGY — PREMIER COAL SUPPLY CONTRACT

28. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Energy:

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister guarantee that we will have adequate coal supplies for the government coal-fired stations in Collie for the coming year?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

Actually, I just said that.

Dr D.J. Honey: You didn't say that.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! I would just like the minister to answer. Thank you.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I always make the suggestion to the member for Cottesloe that he should always listen to the answer and not read out the prepared question. I said in my answer—this is not the exact words, but the exact meaning—that because of the careful management of the coal by the leadership and workforce, and the fact that for every week from October to Christmas, and I understand it is continuing, Premier Coal has been delivering the contracted volumes, our coal stockpile is in a very healthy position. As I just said in answer to the member's first question—I will repeat it, because clearly he was not listening, otherwise he would know that I said this—that means that we are in the strong position that even if the deliveries by Premier Coal this year are short, we will have sufficient coal for next summer. I am just repeating that, because even though the member asserted by interjection that I had not answered that part of the question, I had actually specifically answered that part of the question.

I want to thank the Premier Coal workforce as well, and the contractor who moved the coal, who I understand was a Bunbury local transport contractor.

This is an unusual situation. There is now a view from the Liberal Party that coal is the future of energy in Western Australia. I know that is based on the fact that Paul Murray in *The West Australian* keeps writing that. There is nowhere in the world that thinks that coal is the energy future. Members opposite have to understand that the energy system is much more complex now than it was in the past. That is because the rise of renewable energy means that coal-fired power stations have a harder life working in the electricity system. It is not that we are against coal. I am against no technology. I am in favour of a sensible debate.

I want to congratulate the member for Vasse for doing what I said to her and stepping up and taking the leadership, and for getting rid of the member for Cottesloe as the shadow minister for Energy. I want to congratulate her for following my advice on those two things. I want her to follow some more advice—that is, get the Liberal Party into proper order here. The Liberal Party cannot go to the 2021 election saying the Labor Party is too slow on closing coal and then go into opposition saying we are too fast. It does not work like that. We are being congratulated by every sensible commentator about our plan in Western Australia. International people are coming to Western Australia to learn how we are doing the transition. That is because we are recognised as being one of the best in the world.

Several members interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: There is an organisation called Powering Beyond Coal. That is an international group of subnational jurisdictions. Those people are very excited to learn about what we are doing here in Western Australia. They have actually asked me—not that I have agreed—to go to Korea and address their conference. That is because they are so impressed by what Western Australia is doing. Get away from the dinosaurs like Paul Murray in *The West Australian*. There is no proper information that is written by that guy. Opposition members need to get away from following his lead and start acting sensibly in this space.