

MUJA AB — REFURBISHMENT — WORKER ENTITLEMENTS

334. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Premier:

I refer to the Premier's decision to cease work on the refurbishment of units 1 and 2 of the Muja A and B plant following a series of poor decisions by government.

- (1) Will the Premier ensure that all entitlements for the employees who undertook work on the plant will be protected and provided to them?
- (2) Now that this project has been mothballed indefinitely, what other work will this government provide to the Collie area to replace these local jobs?
- (3) Would it not have been better initially to have used this expenditure on the Collie B power station?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1)–(3) Unless my memory is failing me, last week the member for Collie and the Labor Party were calling for this project to be abandoned.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Premier, can you direct your answer through the chair please.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Labor Party, including the member for Collie, spent all last week bagging this project and today it has called it a “scandal”, to use the term of members opposite. Members opposite have argued and we listened. We thought about it and we closed the project, and now members opposite come back and grizzle about it. For goodness sake! The project has closed, people have been demobilised and they have lost their jobs; that is what members opposite were calling for.

Mr M. McGowan: You're verbalising again.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Oh, come on! The opposition cannot come in here, bag the project, say it is a scandal and everything else, and then the government looks at it and says, yes, it will close it, and now the opposition is complaining about it. I remind the member for Collie that the last minister ever to build a coal-fired power station was me.