

MUJA AB — REFURBISHMENT — WORKER ENTITLEMENTS

**335. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Premier:**

It is a pity I do not have 20 minutes. My supplementary question is: will the Premier ensure the 190 or so workers who are definitely out of work as a consequence of his poor decision will receive their full entitlements?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:**

The employees on the project would have been employees of the contractor, I would imagine, not of the government or of Verve

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** So you don't care less then?

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** Did I say that?

**Mr P.C. Tinley:** Neither of the contracts has been dealt with.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I do not think the member for Willagee should talk about people losing money.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Willagee to order for the first time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** People have lost their jobs on that project, and I expect that all workers will receive their entitlements. But I make the point that they were employees of a private company, not of the state.

**Mr M. McGowan** interjected.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** The issue has not arisen. I have not heard of that. There are some serious issues in Collie, and members opposite go on about how their energy policy was so terrific. Their energy policy has led to a situation —

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Ha-ha!

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** I did not even crack a joke and the member for Cannington is laughing. There is a precarious situation in Collie, and I think at least the member for Collie understands that. Two coalmines are now in overseas' ownership.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** That is why we had two extra coal-fired power stations built.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Cannington! There are ample opportunities for the member for Cannington to ask more questions. I call him to order for the first time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** In Collie, two coalmining companies have gone into overseas ownership. They both claim to be operating at a loss. It is a highly unstable situation given that coal supplies about 60 per cent of the energy to the south west grid. Companies are not talking to each other. I know the opposition has a hands-off approach, but this government is trying to get the Perdaman Chemicals and Fertiliser project underway, and it is engaging; we are probably crossing the line from where a minister or a Premier should be because we want to try to stabilise the situation.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Warnbro and the member for West Swan to order for the first time.

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** The opposition talks about the Bluewaters project. It is good to see private investment in coal generation, but I remind the opposition that Bluewaters went into receivership. That is how unstable the situation in Collie was, and the actions of this government allowed it to transfer into Japanese ownership so at least its ownership is now secure. Do not come in here and talk about Collie. Collie has some extraordinarily serious issues, and the entire coal industry is unstable and the government is trying to stabilise it.