

Investors bail out as Jennings hits 20c low

By **EMMA ALBERICI**

SCEPTICISM about the future of property developer Jennings Ltd pushed shares in the group to an all-time low of 20c yesterday.

The shares plunged 14c before rebounding slightly on brief bargain-hunting to close at 24c — a far cry from their pre-crash high of \$3.36 in September, 1987.

Panic selling began on Wednesday as a result of growing concern about the company's commercial property woes.

In an effort to service debt of about \$500 million, the company plans to sell about \$250 million of commercial property.

Jennings has still not replied to Wednesday's stock exchange query to provide the market with more information about its plans, including a \$74 million write-down on the Southgate project.

Merchant bankers from Baring Brothers Burrows are working on options for a group restructure.

Jennings pulled the Development Contractors index down 1.2 per cent while steady rises were evidenced across the rest of the sharemarket.

News of Australia's aver-

age weekly earnings which rose 1.7 per cent in the February quarter and company profits which lifted 13 per cent (adjusted in the March quarter) boosted general sentiment and enticed a flux of overseas capital to the market.

The All Ordinaries index closed 10.7 points higher at 1676.5 with the June futures boosting sentiment up 10.0 points to 1685.0.

Pancontinental Mining Ltd listed its rights issue yesterday which topped the volume table at 20.9 million up 2c to 8c.