




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2016

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Sale of Public Assets

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (11.00 am): It is always a pleasure to follow the member for Kawana. He always brings such joy and cheer to this place. Yesterday Western Australian Premier Colin Barnett announced that he will be going down the path of selling their electricity assets. It has been described in the media as a partial sale of the electricity network. I do not know how 51 per cent is a partial sale, but that is another thing we should take up with those who reported it.

We have had a debate in this state for many years, over two elections, about what should happen with our government owned assets. Those assets belong to the people of Queensland and actually continue to produce great income for our state. The member for Clayfield, 'Mr Strong Choices', has been one of the chief people pushing for asset sales in this state. He was the overseer of the asset sales sell job under the Newman-Nicholls government. He wasted \$100 million on asset sales and asset sales preparation before he had even asked people if they wanted them and he had approval to do up to \$250 million worth of works in Executive Council.

What has happened since that time? He was asked what his position was going to be, but what has happened? He has gone quiet. He has taken a vow of silence which has lasted about six months. Everyone is waiting with bated breath to see just what will happen. We have not heard from him and today is the last sitting day of the year. Perhaps in his contribution in this debate this morning he may finally come clean.

Why has he waited? It may be because he is waiting for that better asset sales messenger. We all remember how the *Australian* said that the biggest problem was that they needed 'a more succinct and clearer campaign'. Who is going to be the deliverer of that campaign? Is it going to be the member for Clayfield? Apparently not, because he will not tell us what he is thinking. Is it going to be the shadow Treasurer, the member for Indooroopilly? No, that is not on the cards either.

What we have now figured out, if we are to believe the media reports, is that they may have their advocate for asset sales. It could be Nick Behrens of the CCIQ, who announced his resignation yesterday. I will be the first to acknowledge that Nick Behrens has been a tireless advocate at the CCIQ and we have not always seen eye to eye. One thing we definitely never saw eye to eye on was asset sales. He continually asked our government to break our vow to Queenslanders, to sell assets and to take the easy way out, like those opposite. We were having none of it—we were having none of it then and we will not have any of it in the future. If they are waiting for that person—that asset sales whisperer they have been looking for—it may be that it will be Mr Behrens, if the reports in the paper are to be believed. That is what we may see.

What is our great hope? We have been saying this for a while. Who is going to champion this role for us? We will keep these assets in public hands. Who is going to join this side of the House? We have to take a look back at history and have a good read of *Can Do*. It is always a great read. Put it on

your Christmas list or in someone's stocking. We know that Campbell Newman was exasperated. What did he say? He slammed his fists on the table and said, 'Are you [expletive] kidding me? Wake up and smell the'—

(Time expired)