

SYNERGY — RENEWABLE ENERGY ASSETS

**235. Mr D.C. NALDER to the Premier:**

During the election, the Premier promised not to sell electricity assets, and he was supported by a campaign bankrolled with millions of dollars from the unions. Can the Premier confirm he has sold 80 per cent of Synergy's unregulated renewable energy assets and how is this different from selling 51 per cent of Western Power?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I will give the member for Bateman a bit of advice. He does not seem to understand that there are ministers responsible for certain things in this house. The member for Bateman has been here for only five years, and it takes a while to learn the ropes—I acknowledge that. Yesterday, he asked the Minister for Tourism about international students when they fall within my portfolio. Today, he has asked me about electricity issues when we have the Minister for Energy sitting right there, waiting to answer the question. I am confused about why the member for Bateman does not seem to be able to learn.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition! Members, please, I want to hear the answer.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I would be more than happy for him to —

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Carine, here is a tip: you are not funny!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** That was funny.

The reality is that we went to the last state election and there was a major campaign —

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** It was you, wasn't it!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The member asked me a question. If he wants specifics, maybe he should ask the Minister for Energy—he is a very bright fellow, as the member knows.

**Mr A. Krsticevic:** Brighter than you!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I would agree with the member. He is certainly brighter than you!

We went to the last state election and a major campaign was run around Western Power. Members might recall that over the course of a career of 25 years, the former Premier, Colin Barnett, opposed vigorously the sale of the poles and wires. He ran that argument for his entire public career until right before the last state election when he flipped and said, "No, we'll sell off half of it." The Liberal Party then went quiet on the issue throughout the course of the election campaign. We had a clear position. We said that we were not going to sell Western Power. That remains our position. But I pose the question to members of the Liberal Party: is their position still to sell Western Power?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** You just misled the public, didn't you?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Is that their position?

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** You just lied to the public. You systematically lied to the public.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Is their position still to sell Western Power?

*Withdrawal of Remark*

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** The Leader of the Opposition is using the word "lied". He said that the Premier lied, and he should withdraw.

**The SPEAKER:** Will you withdraw?

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** I did say that. He did systematically lie to the public and I withdraw it.

**The SPEAKER:** No, no, no! Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the third time. You will do a proper apology.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** I withdraw.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** My question to members of the Liberal Party is: do they still propose to sell Western Power? It is an easy question; they can say yes or no. We have expanded the renewable energy capacity of Western Australia. I am a strong supporter of renewable energy. We have expanded the footprint. Synergy has control over it.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 11 April 2018]

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Mr Dean Nalder; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr David Templeman; Dr Mike Nahan

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**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you are on three calls. On the next call, you are going home.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is a terrific deal. We are seeing the renewal of wind energy in Albany, Mr Speaker, we have solar energy in Greenough and we have the Warradarge wind farm. We have all sorts of renewables because we support renewables. The Liberals and Nationals do not know if they are Arthur or Martha or a shiver or something else. They do not know where they stand on these issues because they have Tony Abbott out there running the arguments for them. We support the diversity of supply in Western Australia, we support all forms of energy generation in Western Australia and we strongly support renewable energy. I can tell members that we are not selling Western Power.