30 September 2013

CLP STEPS UP PRIVATISATION PUSH

Shadow Minister for Essential Services, Gerry McCarthy said that the CLP’s announcement to split up PowerWater into separate entities is a pathway to privatisation.

In making the announcement, Treasurer Dave Tollner did not rule out selling parts of PowerWater in the future, saying “There may well come a time when we start to look at privatisation, and we will certainly give plenty of signals then.” (ABC, 27/09/2013)

“The CLP is taking the steps necessary to privatise PowerWater generation and also potentially networks, which would further increase prices and reduce reliability. Sadly more Territorians will also be out of a job,” Mr McCarthy said.

“Treasurer Dave Tollner’s claims that the changes are about increasing competition are a furphy. There is nothing stopping competition right now. We already have an independent retailer providing power to Parliament House.

“The only reason the CLP would split up PowerWater is to sell it off. Elsewhere in Australia we have seen Government-owned power companies split up before then being sold off. Prices went through the roof every time.

“Last year former Treasurer Robyn Lambley announced the Territory Government would conduct a comprehensive review of PowerWater to look at the corporation’s structure and operations and areas where efficiencies can be made. Where is this report and why has the CLP withheld it from the public?

“The CLP do not have a mandate to sell off any part of PowerWater and they need to release any analysis supporting the split up of this Government asset.

“PowerWater recently contracted Magellan Petroleum to provide 15 petajoules of additional gas for undisclosed millions of dollars and this is inconsistent with claims of financial unsustainability.

“Everything the CLP do with PowerWater is about putting profits before people.

“They should stop what they are doing and consult with Territorians.”

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