

EDUCATION AND TRAINING BUDGET, ADDITIONAL \$47 700

311. Mr M. McGOWAN to the Minister for Education and Training:

Will the minister please advise the House how much of an additional benefit \$47 700 could deliver to the education and training budget?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:

I thank the member for Rockingham for the question. Incidentally, \$47 700 is the amount of money that is paid as an allowance to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in this State. An amount of \$47 700 is being paid to the Leader of the National Party, and an amount of \$47 700 is currently being paid to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. To answer the member for Rockingham's question more directly, \$47 700 -

Several members interjected.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: I sense that we have struck a nerve!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The minister.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: An amount of \$47 700 will buy more than 2 500 hours of educational assistance support for children with profound disabilities.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What a low standard of government!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: Speaking of standards -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: The parents of those children might well ask why is that amount of money being paid to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; and who is he? According to the press release that the coalition leaders put out last week, the Leader of the National Party is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and according to the press release that they put out about their shadow Cabinet, the Leader of the National Party is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. However, when it comes to the seating arrangements in this place, of course we now know that the deputy leader of the Liberal Party is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

Point of Order

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: Mr Speaker, I refer you to the section of the standing orders dealing with relevance and ask you to ask the minister to bring his answer back to the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is correct that the answer should be relevant to the question. I think the way in which the minister is answering the question is bordering on moving away from the question, and I direct that the minister come back to the specific question that was asked.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: An amount of \$47 700 would buy 2 500 hours of additional support for children with disabilities.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! I call the member for Kalgoorlie to order for the second time.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: I have had discussions with the office of the health minister. On the member for Mitchell's figure of \$14 each, \$47 700 would pay for the screening of hearing disorders in 3 400 newborn babies, although the figure in his press release as Deputy Leader of the Opposition was \$19. At \$19 each, the amount of \$47 700 would pay for the screening of 2 500 newborn babies.

Several members interjected.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: Mr Speaker, I ask a rhetorical question of the Leader of the Opposition: given the information that has been released, is \$47 700 the price of the member for Mitchell's loyalty, or is the Leader of the Opposition drawing upon some other precedent?

Mr Speaker, \$47 700 could provide a lot of benefit to children with disabilities in the education system. Is a fraud being perpetrated on the public under the current arrangements that members opposite have settled on? Who is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition? Is this a rort or is it pure hypocrisy? The price that the Leader of the Opposition is paying, at the expense of children, for the loyalty of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is \$47 700. The member for Mitchell's press release said that WA babies were paying for financial

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Alan Carpenter; Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Speaker; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Terry Waldron

mismanagement. WA babies and schoolchildren are paying for the rot that is being perpetrated by the opposition parties in this State on the people of this State. It is disgraceful - rot, fraud, hypocrisy.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: I direct the minister to withdraw his comments on fraud.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: And apologise!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: I withdraw, Mr Speaker.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Where is the apology?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Where is the superannuation?

The SPEAKER: I do not know what has happened today. It is Thursday, question time is 22 minutes old and there have been four questions.