

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING — REGIONAL AREAS

24. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to this government's decision to slash \$64 million from the education budget and then backflip to reinstate \$41 million of these cuts.

- (1) Will the government seek to recover the remaining \$23 million?
- (2) If so, will it be, as the Treasurer has promised, extracted from places the opposition does not like by targeting non-Labor and regional electorates?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

(1)–(2) The entire premise of the question is incorrect. It is factually incorrect.

Ms R. Saffioti: It's confusing.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is confusing. I do not think the National Party leader has even read the press release correctly. She has the numbers the wrong way around. Seriously, I think you need some re-education, Leader of the National Party. I am surprised you are asking any questions after the performance of the National Party yesterday and your disgraceful social media performance. You are responsible, Leader of the National Party; it was a disgraceful, disgraceful performance and you need to apologise to the people affected as a consequence.

Ms M.J. Davies: You are deflecting from the core issue, Premier, because you have chaotic decision-making.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You did it. I just say again: imagine how you would have responded.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr M. McGOWAN: You know what you did. You know what the National Party did. The National Party is down in the gutter.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: When I came into the chamber for the commencement of question time, I thought I was listening to something very, very informative—it was the Treasurer; Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. When he said to the house that the federal government is cutting \$100 million a year out of remote housing—a year out of maintenance —

Dr M.D. Nahan: You're still going on about this?

Mr M. McGOWAN: What did you say—"Still going on about that"? Yes, I am! Absolutely!

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am still going on about that, and I am going to continue to go on about it.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I have a supplementary question.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have not finished.

The SPEAKER: You have finished, have you?

Mr M. McGOWAN: No. You stood up, Mr Speaker, so I sat down.

The SPEAKER: Yes, and then I sat down.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Okay. I stood up —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Premier.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You need to declare your interests —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: You should have left it to the smartest man on the front bench.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You need to declare your interests in the Scarboro surf club.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I did!

Mr M. McGOWAN: You got huge benefits.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I did!

Mr M. McGOWAN: And the properties you own nearby; you need to declare that!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I did! I did, and don't imply that I didn't!

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is very concerning the way you guys conducted yourselves.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Back to the question.

The Treasurer; Minister for Aboriginal Affairs was raising the important point of the \$100 million per year cut from remote housing. The National Party has had nothing to say about it—nothing. It has shown no interest whatsoever in that important issue. We have reinstated support for education assistants, teachers and Aboriginal and Islander education officers across every region of Western Australia. Has there been any acknowledgment of that? No. When the National Party was in office, there were all the cuts it put in place when it was sitting at the cabinet table to all the schools across regional Western Australia, such as \$87 000 at Central Midlands Senior High School and \$584 000 at Merredin College. Those schools would not matter to the National Party because it never went to them. That is the record of National Party ministers in government. We are putting more effort into regional education than any government before, and we are very proud of the additional initiatives we are taking across the regions.