

COST OF LIVING — EDUCATION

**62. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Education:**

I refer to reports of parents using Afterpay to buy essentials such as school supplies, citing the cost of living crisis as the reason for putting off this expense. Is the Department of Education considering ways to alleviate costs to families, noting the extraordinary lengths to which some parents are going to provide these basics?

**Dr A.D. BUTI replied:**

In relation to the cost of education in the public school system, no child is denied education in the public education system, as the member very well knows. With regard to assistance that is required by any individual parent, if they approach the school, they will receive assistance. Financial assistance is available if parents approach the school. No child will be denied access to educational facilities or textbooks et cetera.

I know that some families are doing it tough. All I have to say in respect of that is that if they approach individual schools, the schools will help them in any which way they can. As the member knows, a contribution fee is paid by parents, but it is not compulsory.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** I think it was made by the Court government.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Yes, a compulsory fee was introduced by the Court government. As we know, the DNA of the conservatives would be to make every government school a private school. That is just the way they operate because they do not believe in government having a role to play in the lives of people.

**Dr D.J. Honey:** We built more schools than any other government in the history of the state.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** The railway line that goes through the member for Cottesloe's electorate would not be there if it were not for a Labor government. His government wanted to sell it.

With regard to cost-of-living challenges and education, I repeat: assistance is provided and no child attending a public school, primary school, pre-primary school or kindergarten will be denied an education.