

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — BACK OFFICE STAFF

744. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Can the Premier please reassure Parliament that cutting approximately 84 per cent of support in administrative roles —

Mr M. McGowan: How many positions?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: It is 800 out of 954. Can the Premier reassure this Parliament that cutting approximately 84 per cent of support in administrative roles to education is not going to impact on frontline teachers and children's education?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The member is claiming that 800 positions are being cut from education. I have never heard that figure before. In fact, the figures I have heard are nothing of that magnitude. I think it is important that we understand that the government has a voluntary targeted separation scheme, and I remind members that it is a voluntary scheme. If public servants decide to take it up, that is something that public servants will do, and we support them if that is what they want to do. We cannot just drift along, like members opposite did in government, wrecking the state's finances. Members opposite were the worst —

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman, I gave you four warnings. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Members opposite were the worst financial managers in the history of this state and here they are again, standing up in question time no less, and in the votes that they undertake and the questions that they ask, just re-emphasising to the people of Western Australia that they are incompetent, useless and not prepared to make the tough decisions that this state needs to get itself back on track. That is all they are doing.

The Minister for Education and Training, no doubt at some point in time, will make clear the savings initiatives inside education, but we did announce 3 000 voluntary targeted separations. That is the figure we are working towards.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Mr Speaker —

The SPEAKER: That is the end of question time.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I would check with the Leader of the House; he makes the order of the questions!