

CONSTRUCTION FORESTRY MINING AND ENERGY UNION, NO TICKET NO START

3. Mrs EDWARDES to the Minister for Labour Relations:

I congratulate you on your appointment, Mr Speaker.

I refer the minister to the Labor Party's industrial relations direction statement released last September in which it states that Labor recognises the right of the individual to choose to join or not to join a union.

- (1) How does he plan to implement this policy -
 - (a) in the light of the no ticket, no start campaign being run by the Construction Forestry Mining Energy Union on construction sites; and
 - (b) the union's non-negotiable enterprise bargaining agreement, which includes a compulsory union membership clause?
- (2) Does he plan to take action against the union?
- (3) If not why not?

Mr KOBELKE replied:

- (1)-(3) I refer first to the last part of the member's question regarding an enterprise bargaining agreement that appears to contain some preference for union members. As the previous Minister for Labor Relations, the member for Kingsley will be aware that matter is covered by Mr Reith's federal legislation. The state minister has no control over the Howard Government's legislation that allows clauses within enterprise bargaining agreements concerning whether workers are members of a union. As reflected in a great deal of press coverage, there is clearly some concern in the building and construction industry about the push for membership by some unions. However, the signs which read "100 per cent union and proud of it" are not new. They have been on building sites around Perth for many years. Suddenly, with a change of Government, members opposite, who were in government, think that somehow the application of the laws have changed. They have not. The Government is aware of cases of discrimination against workers who are not union members. That is improper and the Government will do what it can to stamp it out. Similarly, we will not countenance discrimination against workers on the basis that they are not members of unions. We will use the freedom of association laws, without fear or favour, to support all employees who suffer discrimination because they are members of a union or because they are not members of a union.