

FAIR EMPLOYMENT BILL, VICTORIAN LEGISLATION

372. Mr BARRON-SULLIVAN to the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) Has the minister's attention been drawn to the so-called Fair Employment Bill introduced by the Labor Government in Victoria?
- (2) If so, can the minister indicate what impact such legislation would have on the small business sector in Western Australia.

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(2) Some may ask, fair to whom? It certainly will not be fair to small businesses. The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry estimates that it could cost 22 000 jobs and force many small businesses to the wall in the process, and massive cost increases for about 30 per cent of Victorian businesses have been forecast. One issue of real concern to small business is the ability of union officials to enter any workplace at any time and use any reason to inspect and copy company records, even if the employer and all the employees do not want them to. That is a major issue. Why should small businesses that have no union members on the staff be forced by law to have unwelcome visits by trade union officials? In the *Business News* last month, the member for Nollamara was quoted as saying that Labor's policy under its direction statement would put unions on a level playing field. Who does the member think he is kidding? What is level about giving unions free access to workplaces where nobody wants them? I ask members opposite, what is their policy? Will union officials be able to enter small business places which do not have any union members and when the employees and the employer say that they do not want them on the premises? Will that be their policy?

Mr Kobelke: Are you talking about Victoria?

Mrs EDWARDES: I am talking about the Western Australian Labor Party's policy.

Mr Kobelke: Did you look at what was tabled on attitude monitoring?

Mrs EDWARDES: Not only do we ask of the Victorian Fair Employment Bill, fair to whom, but also I ask of the Labor Party's direction statement, fair to whom?