

CONSTRUCTION, FORESTRY, MINING AND ENERGY UNION, STANDOVER TACTICS

828. Mrs EDWARDES to the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection:

I remind the minister of his promise made over two months ago of an investigation into standover tactics used by the Assistant Secretary of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, Joe McDonald, when he forced the non-unionised members of a demolition company to join his union. Has this investigation been concluded; and, if so, what were the findings of the investigation and what action will the minister take as a result?

Mr KOBELKE replied:

The member quite rightly points out that I undertook to refer that matter to the department, whose staff have been investigating it. When I saw recently in the newspaper certain statements attributed to Mr McDonald that were made at the royal commission into the building industry, they seemed on the face of it, assuming that it was a true report, to be fairly clear evidence of a breach of the freedom of association legislation. I therefore again asked the department what had happened with the investigation and was advised that the matter was likely to proceed to prosecution and that the brief was being finally worked up. I asked why there had been such a delay. I have not yet received an answer to that question. However, I now understand that the investigations, which have been afoot for some weeks, have led to the decision that a basis exists for a prosecution. We are waiting to see what the charges should be and for the formal laying of those charges.