

OFFICE OF LABOUR RELATIONS, STAFF SEMINARS

**591. Mrs EDWARDES to the Minister for Labour Relations:**

Does this not compromise the independence and integrity of the public servants as required under the Public Sector Management Act?

**Mr KOBELKE replied:**

The implication in the question is that somehow people do not have a right to be in a union. The implication is that because a union represents employees, those organisations are somehow untouchable and nobody can go near them. That was the policy of the previous Government - the previous Government that gave us the lowest minimum wage in Australia. That Government's research showed that women in Western Australia were downtrodden because the Government wanted to reduce the average wages of women in Western Australia. They were \$20 a week worse off than women in the rest of Australia. That was the policy of the mob opposite when it was in government. The intent of the question from the member for Kingsley is that there is something wrong with upholding standards and in organising collectively through an organisation to ensure that people are protected. That shows how misguided and out of touch this Opposition is. Long may those opposite remain in opposition.