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Australians who believe in the right of elected Governments to make decisions that affect the welfare of each citizen will applaud the Victorian Government's decision to proceed with the Newport Power Station.

It is a question of who controls the vital power supplies for Melbourne and the rest of Victoria.

The Federal Government supports Mr Hamer's stand, and it's clear that his government's resolution in this matter has won wide support throughout the State.

Mr Hamer has been most patient, reasonable and very willing to listen to argument on this issue. The question of union activities in the area of vital services has been canvassed in other parts of Australia over the past week or so.

Mr Wran has indicated a real degree of frustration with what has been happening in New South Wales. Clearly, this question is not just confined to one side of the political arena.

Governments from both political views are thoroughly fed up with being held to ransom by a few militant union leaders.

I believe also that the great bulk of the trade union movement has become disillusioned with the irresponsibility of a few union officials who are often in communist dominated unions.

Our secret postal ballot legislation, in operation since August, places a powerful weapon in the hands of union members, who become convinced that the actions of their union are contrary to their own interests.

Most trade unionists know that no section of the community can adopt attitudes, or try and force attitudes, in isolation from the rest of the community, without causing lasting harm.

People rightly demand that both business and unions recognise that they are part of a community, and that they must be concerned with the impact of their actions upon other people in that community.

Today, unions and management have clearly defined social responsibilities. Union responsibilities extend much beyond wage issues for their members. Management responsibilities extend much beyond providing a place of employment.

Rejection of unreasonable strikes of all kinds - from political strikes to strikes that come from inter-union disputes - are part of the trade union movement's social responsibility.

These strikes do nothing more than raise costs, inhibit production and destroy job opportunities.

But their responsibilities go further. For example, union journals are almost invariably published in English. This happens despite the large numbers of non-English speaking employees in many industries.

Until the union movement does more to close this information gap between themselves and their migrant members, they can hardly claim to be adequately representing those members.

Managements, too, have an equal responsibility. Only a few employers, for example, provide multi-lingual information on award provisions, working conditions, and company information for migrant workers. The lack of multi-lingual safety signs could also well contribute to industrial accidents among migrant workers.

The needs of other disadvantaged minorities - working mothers, youth and Aborigines - must also be considered in a practical way by unions and management.

Government, of course, has significant responsibilities in these areas. We have taken positive and effective action in these areas, but much can be done by unions and management who have the will to help.

The Government looks for future signs, from both unions and management, that they will recognise the great social responsibility they must bear if this nation is to prosper as we would all want.

This week the Government made a significant decision that will provide for more effective management of the business of Government - particularly in relation to the national economy.

The Government announced that the financial management activities of the Treasury Department will be separated from its role as an economic policy analysis and advice source.

In future the financial management and control functions will be carried out by a newly created Department of Finance. In effect, the decision means that more concentrated attention will be given to budget management, development of forward estimating, the analysis of economic issues and the creation of economic strategy.

In addition, there will be a strengthening of existing resources available in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to study the overall effectiveness of Government programmes to make sure that those programmes are meeting the objectives set for them.

The closest cooperation will, of course, be maintained between my own Department and the Department of Treasury and the new Department of Finance.

The Treasurer, Mr Lynch, of course, remains in charge of both the Treasury and the new Department of Finance.

The new arrangements will add greatly to Government effectiveness in dealing responsibly with major economic issues that face Australia.

There is one other area where we have made significant changes in the public service structure. In Opposition we were concerned that certain appointments made to the Public Service could only introduce, or tend to introduce politics into the Public Service. We have always been concerned that appointments to the most senior positions in the Public Service be made by due process, under proper procedures, on proper recommendations, from the Public Service. We do not want to see the Public Service become political because of the nature of appointments.

As a result we have now established procedures that will make sure that Governments take proper advice concerning the appointment of permanent heads. If they follow such advice, and appoint somebody off a short list, selected by due process, then that person will become a permanent Public Servant. But if a government, by whim of its own, by a decision of its own, wants to choose somebody else, then the Government can do so, but the person will not have permanent status and an incoming government would be able to terminate the appointment.

We believe that that procedure will prevent political appointments being made to the Public Service, but if they are made in the future, then the appointment will only be for a short term.

The procedures are being established in the law, and therefore, they will have to be followed.

My Government has strong views about this particular matter. We believe that the Public Service must maintain its apolitical position, so that its most senior people especially are able to serve Governments of either political party with loyalty and dedication.

This has been the position in the past in relation to the Australian Public Service and the legislation I introduced last week will do much to protect that position in the years to come.