



## PRIME MINISTER

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### ELECTORATE TALK

The fundamental rights of men and women will be strengthened - and not weakened or eroded - through the setting up of the Industrial Relations Bureau.

The Bureau will protect people against the wrong actions of either employer or union. It will work in the best interests of Australians and the community at large - and not against those interests.

Despite what some critics may say, the Industrial Relations Bureau will not be an industrial policeman. In fact, the Government sees the Bureau as a type of industrial ombudsman. It will help ensure the general supervision and observance of Federal industrial law. It will be a focal point for individual's complaints. It will be required to investigate individual's complaints and if the complaint is justified the Bureau will seek to have the matter rectified.

I want to make an important point clear here. The legislation which sets up this Bureau will introduce into industrial relations precisely the same principles of civil liberty and equality before the law that we take for granted in every other area of human behaviour.

I am absolutely certain that this legislation has strong and widespread support throughout Australia - for it is legislation based on our policy that was endorsed overwhelmingly at the last election.

There has been some emotional, ill-informed and sometimes deliberately misleading attacks on the broad thrust of this legislation. We have heard repeated talk of industrial confrontation and even of threats to bring Australia to its knees. I think it is worth asking a simple question. What sort of industrial relations policy would it be if it got the applause of extremist union leaders?

Surely, if the only industrial relations policy that may be implemented is that acceptable only to a few, but influential, extremist union leaders, then that says something very disturbing about the way our society is heading.

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If some people still believe the policy is unreasonable, they should think back to the times when certain trade union leaders, defied the Arbitration Commission and set out to inconvenience the nation.

The point often missed here is that the people they inconvenience most are the working men and women they claim to represent. It is the working man and his family that are most affected by stoppages, strikes, bans and go-slows just before a holiday weekend or before a Christmas holiday period.

The men who are claiming our policies are unreasonable are those who refused to accept the umpire's verdict. They refused to abide by the Arbitration Commission's decision. Some have refused because their political philosophy is directed to the destruction of our system of Government. Their central concern is their own power. That is why they attack the Industrial Bureau. They do not want any control that could threaten the exercise of their own power.

The Government is not on a confrontation course with the trade union leadership over the Industrial Relations Bureau. It is not the Government that talks confrontation. It is others - including Mr. Hawke - who seem determined to set a firm confrontation course.

The proper place to decide these issues is in the Parliament. That is why the legislation will lie on the table of the House to give every opportunity for constructive and reasoned debate.

The Government will be arguing that the legislation simply seeks to protect the rights of individuals - and the community - in a fair and reasonable way. We are seeking to give Australians a better go.

I believe the legislation is very fair, and just. I also believe that it is infinitely important to the future of Australia that it be supported.

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