



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

16 JULY 1985

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, MR RALPH WILLIS.

Cabinet today endorsed the need for strong and direct Commonwealth legislative action against the BLF in response to the Union's sustained record of industrial lawlessness, particularly in Victoria, New South Wales and the ACT.

The detailed content of the proposed legislation, and the way in which the deregistration of the Union, or its equivalent, will operate at the national level and in the different States, will be considered by Cabinet next week.

The Federal Government no longer has any confidence in assurances or undertakings given by the BLF that the Union will conduct itself in a responsible way.

The industrial record of the Union is appalling. It has continued to cause severe disruption to the building industry despite a number of written assurances that it would operate in accordance with the procedures of the conciliation and arbitration system.

The actions of the BLF pose a continuous threat to the stability of the industry, the employment of other building workers, the national wage principles and the Prices and Incomes Accord.

The Government is determined to create a new industrial environment in the building industry which will have significant benefits not only for workers and employers in the industry, but also for the national economy.

The Government will require the assistance of building employers, the ACTU and other building unions to ensure the success of its proposals.

There will also be a heavy onus on employers in the industry to take a firm stand. Too often in the past employers have been prepared to do separate deals with the BLF against the best interests of the industry as a whole.

Further, employers have adopted industrial relations practices which have facilitated the success of the BLF's tactics.

The Government is only prepared to act as long as it has guarantees of solid support from employers in the industry and in the knowledge that they are prepared to take appropriate action to put an end to undesirable industrial practices in the industry.