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Press release: National Trust Criticism

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PRESS RELEASE BY THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN.

NATIONAL TRUST CRITICISM.

17/7/73

The Premier, Mr. Dunstan, tonight accused some officers of the National Trust of being unsympathetic and unreal in their approach to the restoration of Ayers House.

"Ayers House has been restored as a place for people to enjoy, not as a lifeless museum," Mr. Dunstan said.

He was replying to criticism by the National Trust of S.A. Director, Mr. G. Toogood, of the restoration work.

"Government policy has been to establish within this magnificent old building, restaurants, public entertainment areas, National Trust offices, and a range of facilities that can be used by the people of South Australia and by tourists.

"For instance, Ayers House will be the centre for writers' week during the next Adelaide Festival of Arts. It will also be a venue for concerts, recitals and receptions."

Mr. Dunstan said the Trust had known of this policy since it was formulated.

An architect member of the Trust sat in on all meetings of the steering committee, together with the project architect.

But it is evident that some members resent this building being restored to life as well as to beauty.

The present Government had spent far more on restoration work than any previous one and had spent far more in the Trust's own area than it originally promised.

"It is public money. The public has a right to demand that the public benefit from it - not just members of the National Trust."

The Premier noted that Mr. Toogood's criticism had not been communicated to him by Mr. Toogood or any member of the Trust.