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Title:

Statement: Writ to change federal boundaries in South Australia

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STATEMENT

from the Premier

Date October 15, 1975

Embargo.....

State Administration Centre,
Victoria Square, Adelaide,
South Australia 5001
228 4811

WRIT TO CHANGE FEDERAL BOUNDARIES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The South Australian Government has initiated a High Court challenge to the boundaries of Federal electorates within the State.

Announcing the challenge, Mr. Dunstan said the High Court writ sought :

- (i) A declaration that Federal electorates in South Australia are not drawn up according to law.
- (ii) A declaration that Section 19 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act is invalid. (Section 19 allows the distribution of a State into Federal electorates which are not, as near as practicable, of equal numbers).
- (iii) A declaration that Section 24 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act is invalid. (Section 24 allows Federal Parliament to approve, and the Governor-General to proclaim, Federal electorates within a State that are not, as nearly as practicable of equal numbers).
- (iv) A declaration that until the House of Representatives seats are redistributed lawfully, at any House of Representatives election each State shall be regarded as one electorate.
- (v) A declaration that so far as the Commonwealth Electoral Act allows Section 24 of the Federal Constitution to be contravened, it is invalid.
- (vi) An injunction restraining any election for the House of Representatives which is not conducted on the basis of electorates which are nearly as practicable of numerically equal size.

Mr. Dunstan said the Government was determined that elections for the House of Representatives should be conducted on the basis of one vote, one value.

"The reactionary and undemocratic Senate recently rejected legislation which provided for equality of votes. In this State we have the grossly unfair situation where one electorate, Bonython, has 86,682 voters, while another, Wakefield, has only 50,742 voters.

"In the State Parliament, my Government has recently introduced electoral reforms which will provide equality of representation at the State level. My Party's strong commitment to electoral justice has prompted this legal action".

Mr. Dunstan said the Government's action was based on Section 24 of the Constitution, which provided for equality of representation for voters at House of Representatives elections.



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