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Title:
Press release - Housing

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The Federal Government refused to cooperate with the States on housing development and ensuring the health of the housing industry and the present State Government had refused to stand Mr. Gorton up about his failure in this vital area. The grave harm which was occurring to the South Australian building industry through the Federal restrictions on building credit and increase in interest rates shows a complete lack of interest in the needs of the building industry in South Australia. The Labor Government would join with industry in demanding of the Federal Government better finance for building and Federal involvement in redevelopment projects Mr. Dunstan said at Morphett Vale last night.

In 1967 at the Premiers' Conference he had requested a Housing Ministers' meeting to discuss Federal involvement in redevelopment of cities in a similar way to the involvement of the Canadian and United States Federal Government with their Provinces and States. In this he had been supported by Sir Henry Bolte and Mr. Askin, but the meeting had never been held and Mr. Gorton ignored South Australia as he constantly did. It is vital Mr. Dunstan said that the whole building industry joined with the Government in South Australia in putting pressure on the Federal Government for a better deal for housing but the present LCL Government was frightened of rocking the electoral boat and would not cooperate with the building industry in consequence.

Within the State Labor's policy on housing was clear. The Housing Trust will come under the direct control of a Minister who in the terms of the present Act will be able to direct its policy. The Housing Trust finances will be concentrated on their provision of houses in the rental and rental-purchase fields and in redevelopment and emergency housing. Under Labor the Housing Trust will not provide houses of 17 squares with two bathrooms out of cheap loan monies available for public housing. Moreover there will be

a building investigation of Housing Trust operations to ensure that any unreasonable overheads are eliminated. Sub-contractors for both the Housing Trust and private builders will be assured of getting at least award wages for the work that they do.

The Labor Government will as in the case of the West Lakes Scheme make Government owned land available where necessary at less than the market value in order to ensure that we obtain investment and development of the kind we need.

A Labor Government will remit the special tax imposed by the Liberals on State Bank finances. We will not take profits from the State Bank into revenue but ensure that they are returned to investment for development and in the housing area.

The Labor Government will proclaim the Builders Licensing Act which it passed during its term of office in order to ensure stabilization of the building industry and protection of the public.

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