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Speech at Simpson Pope design label presentation

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SPEECH BY THE PREMIER, MR DUNSTAN, AT SIMPSON POPE DESIGN LABEL
PRESENTATION 20.3.74

Mr Simpson, Mr Scammell, Mr Jennings, Mr Durance, Mr Harris,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you very much for asking me here today.

Every one of the good design labels awarded to South Australian firms - and by now there's a very impressive list of them - is to be valued for the kudos it brings and for its effect on selling our products.

But there's something especially valuable about this award.

We are the national centre for the manufacture of white goods so it's right and proper that the first major white goods item to be accepted into the Australian Design Index should be a South Australian one.

It marks a significant step forward in the development of the appliance industry and is an acknowledgement that the pace is set in this State.

It's also a recognition of the special concern with design that Simpson Pope's have shown throughout their operations here.

The Company conducts its own research and development program and creates its own designs rather than being content to import them. The award of this label shows that it's a policy which is now paying off: it is also one which is of great benefit to South Australia.

I believe it is essential for the continued stability of the South Australian economy that manufacturers in virtually all fields pay particular heed to good design.

This means that we have to develop a pool of South Australian design talent: we can't expect to be able to import designers at will and nor should we seek to do so.

Close attention to design is more and more necessary in sales generally: it is crucial for success in export markets and greater penetration of overseas markets is itself an essential ingredient in our program to foster greater economic stability in this State.

I've had this brought home to me again in the past couple of days.

We currently have visiting this State a most distinguished leader of Government, Dr Lim Chong Eu, the Chief Minister of Penang.

He and I are currently exploring a number of areas in which we believe there is great scope for operations on a joint venture basis.

In addition to being apparently tireless and immensely hardworking,

Dr Lim is both astute and hard headed in his appreciation of his State's needs and how to meet them.

He is, like me, most enthusiastic about the prospects for joint manufacturing projects involving both our States. But he points out that real success in a market as competitive as the South East Asian is contingent on product design as well as price.

One of the particular areas in which we believe the prospects for joint participation merit very close study is the appliance industry where we have well established plants, skills and experience. The reason for our enthusiasm is obvious. They are of great benefit to us in broadening the base of our economy and so providing greater stability of employment and they benefit States such as Penang in exactly the same way. It's no good in 1974 thinking of export markets in developing countries purely in sales terms as a market place or, worse still, dumping ground. They want a slice of the action themselves.

As I said I've already discussed this with Dr Lim at some length. We're now ready to take matters a stage further. The Government will shortly introduce legislation to allow the Industries Assistance Corporation to give assistance to South Australian firms engaged in joint ventures in approved countries that will strengthen the South Australian economy.

I've often spoken of the vulnerability of the South Australian economy to fluctuations in demand for our goods - and especially for our white goods - interstate. Joint ventures such as those I've mentioned are one way of reducing the impact.

There are others which the Government is actively pursuing. On an intra-industry basis one of the obvious ways in which a particular firm can minimise the effect of such market fluctuations on itself is to pay careful attention to design, not only to make a better mousetrap as it were. This is what Simpson-Pope with the Karumba range of ovens have done.

The Design Index judging panel in making their decision emphasised that the company had achieved a number of notably elegant solutions to problems which arose in meeting consumer needs. The panel noted: "The detailed evaluation of needs and the logical approach to meeting them was most appreciated".

As you can see looking at the models on display today Simpson-Pope's have indeed come up with a product which is both elegant and efficient. Their Good Design Label is well earned and well merited. I'm delighted that it should also be another first for South Australia.

Thank you.