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Title:

Press statement - Contrast between first 100 days of LCL and first 100 days of ALP
government

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PRESS STATEMENT BY THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, HON. DON DUNSTAN,
Q.C., M.P. 26.7.68.

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Dunstan, said today that the contrast between the first 100 days of the Labor Government in South Australia, and the first 100 days of the present Liberal Government, was startling.

Mr. Dunstan said: "When the Labor Government took office in 1965, South Australia saw in almost every area of government a whole series of announcements, about reform and improvement, and some of the most sweeping changes in legislation and administration this State has ever seen."

"Not only is the credibility of the Government at stake following a series of contradictory statements by Ministers, but nothing worthwhile has been achieved by the Hall Government."

"Mr. Hall has made himself Minister for Industrial Development, but besides giving himself another name has produced nothing," Mr. Dunstan said.

"But not only does he remain inactive in producing what is needed, he will not even produce the series of plans to get South Australia moving, about which he talked so freely before the election."

"Yet in a statement yesterday, Mr. Hall had the nerve to say that he and his Government believed in action and not words."

Mr. Dunstan said: "I challenge Mr. Hall to list the achievements of his Government in the first 100 days."

"The fickle mind of the present Government is quite obvious from a long list of inconsistencies and contradictions it has presented to the public of South Australia," Mr. Dunstan said.

"Probably the most blatant contradiction so far made is that of Mr. Hall on electoral reform," Mr. Dunstan said.

Before the Millicent by-election, Mr. Hall said that if the L.C.L. won Millicent, he would consider it an endorsement of the L.C.L. electoral reform plan, but that if the A.L.P. won the by-election he would consider it an endorsement of the A.L.P.'s plan and would then have to compromise. The A.L.P. convincingly won Millicent, but then Mr. Hall did a somersault and said he did not consider the vote against the L.C.L. in Millicent a vote against the L.C.L.'s 45-seat electoral reform plan.

Mr. Dunstan said: "Mr. Hall even suggested soon after the election in Millicent that I wanted to hold 'secret' talks with him on the question of electoral reform. But nowhere did I say that, and nowhere is it possible to find me on record as having said that. Now finally, after months of balking at the subject, the Premier has been forced by the actions of the Labor Party into reversing his stand that he would not proceed with Electoral Reform for some weeks. In reversing his stand, he has made an apologetic and argumentative statement full of half truths and evasions."

"Another of Mr. Hall's blunders," Mr. Dunstan said, "was at the time he accused me quite incorrectly of inciting crowds at Parliament House. Only hours before he gave "The News" his statement about the so-called inciting of people at Parliament House, he had said that I was trying to quieten the crowd in the gallery. When challenged about his statement in "The News", he offered to substitute 'excite' for 'incite'. Later he made a half hearted apology full of ifs, buts and excuses. Then when the House resumed this week, Mr. Hall finally made an unreserved apology and withdrew his remarks, thus admitting his previous mistakes."

"On July 17, the present Minister for Marine and Harbours, announced L.C.L. Government plans for the development of Garden Island and adjacent waterways for pleasure boating as a long-term

project. The Labor Government made the same announcement in September, 1965. In fact work as a result of the Labor Government's announcement is going on, and was well under way when the L.C.L. Government's announcement was made. After his announcement, the Liberal Minister talked about an original plan, but omitted to say that the originator was the Labor Government."

Mr. Dunstan said: "At the time the recent unemployment figures came out, there was utter contradiction made by Ministers of the Hall Government. The then Acting Premier said the figures on unemployment in South Australia were 'disappointingly static'. The same day, the Labor and Industry Minister said the situation was 'recovering'. Just what is the opinion of the Government, and which Minister does the public believe? The fact is that there has been a steady increase in unemployment since the Liberals took over, and in the month of June, there were several hundred more people registered in this State as unemployed.

"While on the subject of unemployment, it is interesting to note that since the L.C.L. Government took office, a hundred carpenters have applied for work interstate, sixty are now permanently on record with the Carpenters' and Joiners' Society as unemployed and at least sixty more are to be added in the next few weeks. According to officials, this inactivity in the building industry has occurred since the advent of the Liberal Government. Yet when they were Opposition, they said we were to blame for the slump in building. How do the L.C.L. explain this extreme depression?"

"When the Federal redistribution was publicised, the Acting Premier said the redistribution was logical, but at the same time the State Secretary of the L.C.L. said the boundaries were not good for the L.C.L. Statements like these make me wonder if there is any co-ordination in the Liberal Party or if the left hand of the Party knows what the right is doing."

"Before he went to the Premiers' Conference, Mr. Hall said he would be using his own submissions and that it was not worthwhile using the submissions I prepared in February. Mr. Hall said the Federal Government would have answers to the submissions I had prepared. Yet, when he arrived in Canberra, the submissions were given to the Press. These submissions were virtually a verbatim copy of those I prepared. It is statements like these that must draw a large question mark over the credibility of Mr. Hall's pronouncements."

"Since the Hall Government took office, we have seen three important industries close down, and at the same time heard promises to 'get South Australia moving'. Mr. Hall has made a trip overseas, which he says was to help attract industry to this State, yet he has not even made a general announcement that the trip was beneficial or that it could yield new industries. While I appreciate the fact that he may have given assurances to several companies not to mention certain things, he must have some idea of generally how much worth the trip had. While he maintains that the Labor Government did nothing to boost industry in South Australia he said on returning to Adelaide that the State's reputation is high in industrial and investment circles overseas, but that he is cautious about predicting new industries. I would like to know how the State's reputation can be high if the Labor Government did nothing for industry in the last three years."

Mr. Dunstan said: "Of all the inconsistencies made by the L.C.L. Government so far, the one which has probably gone against the grain of the public most is their decision on the site of the Festival Hall. The L.C.L. chose the Montefiore Hill-Carclew site, despite recommendations in the special Government report for the site at the rear of Government House. If public opinion can be judged by letters to the papers and people on radio programmes, it is obvious that public opinion favors the site at the rear of Government House. The L.C.L. City Council has even

voted against the site at Carclew pending investigations. Can the Premier give me a list of intelligent reasons for having the Festival Hall at Carclew? He said recently that the Government was not dogmatic on Carclew, and that if a better site could be found it would be used. There is no site more suitable than that near Government House, yet he continues to oppose it."

"We have heard from the Education Minister that alternative sites are now being sought for Western Teachers College. This decision came only after continued pressure from that institution. Before this decision the Education Minister and the Chief Secretary were at loggerheads on whether or not the location of the college should be the Adelaide Gaol site. The Education Minister said: 'I consider this site an excellent one and worth waiting for ... it may not be available until 1971.' The Chief Secretary said he 'could see no possibility at this stage of the Adelaide Gaol site being demolished.' Meanwhile, the students at Western Teachers College have to put up with hopelessly inadequate facilities."

"When in government," Mr. Dunstan said, "we were criticised by Mr. Hall for wasting money in the Premier's Department and having excessive public relations staff. Mr. Hall now has the same number of public relations officers and says that he may have to add more people to the Premier's Department. It seems strange that he should do this after saying it was unnecessary and money-wasting."

"An L.C.L. member of the Legislative Council has now followed up his attack on the Council of Civil Liberties with an attack on an Adelaide University Professor. Yet an L.C.L. member of the House of Assembly admitted being a member of the Council and then said he hoped the Legislative Council member's statement was not a reflection of the opinion of his Party. The L.C.L. Cabinet had already agreed to the Professor's trip to Russia, while the member in the Upper House was still questioning it."

"It makes me wonder just how much the L.C.L. Government

can contradict itself," Mr. Dunstan said.

Mr. Dunstan said: "The L.C.L. inconsistencies could be quoted for a long time. Some more that come to mind are on:

+ Fisheries - No announcements from the L.C.L., despite their statements during the by-election campaign that fishermen's needs were urgent.

+ Aboriginal Lands Trust Bill - This was introduced by Labor, criticised by the L.C.L. as 'window dressing', but is now hailed throughout Australia as model legislation. There have been no further announcements from the Hall Government in this regard.

+ Industrial Development - The Premier has split the administration of the Industrial Development Department by appointing a new chairman to the Industrial Development Advisory Council and putting in, as an executive officer with access to the Premier, a former Industrial Property Officer in the Housing Trust. This leaves two divisions with little means of co-ordination as opposed to a complete section, which was the case under the Labor Government.

+ Social Services - Mr. Hall opposed Labor increases in social services before he took office. Now he says Labor's increases in social service expenditure were correct.

+ Taxation - Mr. Hall said Labor's increases in taxation were wrong, despite the fact that they were smaller than any other State. Mr. Hall did not tell the public before the election what his taxation proposals were, but was forced to give some hint at the Premier's Conference. Mr. Hall now, despite his criticism of the Labor Government says he may have to resort to the same taxes that are being imposed in West Australia and Victoria, - taxes which have caused sustained public furore in those States.

+ Housing - Mr. Hall says South Australia has a housing problem because Labor undermined the economy of this State. He added that his Government would take action with their plans to overcome the situation as he described it. But we have seen no plans, and Mr. Hall does not dare to mention now that since he took office there has been a significant fall in the building approvals in this State.

+ Westlakes scheme - This has been suspended by the L.C.L. Government and is thus holding up the progress of the housing industry in this State. Building officials say the Westlakes scheme would have provided work for a large proportion of the unemployed building tradesmen. Still the L.C.L. suspends the project.

+ Hospitals - When the Government was in Opposition, we heard much about the necessity for immediate development of the teaching hospital at Flinders University and the need for the Modbury Hospital to be built. The L.C.L. has kept strangely quiet on these since coming into office.

+ Water Rates - One of the few things the L.C.L. Government has done is to increase water rates. It is important to bear in mind that this did not happen under the Labor Government even in the drought, yet the Liberals have full reservoirs and do it, after saying nothing before the election.

+ Labour and Industry - No announcements at all in this field. However, no-one can deny the urgent need for work in the field of industrial protection, workers' compensation and similar areas.

+ Aboriginal Affairs - There have been no announcements from this Department and there has been disagreement between the Lands Minister and the Aboriginal Affairs Minister on the question of land rights. Wardang Island was recently given to a

developer for use as a tourist resort, so that land is being taken away from the Aboriginal Lands Trust. This also means that employment opportunities for the aborigines have been taken away.

Mr. Dunstan said: "At present, in many areas of Government little is being done. It is not merely that we want to criticize things that the Government has done, but at times the Public Service is being allowed to let the cogs turn and at other times it is being interfered with so that the cogs do not turn at all. The Government has made few decisions and certainly no major constructive announcements."
