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Title:

Press release: Freedom of Choice: Government Aim in Housing

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People in Adelaide should be given freedom to choose the kind of housing they want and not be subjected to outside pressures, the Premier, Mr. Dunstan, said today.

Mr. Dunstan said that the Planning and Development Act and the State Planning Authority had the job of ensuring that people living in the metropolitan area were not subject to pressures that would crowd them out of stable and settled districts and communities.

He said that pressures could come from development that did not take into account the wishes of a community area, its general condition, or how it fitted into the metropolitan area as a whole.

"People in local areas should be involved in decisions that affect their houses and the life of their districts."

A Matter of Choice

Mr. Dunstan said that one of the biggest problems facing the metropolitan area was the way it continued to spread, and the way it continually placed people in isolated areas away from proper transport and community services.

He said that at present the development of Adelaide forced many people to accept types of housing that they did not want at all.

"You often find young couples who want a small city cottage or terrace house forced to live fifteen miles out on the edges of the metropolitan area and dependent on a desultory or expensive transport.

"And you often find couples with a family of three forced to cram themselves into a sardine tin sized flat in an old damp house.

"The system we have at the moment is a take-it-or-leave-it system, that often means young people or retired people have to make an investment in housing completely out of proportion to their income, and which they then must try to pay off for the rest of their lives.

"It seems to me that those people who don't want to make that kind of investment should not have to make it simply because they have no other kind of choice."

Mr. Dunstan said he did not believe the Australian people as a whole would ever accept, or should accept, massive high rise apartment blocks for families and low-income residents.

"The beehive block has no place in Adelaide.

"Experience all over the world has proven that these are not a proper solution to suburban sprawl or urban decay.

"However, there is no reason why people who want to live in such blocks - young marrieds, single people and the like - should not be able to.

"Such people have just as much right to live there as they have to live in a villa."

Mr. Dunstan said that the Government was anxious to encourage a number of changes in South Australian housing, designed to relate houses to the way people want to live.

"First among these is the suburban house which at the moment costs too much and is often badly designed for the needs of the modern family and for the South Australian climate.

"We would also like to see modern terrace houses built in appropriate inner city areas which will be within the reach of the low to middle wage earner and pensioner, and which will not subject him or her to sole dependence on a private motor car for transport."

The Premier said that he believed the Government's job was to provide a planning framework that was sufficiently flexible that every citizen could have a real choice in housing.

"Unplanned development can only lead to greater and uglier sprawl.

"Careful forethought and proper planning provisions, however, will mean that we can provide a very wide range of ways of living within a workable metropolitan environment."