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Title:

Broadcast by the Hon. Don Dunstan, Q.C., M.P.

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MAY 15, 1968.

Prior to the preparation of the report of the Town Planning Committee on Adelaide metropolitan development in 1962, the National Fitness Council made a survey of recreation facilities and areas available to the population of Adelaide and concluded that we were acquiring recreation areas at about one tenth the rate needed to provide for adequate sporting and open space facilities and the time was fast approaching when Adelaide would have lost the opportunity to acquire these areas at an economic price.

When the Town Planning report was presented to Parliament, they made it clear that there were considerable areas within that covered by the Metropolitan Adelaide Development Plan which should be reserved for open spaces and should be, in due course, acquired by public authority. They recommended that money be raised to acquire and develop these areas through additional rates to be imposed by local councils, the revenue of which would be paid into a common fund and used to service the loans raised to pay for the acquisition.

Between 1962 and 1965 councils in the metropolitan area made it clear that they were unwilling to proceed in this way to impose additional rates to finance new recreation areas.

When the Labor Government took office a meeting was held with members of local councils and I put it to them that the situation ^{had} ~~would~~ become urgent and indeed desperate ^{and} unless the areas recommended by the Town Planning Committee were acquired they would be lost to us forever. Already in large areas of the city, sporting clubs were unable to find adequate grounds to play on and ~~that~~ ^{the councils} they had a duty, either to comply with the recommendations of the Town Planning Committee or to ask the Government to raise the necessary revenue ^{and} ~~but~~ to support the Government in doing so. It

would not be in accordance with their meeting their moral and public responsibilities simply to wash their hands of the matter. I could get no agreement among the councils as to what they would do.

The Labor Government then passed the Planning and Development Act which allowed the planning and development authority to reserve and acquire the necessary land and to raise loans to be paid into a fund for acquisition and development of public open spaces and recreation facilities: but under the provisions of the Commonwealth Financial Agreement the amount which the authority can raise in public loans is not sufficient to meet the cost of acquisition of the lands.

In my policy speech I proposed a similar provision to that which has worked very well for the public in Perth - that is a special metropolitan land tax with remissions to those who were too poor to pay and which would provide the necessary extra money for us to meet the cost of acquisition of the land. This subject was not mentioned in the policy speech of the Liberal and Country League, and indeed we heard nothing from them about the provision of adequate recreational facilities in South Australia. Since the Liberal and Country League Government has taken office, we have not heard a word of acquisition for open space. We have, on the other hand, heard from the Minister in charge of Town Planning (Mr. Hill) a number of things clearly opposed to the best interests of planning and development. Now, this matter cannot be allowed to go on. If we lose the land, either if it is not reserved or not acquired, then posterity will bitterly and rightly blame us for failing to do our job. We must demand from the Government what its programme is in this area because so far all that we have from them is silence and apparent policy of masterly inactivity.