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PRESS RELEASE FOR THE LEADER OF OPPOSITION,
THE HON. DON DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P. 29.8.68

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Dunstan, said today that the Government had stampeded into releasing the M.A.T.S. report.

Mr. Dunstan said: "Not only have there been mistakes because of their haste, but there appear to be serious oversights in the report itself."

"Many people are being inconvenienced because of its premature release."

Mr. Dunstan said: "The question the Government must answer is whether it has accepted the Report in principle, subject to modification on receipt of objections."

"If the report has not been accepted by the Government, then the Government has allowed damage to values of property affected if the report is adopted. Thousands of home owners are, because of publication of the report, now living in a state of flux."

"However," Mr. Dunstan said, "if the Government has accepted the report, then since the authorized development plan for Metropolitan Adelaide would be altered radically by the proposals and the power to make land use regulations under the Planning and Development Act made useless unless the plan is amended, why has the Report not been treated as a proposed amendment to the authorized Metropolitan Development Plan pursuant to the Planning and Development Act, and the statutory provisions of that Act complied with?"

Mr. Dunstan said there were a series of questions which needed answering by the Government in connection with the M.A.T.S. report.

"It is about time the Government let the public know some of the answers," Mr. Dunstan said.

Other questions which should be answered are:

1. On what basis of escalation of costs over the 18-year period covered in the Report was the total cost of the proposals calculated?
2. Why does the Report assume a decrease in the annual cost of roadworks in the Metropolitan area other than in the recommendations over the whole 18-year period?

3. In assessing the cost of the Town Planning Committee's proposals and the alternative survey proposals, what account was taken of property already acquired by the Highways Department in pursuance of the Town Planning Committee's proposals and now to be disposed of?
4. What loss will be occasioned to Government by the acquisition of those properties and their likely sale at a reduced figure?

Mr. Dunstan said: "I have placed questions on the Notice Paper in Parliament, in the hope that the people of the State and especially those concerned directly in the M.A.T.S. report will be given an answer by the Government."

The M.A.T.S. survey recommends that there should be increases in motor vehicle registration, and in drivers' licences, a reduction in the minimum load capacity for road maintenance contributions, a repeal of the major exemptions from road maintenance contributions, and a heavy use of State motor taxes, road maintenance contributions and Commonwealth grants, to help finance the highways proposals.

In relation to Railways proposals it suggests as possible, a tax on properties, a raising of revenue bonds, a levying of bridge tolls, an excise on cigarettes, a flat rate tax on each vehicle, and a one dollar tax on every gas and electricity bill.

"Does the Government agree with these suggestions, and do they recommend them to the public?" Mr. Dunstan asked.

"If the Government does not agree with all the suggestions, they should never have allowed the M.A.T.S. report to be published in the form it was," Mr. Dunstan said.

"Another thing it is interesting to note in the report," he said, "is that the report recommends alterations to compensation procedure without specifying what compensation alterations are to be made. How then, was the Report able to estimate the cost of acquisitions and the total compensation involved?"

Mr. Dunstan said: "The assumption appears to be that while revenue will expand, costs will not!"

"On present indications of monies conceivably available to South Australia the plan, even if it were desirable, is simply not feasible."