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Title:
Press statement - Lands - Zone Five Rentals

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PRESS STATEMENT: 6th May, 1971.

FROM: THE PREMIER (MR. DUNSTAN)

The Premier (Mr. Dunstan) announced today that the South Australian Lands Minister, Mr. Kneebone, will visit Melbourne next week for talks on Zone Five rentals with the Federal Minister for Primary Industry, Mr. Sinclair.

The Premier (Mr. Dunstan) strongly denied allegations by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Hall) that the Government had refused to act on the Supreme Court judgement in the Zone Five rental case.

"Although the Leader claimed that his Government was responsible for expediting the Supreme Court hearing, it was an action of the previous Labor Government which enabled the matter to be brought to hearing at all.

"It is obvious that the Leader has either ignored or is completely unaware of the conditions and arrangements under which War Service Land Settlement was carried out", Mr. Dunstan said.

"Had he taken the time to check on this surely he would not have made these misleading statements."

The Premier said it was clear that the State must act with the approval of the Commonwealth in administering the scheme and was obliged to have the agreement of the Commonwealth in respect of rental fixation.

Mr. Justice Bright in his judgement indicated that the rent should be that which would have been fixed had it been fixed at the appropriate time and this principle has never been the subject of serious dispute as far as the State of South Australia was concerned.

The question was one of deciding what this particular fixation would have been and this had been under discussion with the Commonwealth for a very long time.

The State had not up to date been able to get the Commonwealth to agree to any proposals which it has made.

"My colleague the Minister of Lands, Mr. Kneebone, has been in communication with the Commonwealth for the last six months to try to get this matter settled.

"In addition to writing to the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry he has sought interviews with him.

"This whole question has recently been discussed by Commonwealth and State officers with a representative of the settlers, who recently met the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry in Canberra.

"Mr. Kneebone has informed me that he has now made firm arrangements to meet Mr. Sinclair in Melbourne on Thursday, 13th May, and he hopes that, as a result of the discussions, the matter can be resolved."