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Title:
Joint Press Statement: April Unemployment Figures

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APRIL UNEMPLOYMENT FIGURES.

16.5.72

The latest unemployment figures show that there has been very little improvement in the employment situation, the Premier, Mr. Dunstan, and Labor Minister, Mr. McKee, said today in a joint statement. There are still more than 93,000 Australians - including 10,970 South Australians - officially registered as being out of work. This is the worst April figure for the past decade.

The Ministers said it was difficult, in these circumstances, to understand the reported pleasure of the Prime Minister with the latest figures.

If you take away the artificial prop of the country dole, that is the Commonwealth Rural Unemployment Relief Scheme, you do get a little closer to the true picture.

In April 14,000 workers got relief from this scheme - an increase of 1,400.

"However, the limits of this essentially holding operation have probably been reached", they said.

Grants made to some Councils have begun to run out and the April increase in the numbers of those receiving this temporary relief completely wiped out the apparent improvement in seasonally adjusted figures.

"The Commonwealth has been doing all it can, short of getting confidence back into the economy, to damp down the impact of the unemployment figures.

"People should realise what is happening in Canberra.

"They should be told, for example, when the restraints on the immigration programme will be lifted.

"However, no amount of juggling can conceal the truth for long.

"Federal ministers are truly clutching at straws if they interpret the tiny changes in the labour market as proof of a real upturn.

"We all hope that unemployment has gone as far as it will go.

"But the only way we can ensure the future is by proper economic planning.

"So far we have had a desperate rash of stopgap measures, hurried along mainly by the electoral warnings so obvious in a whole series of public opinion polls".