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Press release: Election Programme Task Force

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Special parliamentary task forces would soon begin mapping out Labor Party programmes for the next State election, the Premier, Mr. Dunstan, announced tonight.

He was giving the Premier's address to the A.L.P. Annual State Convention in Adelaide.

Mr. Dunstan said next year's election policy statement would build on the traditions of the two previous Labor Governments.

By the end of the coming session of State Parliament he expected that the pledges contained in the May, 1970 policy proposals would have been implemented "except for issues, such as franchise reform, tossed out by the reactionary majority in the Legislative Council".

Within this period special groups of Labor parliamentarians headed by the responsible Minister would begin to frame the programme to be put at the next State election.

Their recommendations - incorporating the policies endorsed at the Convention - would then be studied by the Party Caucus and Executive before final adoption.

Mr. Dunstan would not disclose any of the likely contents but said there would be continuing emphasis and specific new proposals to improve education, health and social services.

"I think we've set an example for the rest of Australia in what we've accomplished so far since our return to office.

"The record speaks for itself: more cash flowing into classrooms and hospital works; consumers given a fair go in the marketplace; a decent and humane approach to problems of poverty, welfare and crime; real concern for protecting the environment", the Premier said.

"That demonstrates - as will our programme for the ensuing three years - which is the real reform movement in this State",

Present publicity about the deep personality divisions within the L.C.L. had been angled to suggest that it was a competition between a progressive and a conservative camp.

"But when Mr. Hall is asked to define progressive he is completely unable to do so. He and his cohorts have not put forward one single proposals for reform or change for the better".

One prominent member of the Liberal Movement, Dr. Tonkin, had, indeed, written an article while contesting the Norwood electorate against Mr. Dunstan saying the L.C.L. was the real conservative movement of South Australia.

"It was, it still is", the Premier added.

So far only two policy differences had emerged between Mr. Hall and those he opposed in the present power struggle.

Mr. Hall wanted the sole right to appoint a Ministry without any say by his parliamentary colleagues.

The Hall forces - while agreeing with L.C.L. members of the Legislative Council on the need to maintain it - did not want any Ministers there.

There would be then nobody to explain Government legislation there or see it through the Council.

These were hardly progressive policies.

The dividing line between the Liberals was over whether they should be dictated to by Mr. Hall or influenced by colleagues whom he had said he disdained to lead.

Mr. Dunstan warned that because the L.C.L. in South Australia was in shattered confusion and disarray and because the Federal coalition was a laughingstock around Australia, A.L.P. members and supporters could easily become complacent.

"It could cost us an election.

"Victory here has been followed by victory in Western Australia and Tasmania and by moral victory in Queensland.

"We have excellent prospects of winning Government at the Federal election.

"But it will take a mighty effort.

"The Liberals and their allies will pull out all the stops.

They know that, if Labor wins and people get the opportunity to see just how effective a Federal Government can be, then we'll be in for a long, long time".