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Press release: Panelboard Expansion

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN.PANELBOARD EXPANSION.

5.3.73

The Premier of South Australia, Mr. Don Dunstan, today cited Panelboard Pty. Ltd. as a proven example of successful decentralisation.

Speaking in Mount Gambier, Mr. Dunstan said the completion this week of a \$1½ million expansion to Panelboard's Mount Gambier complex has lifted particleboard production capacity by 50 per cent and has made the Panelboard complex the largest in Australia, and probably the Southern Hemisphere.

Mr. Dunstan described the development of the industry at Mount Gambier as an important example of how business working with State and local government authorities, could make decentralisation work successfully.

"It requires the faith of investors and businessmen and the determination and zeal of everyone associated with the project to win through.

"It has been done in Mount Gambier and can be done elsewhere", he added.

Mr. Dunstan said that since it commenced particleboard production in 1960, Panelboard had invested \$7 million in Mount Gambier, provided direct employment for 300 people in its complex and indirect employment for many hundreds more in associated industries such as forestry, freight and building materials distribution.

Because particleboard was produced from forest thinnings and residue material from the sawn timber industry, materials which had previously been burnt or dumped - a new industry had been created which now contributed significantly to the financial and social well-being of the entire area.

To ensure the continued growth of the industry, the S.A. Department of Woods and Forests had programmed raw material supplies to the year 2004, which based on 2000 million super feet of timber would produce particleboard to the value of \$400 million.

Mr. Dunstan said that in the last phase of the expansion programme just completed, State and local government instrumentalities had worked closely with the company on environmental aspects of the enlarged complex.

Dust emission had been reduced to one third of the level permissible under statutory regulations and the company's current beautification programme involving the planting of 280 trees, new roads and car parks, were designed to make it a showplace in the district.