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Title:
Opening of FCU Building

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OPENING OF F.C.U. BUILDING BY THE PREMIER OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA,
HON. D.A. DUNSTAN, Q.C., M.P., ON MONDAY, 10TH MAY, 1971.

MINISTERIAL COLLEAGUES,
YOUR HONOUR,
COMMISSIONERS,
PARLIAMENTARY COLLEAGUES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I AM VERY PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY TO OPEN THE NEW F.C.U.
BUILDING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

THE FEDERAL CLERKS UNION IS WELL-KNOWN AND HIGHLY RESPECTED
BY THOSE INVOLVED IN STATE OR COMMONWEALTH INDUSTRIAL MATTERS.
ESTABLISHED IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA IN 1905, AND WITH ITS FEDERAL
BODY REGISTERED IN 1911, IT HAS REPRESENTED ITS MEMBERS AND THEIR
OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS THROUGHOUT THE THREE OR FOUR MAIN PERIODS OF
INDUSTRIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN
AUSTRALIA SINCE FEDERATION.

PAGE 2.

IT IS, IN FACT, NOW DESTINED TO PLAY ONE OF THE CENTRAL ROLES
IN WHAT WILL I BELIEVE BE SEEN AS THIS CENTURY'S MOST FAR-REACHING
AND DYNAMIC CHANGE IN INDUSTRIAL DEMOGRAPHY - THE RISE TO POWER
AND PROMINENCE OF THE 'WHITE COLLAR' WORKER.

AT THE MOMENT, OF COURSE, THIS HAS NOT BEEN EFFECTIVELY
REFLECTED IN WHITE COLLAR UNION MEMBERSHIP FIGURES. FIGURES
THAT HAVE BEEN MOST RECENTLY QUOTED PUT FOR AUSTRALIA SOME
2.5 MILLION BLUE COLLAR UNIONISTS AGAINST SOME 1.5 MILLION
WHITE COLLAR UNIONISTS.

FROM WHEN THE FIRST MODERATELY ACCURATE FIGURES ARE AVAILABLE,
FOR 1921 UNTIL 1947, THERE WAS RELATIVELY NO CHANGE IN THE
MAKE-UP OF THE URBAN WORK FORCE IN AUSTRALIA.

BUT FROM 1947 TO 1961, HOWEVER, THE NUMBERS OF WHITE COLLAR
WORKERS GREW THREE TIMES AS FAST AS OTHER SECTIONS OF THE WORK
FORCE.

BY 1961, 36% OF THE TOTAL WORK FORCE WAS WHITE COLLAR, WHILE NUMBERS OF BLUE COLLAR WORKERS REMAINED MORE OR LESS STATIC AT 51.6%. BY MAY 1970 42% OF THE WORK FORCE WAS WHITE COLLAR, WHILE ONLY SOME 49% WAS IN BLUE COLLAR EMPLOYMENT, AND THIS TREND IS CONTINUING.

NOW, IN TRUTH, THERE SHOULD BE NO SURPRISE AT THIS FIGURE AND AT THE WAY THE PERCENTAGE OF WHITE COLLAR WORKERS IS GROWING WHILE THE PERCENTAGE OF BLUE COLLAR WORKERS IS FALLING. AND THE FIGURES REFLECT THE REAL CHANGES THAT ARE OCCURRING AT THE MANUFACTURING AND ORGANISATIONAL LEVELS AS NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND ADVANCED TECHNICAL BASE INDUSTRIES DEMAND INCREASINGLY BROAD-BASED OFFICE, SERVICE, AND MANAGERIAL STRUCTURES.

IT IS CLEAR THAT THE WHITE COLLAR WORKER IS IN FACT NOW QUICKLY BECOMING THE 'MASS' WORKER - WITH A CONSEQUENT RESULT THAT HIS INSISTENCE FOR WAGE, PRICE AND EMPLOYMENT STABILITY IS BEING GIVEN FROM A POSITION OF CONSIDERABLE AND GROWING STRENGTH.

I BELIEVE THAT THIS AUGURS WELL FOR AUSTRALIA.

INDUSTRIAL PEACE AND PROGRESS, AND EFFECTIVE LIVING STANDARDS, CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED IF THERE IS AN EFFECTIVE DIALOGUE BETWEEN ALL MAJOR ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE COMMUNITY - THAT IS, BETWEEN EMPLOYERS, EMPLOYEES AND GOVERNMENTS.

IT IS HIGH TIME THAT WE GOT RID OF THE IDEA THAT SOMEHOW ONLY EMPLOYERS AND GOVERNMENTS AS ENTITIES HAD AN AUTHENTIC RIGHT TO ARGUE OUT THE LINES ALONG WHICH THE SOCIETY SHOULD DEVELOP. AS A NATION, AND AS A STATE, WE NEED THE COHESION AND UNDERSTANDING THAT SHOULD COME FROM A MUTUAL, CANDID AND HONEST ACCEPTANCE OF ECONOMIC FACT, SOCIAL REALITIES, AND THE DESIRE OF ALL PEOPLE FOR A MEANINGFUL AND OBSERVABLE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY.

THESE ARE PRINCIPLES FOR WHICH THE LABOR MOVEMENT AS A WHOLE STANDS. AND IN THE LABOR PARTY WE ARE WORKING FOR, AND WISH TO SEE, A GROWING INVOLVEMENT AND A CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH ALL SECTIONS OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT, AT BOTH THE INDUSTRIAL AND POLITICAL LEVELS.

IF THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED, AND IF THE PERCENTAGE INVOLVEMENT IN REPRESENTATIVE ORGANISATIONS BY WHITE COLLAR WORKERS CAN ACCURATELY REFLECT REAL WORKING NUMBERS, I BELIEVE AUSTRALIA'S INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS AS A WHOLE WILL BENEFIT - JUST AS THE TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, AND THE A.C.T.U. NATIONALLY, HAVE BENEFITED FROM THEIR LONG TERM AND PRODUCTIVE ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE F.C.U.

I THEREFORE HAVE MUCH PLEASURE IN DECLARING THIS BUILDING OPEN.