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Title:

Address opening Public Service Association's Gilbert Street headquarters

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ADDRESS OPENING PUBLIC SERVICE ASSOCIATION'S GILBERT ST. HEADQUARTERS
22.5.75.

Mr. Your Honour, Cabinet and Parliamentary Colleagues,
Ladies & Gentlemen:

Firstly, may I thank you for your invitation here today - and at the same time apologise on behalf of Don Dunstan.

He wanted to be here. Unfortunately, the combined effects of a persistent viral infection and constant hard work has meant that he has over-extended himself lately, and we - that is, Cabinet - have insisted he have a fortnight off.

Today we are celebrating yet another milestone in the history of the South Australian Public Service Association - that is, the opening of these Gilbert Street premises.

I think we can all agree that the purchase of this building by the Association is a singularly progressive and confident move by such a large employee organisation.

The new premises will allow for the expansion of the Association's activities over many years.

If that is so, it clearly has considerable expectation of a continuing expansion, over many years, of Government services and thus employment. I think that expectation is warranted. The more technocratically complex society becomes, the more will Governments be required to provide services. And in Government administration, in our society, the independent non-politically determined public administrator is essential to the well being of society.

The Public Service Association of South Australia was born on 30 October 1885.

It was established by a handful of public servants who described their move as one designed to "encourage unity of opinion and action in all matters affecting the welfare and efficiency of the Public Service".

Today, 90 years later, the Association has a membership of eighteen thousand - and identical objectives.

Over the years - nearly five score of them - the Public Service Association has progressed from strength to strength, under the stewardship of successive member-elected Councils.

During its 90 years, the Association has had only five full-time General Secretaries, the fourth of whom - Mr. Stoney Mitchell - will retire in six days' time, after 28 years of service.

And in saying this, this afternoon may I take the opportunity to bid farewell, on behalf of us all, to Mr. Stoney Mitchell.

Mr. Mitchell leaves the Association in six days' time after a record service of 28 years - 27 of them as General Secretary.

He was appointed General Secretary in 1947, when the Association had a membership of 3,005 and a staff of three.

He has seen the membership grow to 18,000 and the staff to more than 40.

He pioneered several of the Association's fostered activities, and for many years was its sole industrial advocate.

During his term of office he served under nine Presidents, dozens of Executives and hundreds of Councillors.

I think it is true to say that the finest traditions of the Association have been exemplified by his career in the Association.

Besides its prime function of industrial activity, the Association has developed and fostered, over the years, a number of ancillary benefits in the interests of its members. These include a Savings and Loans Society, a Health Scheme, the Trade Concessions Scheme, the Television Maintenance Club, a Licensed Social Club and a Holiday Homes Complex.

Again, since 1888, the Association has published its own newspaper, of which - it is interesting to recall the late father of our

State Governor was once the Editor.

The Association has strong working ties with the Australian Public Service Federation which, in all States and the Commonwealth, is Federally representative of all Australian public servants.

The long life of the Association has meant that it has had a number of "homes". This very fine building is the latest one. It is a fitting one.

The State Government is very aware of the immense and proper significance of the Association to the public services on which the Government of the State depends.

It is for these reasons, and for the central role the Association plays in a vital area of industrial relations, that I have great pleasure in declaring this new headquarters open.

Thank You.

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