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Title:
Statement: Electoral redistribution

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STATEMENT

from the Premier

Date November 5, 1975

Embargo.....

State Administration Centre,
Victoria Square, Adelaide,
South Australia 5001
228 4811

ELECTORAL REDISTRIBUTION.

The Premier, Mr. Dunstan, today accused Liberal Party M.P.'s of misleading people in country areas about the Liberal Party's attitude to electoral reform.

"One-vote-one-value has been the policy of the Labor Party for very many years, and that policy is now supported in numbers of statements by members of the Liberal Party.

"But it is very strange to see the statements which country Liberal M.P.'s are putting out for local consumption, and then try to reconcile those statements with their actions in the House of Assembly.

"When the Bill establishing an independent Electoral Commission to redistribute the State's Lower House seats on the basis of one-vote-one-value came to a decision, the Liberal Party unanimously supported it.

"The only amendment to the Government's measure moved by the Opposition - other than trying to by-pass the whole issue by referring it to a Select Committee - would have given the Electoral Commission the impossible task of weighting electorates according to political support for the Parties.

"This amendment would have increased the number of Assembly seats by six, of which four would come from the metropolitan area and only two from the country.

"The size of country electorates under the new redistribution would not have been significantly altered by such a proposal. So there was no proposition before the House to retain the present number of country seats and all members of the Liberal Party voted for the second and third readings of the Bill.

"The division bells were rung, the members were summoned to the Chamber, and no voice was heard in opposition to the second and third readings, which passed unanimously.

"In these circumstances it is obvious that the Liberal Party's huffings and puffings about the rights of local citizens are not what they mean at all.

"They are trying to con their local people while not even being prepared to vote in Parliament for a conceivable alternative to the policy which has overwhelming support in South Australia.

"That policy is that electors in this State, as in the Commonwealth, should be in single member electorates containing approximately equal numbers of voters".