



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON HIS VISIT TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA

It has given me very great pleasure today to name the new international terminal at Adelaide airport after Tom Playford.

Tom Playford was not only a father figure to South Australians, his name is almost synonymous with the economic development of this State. During his years as Premier he transformed South Australia from an agricultural economy to one of Australia's major industrial and manufacturing centres. That was a notable achievement by a man who had the determination and the drive to help build South Australia and Australia.

The new terminal, which has been built at a cost to the Commonwealth Government of \$11 million, and the beginning of international services into Adelaide will give South Australia's growing tourist industry a great boost and will help develop this State's business contacts with the rest of the world.

This achievement is very much the work of David Tonkin who in his determination to build up South Australia has shown much of the same drive and determination which Tom Playford had. He inherited a dispirited, depressed State, and in a difficult world economic environment he has laid the foundations for an important new phase in the development of the South Australian economy: he has worked to rebuild its manufacturing base and he has begun to develop this State's enormous potential as a resource producer.

Extensive exploration over the last three years has revealed the vast reserves of good quality coal which South Australia has, in particular the Wintinna coal field in the Arckaringa Basin in the far north of the State. This is estimated to contain 1,500 million tonnes of coal. The Government has encouraged exploration for oil and gas in the Cooper basin in the

north east of South Australia and the results of that exploration have been most impressive. This year about \$65 million are being spent on exploration there. It has also enabled the significant development based on a fractionation plant at Stony Point to proceed which I have seen today. In total that project will involve expenditure of about \$1 billion.

But above all, the South Australian Government has gone ahead with the development of the giant Roxby Downs copper, gold and uranium project. As the Minister for Trade and Resources pointed out in Parliament this week the draft Environmental Impact Statement estimates that Roxby Downs has at least 2,000 million tonnes of mineralised material. For planning purposes, production capacity has been set at 150,000 tonnes of copper a year, 3,000 tonnes of uranium oxide a year, 3,400 kilograms of gold a year, and up to 23,000 kilograms of silver a year. The annual value of production could range from \$442 million to \$658 million per annum. The capital cost of the project in 1981 terms will be \$1,400 million. During the construction stage between 9,300 and 18,600 jobs will be created directly and indirectly in South Australia. The production workforce will be 2,400, but the total employment generated in the long term will be between 5,700 and 8,300. A township of 8,000 rising to 9,000 will be established with planning envisaging a town population of approximately 30,000 people. That is a project of immense importance to the Iron Triangle, to South Australia and to all Australians. And it brings with it the possibility that South Australia may be chosen as the site for a uranium enrichment plant.

That development would be destroyed by the election of a State Labor Government on 6 November. The Roxby Downs project would be abandoned, the uranium enrichment plant could not come to South Australia, the great opportunities which have been created for this State by the Tonkin Government would be lost.

And let there be no doubt that Labor would destroy the uranium industry. They want to shut the industry down. In July Labor amended its uranium policy. But that amendment makes no difference to the policy's objective. As Mr Hayden on 8 July said after the policy had been amended: "Our policy unequivocally supports the objective of an end to the uranium industry".

On 11 July he said: "There has been misrepresentation and uninformed comment suggesting we have abandoned our opposition to uranium mining in Australia. This is a travesty of the facts".

And the mover of the amendment said : "They (the ALP) have built conditions into it (the uranium policy) which bluntly I do not think can be met".

By closing down our uranium industry Labor would be denying energy to a world which, over the next few years, is bound to be short of energy. Labor would deny Australians jobs and they would deny our country about \$4 billion in export earnings.

For that reason alone South Australians, all Australians, cannot afford narrow, ideological Labor governments which would destroy great opportunities to build our country up. South Australians should take as a warning what Mr Wran has done in New South Wales where bad economic management has led to massive increases in State charges and taxes. They should take as a warning what Mr Cain has done in his first budget in Victoria: he has increased expenditure and revenue by over 24% and State taxes have been put up by nearly 30%. These big spending plans are reminiscent of the gross extravagance of the Whitlam years. That is the pattern of Labor Governments everywhere.

David Tonkin has laid the foundations for a complete reversal in S.A.'s fortunes. He deserves every support to build on those firm foundations.

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