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It is a very great pleasure to be in Port Augusta again - in the centre of South Australia's iron triangle - and to have this opportunity to talk to you. I was last in Port Augusta in April, before going on to Tarcoola for the inauguration of the new railway line to Alice Springs. That railway will be one of the many achievements of my Government of benefit to the people of South Australia and the Northern Territory. Since then South Australia has had a State election. It was an election on the very issue of railways, and I was delighted that Don Dunstan won that election and was able to put through his legislation to transfer financial responsibility for the State railways to the Australian Government. It was an excellent financial deal for South Australia, and it will make possible a very great improvement in South Australia's railway services.

Of course the other issue, the basic issue in your election, was the power of an Upper House to frustrate a Government's policies. Don Dunstan won that battle too, and now in Canberra the national Government is facing an even more serious challenge from a reactionary Upper House - and we are facing it for the second time in the life of my Government. We have to win that battle for the sake of democracy, for the sake of our Budget - with all the benefits it will bring to the Australian people - and for the sake of the economic health and stability of the nation. The Senate is threatening Australia with total chaos and disruption in its attempt to overturn the Government, in its determination to follow - in the words of Senator Steele Hall, a great South Australian - the "sleazy road to power."

In the past few days the opinion polls have shown clearly what the Australian people think of Mr Fraser's tactics. Seventy percent of the people believe the Budget should be passed. Yet Mr Fraser persists with his disastrous policy. Already the Liberal-Country Party tactics are damaging the business community and threatening the nation's economic recovery. The Opposition is threatening the country with chaos in a grab for political power. They are telling the Australian people that a democratically elected Government, a Government with a secure majority in the House of Representatives, a Government elected for a three year term, should hand over power half way through its term simply because it suits the Opposition. Could any self-respecting Prime Minister yield to such tactics? What leader worth his salt would give in to this sort of blackmail? I certainly will not. The Government will not.

It's not the Government which is blocking the use of your taxes. It's not the Government which is threatening the life and stability of the nation. It's the Opposition in the Senate. The House of Representatives has passed the Budget Bills. Every Labor Senator has voted for the Budget Bills. Every Labor member of Parliament and every Labor Senator will go on voting for these Money Bills until they are passed. The Opposition Senators alone are holding them up.

We have to remember that at the Senate elections in May last year Labor candidates polled 165,000 more votes than the candidates of all other parties represented in the Senate. We were returned with 29 Senators - the same number as the Liberals and the Country Party. And there were two Independents. No party has a Senate majority. Since then, the Labor Senators have been reduced to 27, because two State Premiers have flouted another great constitutional convention that Senators should be replaced by a man or woman of the same Party as the one elected by the people. The Senate motion to block Supply would never have been carried but for the death of Senator Milliner of Queensland. As Steele Hall put it in another vivid phrase: "Let it be remembered that the Opposition succeeded only because a Labor Senator died. They did it over a dead man's corpse."

I ask the people of South Australia - a State that has consistently demonstrated its concern for democratic principles and for the rights of elected Governments - to stand firm with me in resisting Mr Fraser's threat to democracy and his threat to the nation's economy. The Budget must pass. The Government must be allowed to govern. The nation and the economy must go forward.
