

Tabled document no: 2

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Date: *19/2/2008*

Friday 16 November 2007

MEDIA MONITORING UNIT

**RUDD DOORSTOP PERTH
With JENNY MACKLIN AND STEPHEN SMITH**

conference today.

Journalist:

(Inaudible) Regional Partnerships, will you reinstate...committees from which this
(inaudible)

Rudd:

Reinstate the?

Journalist:

(Inaudible)

Rudd:

The mean of the three Ministers', you mean?

Journalist:

(Inaudible)

Rudd:

Um, the three Ministers who've actually made these decisions, am I right, is that what you're referring to?

Journalist:

(Inaudible)

Rudd:

Oh. Well can I... well can I say first principle is this. The reason why this is a matter for national political debate is because we, the Labor Party, raised these matters in the Parliament over a long period of time, both in the Reps and the Senate, leading to considerable investigatory activity through the Parliament. Therefore Parliamentary Committees should be, have a capacity to refer matters to the Auditor-General for investigation, I think that's a proper system of accountability and it is something which Mr Howard's Government finds all too politically inconvenient.

Journalist:

Mr Rudd you explained your position on how you would administer the Regional Partnerships programme, yesterday, surely if you were really serious about total independence you'd take it right out of the hands of a Minister and the Minister has no say in it. Do you commit to that?

Rudd:

What I've said, yesterday, is that it must pass through three stages. And I'll repeat them because some people weren't here yesterday. Number One, for anything to be considered by us under this programme it would need to have the endorsement of wither a) the local council, b) the local Area Consultative Committee, or c) the State Government. Secondly, it would need to form part of that community's local economic or community infrastructure, and thirdly it would then need to pass the departmental seal of approval in order for it to proceed.

Journalist:

Yes but you'll still retain Ministerial oversight, veto, interference? Why don't you just take the politicians out of it?

Rudd:

Because what I just said is it's got to pass the departmental seal of approval that is departmental, that is public service and if it doesn't pass the departmental seal of approval having gone through the first two it doesn't proceed.

Journalist:

(Inaudible).....Ministers wouldn't be able to overturn the recommendations of the department, is that what you're saying?

Rudd:

According to the three stage process I've outlined, absolutely. I actually believe in decent public administration. You see there are good things out there that communities need and they should be able to pass muster against a transparent process. The old "De-Anne Kelly five minutes to midnight whack in the backdoor, here's 50 or 60 projects, god the elections going to be called in 53 minutes, Bob's your uncle," that's no decent public administration. It's not the right use of taxpayer's money. And you know something local community needs can be met by a proper process. The three stage process I've outlined has integrity to it. And the final stage of that process in response to Matthew's question is for me absolute and paramount.

Journalist:

On Mr Abbott he said there was a vicious and misleading cut and paste version of the tape. Do you reject that and also he said of you, you're not an honourable man (inaudible) and lacking character to be Prime Minister.

Rudd:

Well I'll leave all the personal stuff to Mr Abbott but on the substantive point about his comments on the industrial relations system and Mr Abbott saying that the Howard Government had stripped away basic protections from working families, Mr Abbott is condemned out of the words of his own mouth. People have seen him say that. If he has a problem with context let him release his entire transcript to see where the problem of context lies. The challenge is with him.

Journalist:

Mr Rudd this afternoon Simon Crean announced his (inaudible) is owned by an ALP member, is that (inaudible)

Rudd:

Well as I said I don't know the details of that but it would pass through the three stage process I just referred to. And if having got to the Departmental it didn't fit the criteria, it would not proceed.

Journalist:

Mr Rudd are you pleased that Kevin Reynolds and Joe McDonald are outside the Labor Party?

Rudd:

On the question of Mr McDonald, my position has been clearly stated over a long period of time and that is, based on his previous actions, it's entirely appropriate that he's not in the Labor Party. In the case of Mr Reynolds, he has made his own decision. I'm very pleased with Mr Reynold's decision.

Journalist:

(inaudible) by the Party though..