



“Our nation has changed dramatically in three weeks”

RUDD GOVERNMENT HAS HIT THE GROUND RUNNING, SAYS KATE ELLIS

It is often said that a week is a long time in politics. We are now witnessing just how much our whole political landscape and policy direction can change over the course of just three short weeks.

In the last three weeks we have seen Australians declare their desire for new leadership by electing Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister.

We have seen the election of an array of new MPs who are eager to get the keys to their offices and get to work serving their communities.

And, of course, we have seen the swearing in of a new Australian Government and one that has moved quickly to hit the ground running.

Our new Federal Government is wasting no time in getting to work on the pressing issues before our community. Eleven years is a long time to wait in Opposition and the Rudd Government is now eager to busily knuckle down and not waste a second before commencing the implementation of our plan for Australia's future.

This is particularly evident when one looks at the issue of climate change where Kevin Rudd's first act as Prime Minister of Australia was to commence ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on day one of the job.

The impact of this has been to ensure that Australia now stands among other members of the international community who come together to tackle climate change head on. It has meant that in the important talks in Bali this week about the future framework for addressing this issue Australia played a key role in negotiations and leadership regarding the way forward, rather than just watching from the

sidelines.

We know that climate change is the environmental, moral and economic challenge of our time and that action is urgent.

Similarly, the Government has acted swiftly to reaffirm the true independence of the Reserve Bank, recognising the importance of ensuring that we have the necessary framework in place to deal with Australia's economic policy challenges.

Importantly, this Government has also wasted no time in implementing our plan to take the Cabinet to the people of Australia in our cities and regions and held the first meeting of the Rudd Cabinet outside of Canberra in Brisbane. We know how important it is to stay in touch with local communities and see first-hand the challenges facing modern Australia. I look forward to the Cabinet heading to SA to hear first-hand of our local experiences.

FOR my own part, I am remarkably honoured and humbled at the level of support that the local community has placed in me to allow me to continue to represent them as the re-elected Member for Adelaide.

The opportunity to represent Adelaide residents in the Federal Parliament is one that I do not take lightly and pledge to work hard to improve the opportunities and experiences of our local community.

Kevin Rudd has also placed a great deal of faith in me by asking me to join his Ministry as the Minister for Youth and Minister for Sport, an opportunity that I have eagerly embraced and commenced working hard on.

Youth and Sport are both exciting and dynamic portfolios which are vital to our long-term wellbeing, yet both face particular challenges.

We often talk about Australia's youth being our future. This is of course true but it is also true that our youth are an important part of present-day Australia and must be both recognised and heard.

As Minister for Youth it is my intention to establish the Australian Youth Forum, which will ensure that young people have a framework for putting forward their ideas and concerns to the Government.

We will also establish an Office for Youth, which will work to deliver programs for young people while also ensuring that there is a whole-of-government approach to monitoring how Government policies will impact younger generations. There are a number of exciting initiatives which I will be outlining in coming weeks.

In sport, we have commenced work to implement more than \$100 million worth of infrastructure upgrades aimed at ensuring that quality sporting infrastructure is available to help boost our participation rates. My challenge is to promote the role of sport in Australian society and encourage grassroots involvement while maintaining Australia's international position as sporting champions.

There is a lot of hard work ahead for our new Federal Government and challenges which we do not take lightly. The Australian people placed a great amount of faith in Kevin Rudd's Labor team three weeks ago. We are getting on with the job of working hard to repay the community for that faith and advance Australia's interests.

Kate Ellis is the federal MP for the seat of Adelaide and Minister for Youth and Sport



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KNUCKLING DOWN: Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and Treasurer Wayne Swan at Mr Rudd's Brisbane home