

But let's go further and look at a third sustainable region, the Campbelltown sustainable region. You know: remote and rural Campbelltown, represented from Mossman. We had two areas—Camden and Campbelltown; not Liverpool around it; not Wollondilly, which is far more regional than either of them; not Wollongong, which is a regional centre—just Camden and Campbelltown. I wonder why? I wonder why you would single out Camden and Campbelltown to make into a sustainable region. What an outrage.

The only thing that makes the Regional Partnerships program just look red hot, rather than totally on fire, is the Sustainable Regions program. What an outrage. This mob opposite define 'regional Australia' by how people vote and not by where it was actually located. It was all about politics and not about geography.

Disability Services

Mr CRAIG THOMSON (3.19 pm)—My question is to the Attorney-General. Will the Attorney-General update the House on what the government is doing to assist persons with disabilities, including on the international stage?

Mr McCLELLAND—I thank the member for Dobbell for his question on this very important matter. Today the Rudd government will take an important step for the rights of persons with disabilities. Today I will table a national interest analysis proposing that Australia ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

This convention aims to remove barriers faced by people with disabilities. It enhances opportunities to participate in social and political decision making. It also recognises their rights to education, health, work, decent living conditions, freedom of movement and equal recognition before the law. We are grateful for the valuable input received during the extensive consultations that have occurred in the preparation of this matter.

The lead we are taking on the international stage is complemented by practical steps we are taking to improve the rights of persons with disabilities at home. The Prime Minister recently announced an additional \$100 million in capital funding to build supported accommodation for people with disabilities. Earlier this week the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs outlined a new agreement to provide a \$1.9 billion boost in funding. She rightly congratulated the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services for his role in this important area.

The Rudd government is committed to a whole-of-government national disability strategy to increase participation, social inclusion and support for people with disabilities and, importantly, for their carers. The Minister for Employment Participation and others are also

developing a specific national mental health and disability employment strategy to identify barriers to employment for people with a disability and practical steps to increase their participation in the workforce and hence their independence. In my portfolio we are developing standards for access to premises and finalising a review of transport standards. I would like to acknowledge the work and assistance of my colleagues, the minister for transport and the minister for industry, in respect of those matters.

In conclusion, the government has a long-term plan and is committed to being a regional and international leader for people with disabilities and, importantly, for their families. I commend the national interest analysis to the House and I urge all members to support the timely ratification of this very important convention.

Mr Rudd—Mr Speaker, I ask that further questions be placed on the *Notice Paper*.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

Mr PYNE (Sturt) (3.22 pm)—Mr Speaker, I wish to make a personal explanation.

The SPEAKER—Does the honourable member claim to have been misrepresented?

Mr PYNE—Yes.

The SPEAKER—Please proceed.

Mr PYNE—In question time the Minister for Housing and Minister for the Status of Women implied that members of the former government trivialised domestic violence. This is utterly untrue. It is an outrageous slur.

The SPEAKER—Order! The member must show where he has been misrepresented. The member for Sturt will resume his seat.

QUESTIONS TO THE SPEAKER

Question Time

Mr PEARCE (3.23 pm)—I have a question for you and I seek your very wise counsel, Mr Speaker. Earlier in question time today the Minister for Finance and Deregulation said in answer to a question that this morning he released the national account figures. Mr Speaker, there is no provision under the legislation for a minister to do that and my concern of course is about the independence of the ABS.

The SPEAKER—Order! The member will resume his seat. Wise counsel or not, I will just have to let that go through to the keeper.

PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE COMMISSIONER

Annual Report

The SPEAKER (3.23 pm)—I present the annual report of the Parliamentary Service Commissioner for 2006-07.

Ordered that the report be made a parliamentary paper.