

Abbott's shrill tax warnings spook household

A key reason for the success of Tony Abbott's scare campaign against the carbon tax is his argument that it is a direct tax on households.

Therefore it is an impost on every voter whether or not they want Australia to take action to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide sent into the atmosphere.

In this way he has converted the Government's campaign on climate change into a shrill warning about unduly adding to the cost of living.

He is having early success, according to the polls, because of the void

Ross Peake
OPINION



Julia Gillard left when she unveiled a framework about heading towards a carbon price, possibly.

Now her task is to sell the concept of taxing companies and compensating householders for the price rises passed on.

She conceded Abbott's scare campaign was working but retained her cool determination, reflecting on the truism that it was easy to fan fears.

"Tony Abbott is the master of it," she said. "But every day that Mr Abbott is out there stoking fear, we'll meet it with reason."

The Government is relying on the community mood in favour of action on climate change to conquer the Coalition's fear campaign.

But it has to tackle the central tenet of Abbott's argument.

"The truth about this carbon tax is

that it won't clean up the environment but it will clean out your wallet," he said yesterday in Melbourne.

Gillard is engaging in classic self-talk when she urges heavy hitters in Washington to "Be bold, stay optimistic." It is that sentiment she must grasp, relentlessly, to confute Abbott's scare campaign. His rhetoric gets louder and wilder, proclaiming the tax is designed to "utterly transform" everyone's way of life.

"What's the point of a carbon tax if it doesn't make it harder for people to

turn on their air conditioning or drive their cars?" he asks.

In one breath he ignores households would be compensated for price rises passed on by companies. In the next, he derides proposed compensation schemes as a "slush fund" with the implication is that the assistance pensioners is part of a huge con job.

He puts both arguments on a level if this confuses punters, he

No one will vote for a tax that

Stories aim to inspire and connect



CHEERS: Governor-General Quentin Bryce receives a round of applause after launching *Women's Words of Wisdom, Power and Passion* yesterday. Photo: STUART WALMSLEY

WISE WORDS

By Jacqueline Williams

Sometimes all it takes to change your life is one defining moment, one comment, one sliding door.

That's the premise for author Karen Phillips's new book *Women's Words of Wisdom, Power and Passion*, launched at Government House in Canberra yesterday.

"At just 14 as one of the youngest delegates invited by the Prime Minister to attend Australia's first ever youth conference back in 1974, I was inspired by the female leaders at the time," Phillips said.

"That event at Parliament House



ALL TOGETHER: Karen Phillips has compiled stories from inspirational Australian women.

was one of those defining moments in my life."

Thirty-one years later Phillips found herself on the lawns of Government House launching her book, which she hoped would make a difference in women's lives.

Women's Words of Wisdom, Power and Passion is a celebration of influ-

ential women in fashion, business, sport, politics, media and everyday life. It offers readers personal anecdotes from the likes of Olivia Newton-John, Prime Minister Julia Gillard, Cathy Freeman, Miranda Kerr and Governor-General Quentin Bryce.

"Now more than ever before women need to be connected, they need to feel connected, they need to feel they're part of something bigger," Phillips said.

"Australian women, especially young women, need to be inspired by our innovators, our leaders, our entrepreneurs and women reshaping industries right across Australia. I've created this book with the hope of encouraging women to achieve greatness."

Ms Bryce launched the collection and said it was more than a guide to life and rather a guide to sharing.

"It's a snapshot of the countless ways women contribute to Australian life," she said. "One of the qualities shared by all of the women in this book is an engaging openness. We all know in our hearts that often our greatest lessons are our failures."

Terri Irwin, widow of Australian Steve Irwin and owner of the Australian Zoo in Queensland, said it was important to be at the event yesterday to highlight women's issues.

"I'm inspired by choice," she said. Her anecdote in *Women's Words of Wisdom, Power and Passion* detailed her struggle in running her business alone, while raising a family.

Minister holds hopes of making gender inequality history

TRAILBLAZERS

One day there will be an International Women's Day where people look back and reflect on a time when women truly became equal, Minister for the Status of Women Kate Ellis says.

Ms Ellis was among hundreds of women, some heroes, role models and trailblazers, at Government House yesterday, celebrating the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day and 100 years of remarkable achievements. "Today is a

day that we celebrate and reflect," Ms Ellis said.

"I hope that [one day] we will be at a stage where women will be adequately represented in corporate boardrooms across Australia... at the moment we have a shockingly long way to go." Two years ago, 8.3 per cent of board members in the top 200 companies listed on the Australian Securities Exchange were women. Today the number has increased by 0.1 per cent.

"We don't think that progress is moving anywhere near fast enough."

She said the Government was committed to its election pledge to have women make up 40 per cent of public board positions by 2015.

The Government was encouraging businesses to set targets so that the 2015 goal could be reached, and would take action if companies didn't boost numbers and improve gender equality voluntarily.

Australia's first female governor-general, Quentin Bryce, said she was open to the idea of quotas to increase women's participation in leadership roles.

Opposition frontbencher Joe Hockey said he would back enforced quotas that ensured 30 per cent of board positions were occupied by women.

Opposition Leader Tony Abbott said while he supported Mr Hockey's campaign to get more women on Australian company boards, he believed women should gain positions on boards on merit and not through enforced quotas.

Ms Ellis will speak at the National Press Club today for the first time as the Minister for the Status of Women.

Jacqueline Williams with AAP

Airport staff query handling of dogs, cats

Leaders in class of own

From Page 1

Ms Gillard, who labelled nations "great mates", said she had talked about economic forms from last year's G20 and Australia and the US to advance the Trans-Pacific ship trade agreement.

She said Afghanistan was key topic of discussion.

"It is hard, but it's so that I am very personally tied to, to seeing the mission and to ensuring we play our training the Afghan nation and bringing security to Afghanistan so that the Afghan people lead their own security," she said.

As the US undertakes its force posture review, Ms Gillard said there was pressure on the Obama Administration to accept a greater presence.

"There is no sense of fear here - there is a sense of optimism," she said.

Later, Ms Gillard told the Chamber of Commerce to reject the current pace about the sluggish rate of recovery from the global financial crisis. "I've come as a friend to reinforce your best instincts," she said.

"Yours remains what has always been, a nation with exceptional in every way, all in your unfailing ability to confound predictions of doom."

She boasted Australia had beaten the global recession's jobless rate peaking at 10 per cent.

"With our budget coming to surplus by 2013 and net debt forecast to peak above 6 per cent of GDP, one of the strongest budgets in the world."

INDEX

Times2	1
Food & Wine	1
World	1
Editorial	1
Weather	1
Business	1
Classifieds	1
Law list	1
Sport	1
Television	7
Classifieds	13

PHONE NUMBERS

General inquiries	6280
Home delivery	6280

LOTTERIES

\$2 Jackpot Lotto draw 9:30pm
First, \$100,000, No 186363
West Ryde; second, \$10,000
19626, Glendale; third, \$5,000