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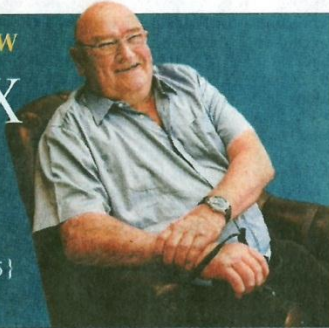
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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

WRY FOX

The trucking king on politics, business and the media

{ DAMON KITNEY P3, P35 }



SPECIAL WRAPAROUND { STARTS P23 }

TOP 50

THE PEOPLE WHO COUNT
IN HIGHER EDUCATION



A PLUS

FOLLOWERS OF FASHION

The style industry bloggers to watch { P19 }



NO RELIEF FOR HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESS AS RESERVE EMBRACES SIGNS OF ECONOMIC STABILITY

Optimistic RBA puts rates on ice

DAVID UREN
SENIOR ECONOMICS
CORRESPONDENT

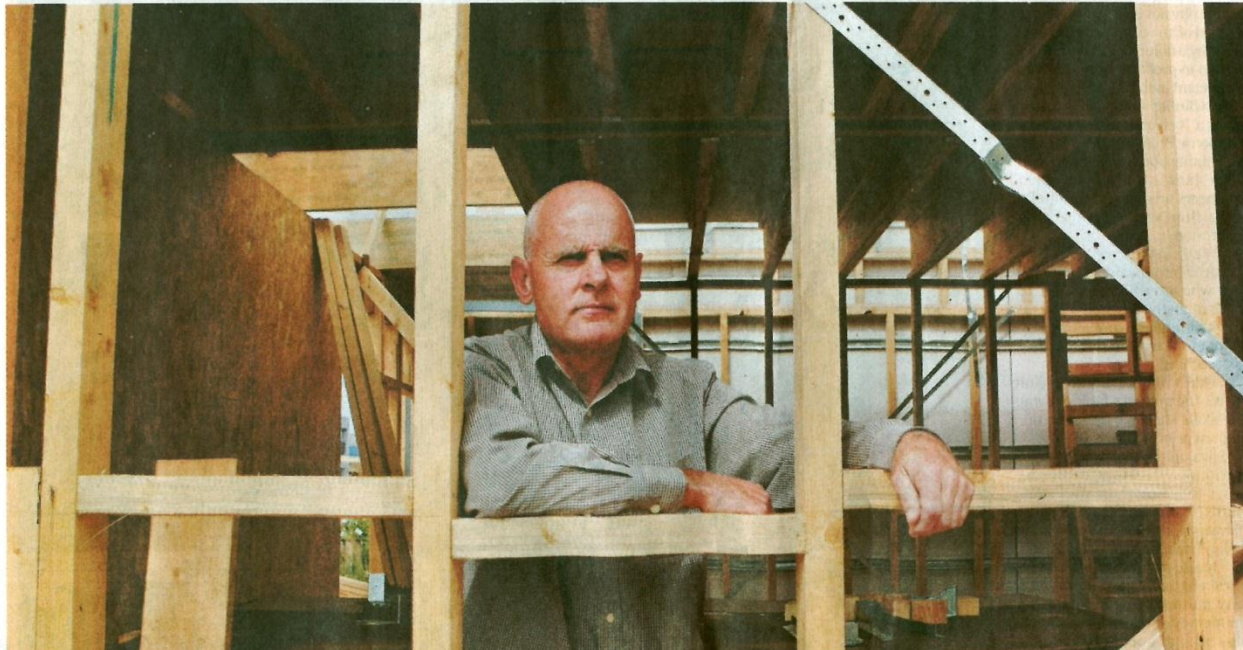
THE official interest rate is on hold indefinitely, with the Reserve Bank seeing fresh signs of strength in the mining boom as fears of a European meltdown recede.

Instead of the rate cut that had been widely predicted, mortgage holders could suffer a small rate rise as banks seek to recoup what Reserve Bank governor Glenn Stevens yesterday acknowledged were rising funding costs.

The Australian dollar shot to a six-month high of US108.1c after the bank's board, meeting for the first time since early December, concluded that the Australian economy was enjoying healthy growth and there was no case for cutting the official rate from its 4.25 per cent level.

"Interest rates for borrowers have declined to be close to their medium-term average," Mr Stevens said in a statement, indicating there was no need to lower them any further.

He said if there was a sudden fall in demand, the modest level of inflation would give the bank



Shorten attacked in bank jobs row

EXCLUSIVE

SCOTT MURDOCH
ANNABEL HEPWORTH

BUSINESS has delivered a stern rebuke to Financial Services Minister Bill Shorten over his accusation that banks moving jobs offshore are favouring short-term decisions and could get better productivity by retaining workers for longer.

After Mr Shorten lashed out at Westpac and other banks that had moved jobs offshore, Macquarie Group deputy chief executive Greg Ward — fresh from shedding 1000 workers over the past nine months — revealed that, for some professional positions, it was cheaper to hire people in London or New York than in Sydney.

Top industry figures also raised

For customers, the next move is up

JOHN DURIE
COMMENT



FOR months, the big bank oligopoly has defended its right to adjust mortgage rates outside the Reserve Bank cycle and now it has its chance. The question we will have answered by this time next week is whether, with the spotlight firmly on them and no Reserve Bank to hide behind, the

'THESE PEOPLE HAVE HAD A GO AND NOTHING HAS HAPPENED'

World leaders failing, says Fox

EXCLUSIVE

DAMON KITNEY

BILLIONAIRE Lindsay Fox believes the current leaders of governments all around the world will be thrown out of power in the next 18 months because of their failure to deal with the debt problems plaguing Europe and other developed economies.

In a wide-ranging interview ahead of being honoured at a gala event staged by the American Australian Association in Melbourne tonight, Mr Fox also said Julia Gillard was a "good person" with "good intentions", but that Tony Abbott would make a "very good leader" of the nation.

Mr Fox, whose logistics company Linfox is one of the largest supply chain companies in the world, said countries now needed "statesmen" who could rise above politics to provide leadership and outcomes.

"Whoever is in power today will be replaced," he told *The Australian*. "You can take that for just about any country because of the financial crises, one after the other. The uncertainty about where things are going. You don't win elections, you lose them. And I think all of those in power today will probably lose office."

"These people have had a go and nothing has happened. In politics and in life, you have got to make a statement. If you have no outcome after having three, four, five or six years in office you haven't made a go of it. It becomes a talkfest with no outcome."

"This has been going on for a hell of a long time. In many ways it is like making love with no satisfaction at the end."

Mr Fox, whose fortune was valued at \$2.1 billion last year, said people were wrong to judge Mr Abbott while he was in opposition. "At the end of the day, Abbott will come through and he will be a very good leader. He will have enough discipline to carry the party."

Mr Fox said the Prime Minister

Freight billionaire rules out following lead of Rinehart

IF only Lindsay Fox were a little richer, he might be joining the queue of billionaires said to be looking at taking a stake in Fairfax Media.

"I suppose if I had \$20 billion and there was an opportunity to control the media, I think I would have a go because I would probably put a broader view rather than a narrow view on the realities of life," he said.

Last week, mining magnate Gina Rinehart confirmed her company had bought a 12.59 per cent stake in the media group. There was speculation that others such as Kerry Stokes and Andrew Forrest were looking at Fairfax — and Clive Palmer said he might have a go.

Mr Fox applauded Ms Rinehart's move, describing her as "a very bright lady".

"The media is a good platform for barons as it has been in Australia for the last 100 years . . . I know Gina. I admire anyone who drives home an outcome. I don't care how small or how big it is. She has won the fight in mining in a tough man's world. And being a woman, she has to get a lot of the credit for the position she is in today."

But Mr Fox said he would not be following her lead into the media. "My problem is I don't like compromise," he said. "I have been married for 52 years and there is enough compromise there."

DAMON KITNEY

was mistakenly taking too much counsel from her advisers rather than "experts".

"Sometimes she needs more counsel from people who are experts in the field rather than having her minders help make up decisions. He added any move to reinstall Kevin Rudd as prime minister would fail.



STUART McEVROY

Linfox founder and billionaire Lindsay Fox — in his office in Melbourne yesterday — will be honoured tonight as an outstanding example of a business entrepreneur

Mr Fox called for more respect to be given to the prime ministerial office, but added his comments were unrelated to claims this week by Greens senator Bob Brown that commentators attacking Ms Gillard were "sexist".

Working closely with the federal government, Linfox has pledged to recruit 500 indigenous

workers by May next year as part of the Australian Employment Covenant, aimed at securing 50,000 sustainable jobs for indigenous Australians.

He said he was appalled by the tent embassy protests in Canberra on Australia Day, but they would not set back the cause of reconciliation. "What happened in Can-

berra should never have happened. We finished up on the front pages of the world through some stupid activities.

"If you looked at it without having an understanding of the Aboriginal people and the lack of real conflict in Australia between people, and compare it to people being shot in the Middle East, we were

up there with them. No guns. But if you look at those photographs and the expression on the PM's face, you ask 'Is this Australia?' This is the land of the fair go, not the nastiness that was associated with this."

Mr Fox will be honoured tonight alongside BHP Billiton chairman Jacques Nasser as an

outstanding example of a business entrepreneur from humble beginnings who has embraced charitable and community causes.

Mr Fox, who says he has been "pro-American all his life", has met six of the past seven US presidents including Barack Obama.

BUSINESS P35

Police rejecting detainee duties

PAUL MALEY
NATIONAL SECURITY
CORRESPONDENT

NSW police were asked to undergo "cultural sensitivity" training in order to better manage Sydney's Villawood detention centre under a draft agreement rejected by NSW authorities.

The proposal was contained in a draft memorandum of understanding prepared by the Immigration Department last year, which was seen as a push by Canberra to transfer greater responsibility to state authorities.

Under the draft, police would have been given the cultural-awareness training to improve their dealings with asylum-seekers detained at Villawood.

Other proposals included requiring local police to investigate complaints by detainees against Serco staff and made NSW police responsible for breaking up non-violent protests inside the centre.

The roles at Villawood of the Australian Federal Police, the NSW police and Serco — the contractors responsible for running the site — are unclear. While the detention centre is a commonwealth asset and theoretically the responsibility of Canberra, the AFP lacks manpower in Sydney to respond quickly to riots.

The confusion came to a head in April last year when detainees staged a violent riot in which fire crews were pelted with roof tiles and millions of dollars of damage was done.

In evidence tendered to a parliamentary inquiry after the riot, senior NSW police officers accused the Immigration Department of failing to plan for major incidents. NSW police Assistant Commissioner Frank Mennilli said the command structure was chaotic and the Immigration Department had dismissed a major fire as "unreal-