

# PM TAKES FEMALE HYPOCRISY TO A NEW LEVEL

*By June Beckett*

These days few who know me would ever say that I'm at a loss for words. On the contrary, I'm aware that often I talk too much. And, of course, politics being one of my passions, one might normally imagine that the current situation in Canberra would spark a torrent.

However, that is not the case. For the first time in my long life I am almost speechless. I can find no words to describe my utter disgust and contempt for the women in the ALP who have, through their strident screeching about misogyny and sexism, fouled the cause of their less fortunate counterparts. "Feminism" is now a dirty word. It is no longer the worthwhile battle designed to help downtrodden, overlooked and abused women to find a better life with equal pay and conditions.

Through the crass hypocrisy of prominent and influential people such as Gillard, Roxon and Plibersek, with their ever-ready store of untruths and spin, the question must now be asked as to whether women generally are ready to take senior office, be it in public service or private industry.

That is not to say that there are not a great number of talented, wonderful women who are currently holding senior positions in all spheres of endeavour. The very much admired Gail Kelly, Managing Director and CEO of Westpac Bank, is one such example and there are many others like her, quietly and efficiently going about their business with little or no publicity. It would be hard to find anybody in New South Wales who didn't hold great affection for our highly esteemed Governor, Her Excellency Marie Bashir.

But our Prime Minister and her female team members are in the news all day and every day. Every word Gillard utters is breathlessly reported and analysed, mostly ad nauseum as other important issues take a back seat. She and they are role models for our young girls and it is surely this aspect which is the most concerning.

As a female of senior years I am appalled at the recent disgraceful performance of Gillard et al. She expects people to respect her because of her high office but does absolutely nothing to deserve it. Nicola Roxon, as the most senior law officer in the land, has shown herself to be totally incapable of handling the portfolio and Tanya Plibersek, who once did display a modicum of talent, has now apparently caught the same bug and is talking mostly unadulterated rubbish. And they all with one voice blame Tony Abbott for everything, even to the extent that he was somehow responsible for Alan Jones' unfortunate comments regarding Gillard's father.

When that story broke, the PM made the most of her heaven-sent opportunity, shouting long and loud about Tony's sexism, the fact that he hates women and how she refuses to be bowed by his misogynistic attitude.

But then, following quickly on the issue concerning Alan Jones, we were subjected to sordid details of the obscene and disgusting text messages sent by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Peter Slipper. There is no denying these messages as they have been made public so it would be natural to expect that the Prime Minister – in view of her obvious distaste for anything anti-women – would take steps to ensure that Mr. Slipper was punished in no uncertain terms.

At the very least Gillard had the power to instantly remove him as Speaker but she didn't. Instead she defended him. It is astonishing that the Prime Minister, purely for the sake of hanging on to her seat, has chosen to ignore or excuse the gross and vulgar remarks made by the Speaker which were highly

offensive to women while at the same time ensuring that her union mates and other friends in the media kept the Alan Jones' pot bubbling away. Whilst Peter Slipper has resigned as Speaker, his vote will still be accepted by the government so that they can continue to hold on to power, albeit by the slimmest of margins.

The hypocrisy of it all is breathtaking. And it is to be hoped that the voters will keep all this in their minds come election day. Certainly, one would think that the men of Australia would be fairly anti-women at the moment and I venture to say that most intelligent women are also unimpressed.

**Girls, let me offer a few words of advice: if you want respect, you have to earn it. Further, to get ahead in what is still essentially a man's world, you must be prepared to accept criticism. Nobody is perfect but it does not help your cause or your image to squeal and wail whenever anybody is less than complimentary towards you. And you say that you want equality, but you must be prepared to work for it and not expect to enjoy quotas or other benefits that are not available to the men. Do you really want to be a token woman? Surely it is better to make your way up the ladder through your own merits and efforts?**

Until you can accept those basic conditions, you are not ready to take your place as a leader in society. And, for all her pomp and ceremony, Ms Gillard hasn't yet learned these important lessons.

I suspect that one day she will find out that – whether male or female – truth, honesty and hard work always win in the end but, unfortunately, that realization may well be too late in her case.

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