



# Tony stirs it up with a call to send them packing

## COALITION

ANDREW TROUNSON

MAYBE it was just the roasting coffee, but when Tony Abbott arrived at the Beraldo coffee factory in Melbourne's north, there seemed to be the whiff of an election in the air.

He was accompanied by his wife, Margie, who had travelled with him to Melbourne on Saturday for the Greek community's Antipodes Festival. There was even a baby on hand, in the person of Liberal senator Scott Ryan's

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**TONY ABBOTT**  
 OPPOSITION LEADER

young son. With the Labor government riven by leadership infighting, it was a gift-wrapped

opportunity for Mr Abbott to go beyond attack mode and attempt some statesman-like rhetoric as he pressed the independents to trigger an early election.

"I say to every Australian who is dismayed by the spectacle in Canberra, we are a great country.

"Do not fear, we can be better than this," he told the media.

"We are a great country, but we are being let down by a bad government. Only an election can bring the strong and stable government that Australia needs.

"I say to the independent members of parliament: You gave us this mess, you fix it."

Mr Abbott said the Coalition was ready to fight an election.

"We do have plans for a strong economy, for a stronger society, and at the heart of these plans are getting government spending down, and getting productivity up," he said.

Earlier, he was shown around the small factory at Heidelberg by owner Paul Beraldo and his man-

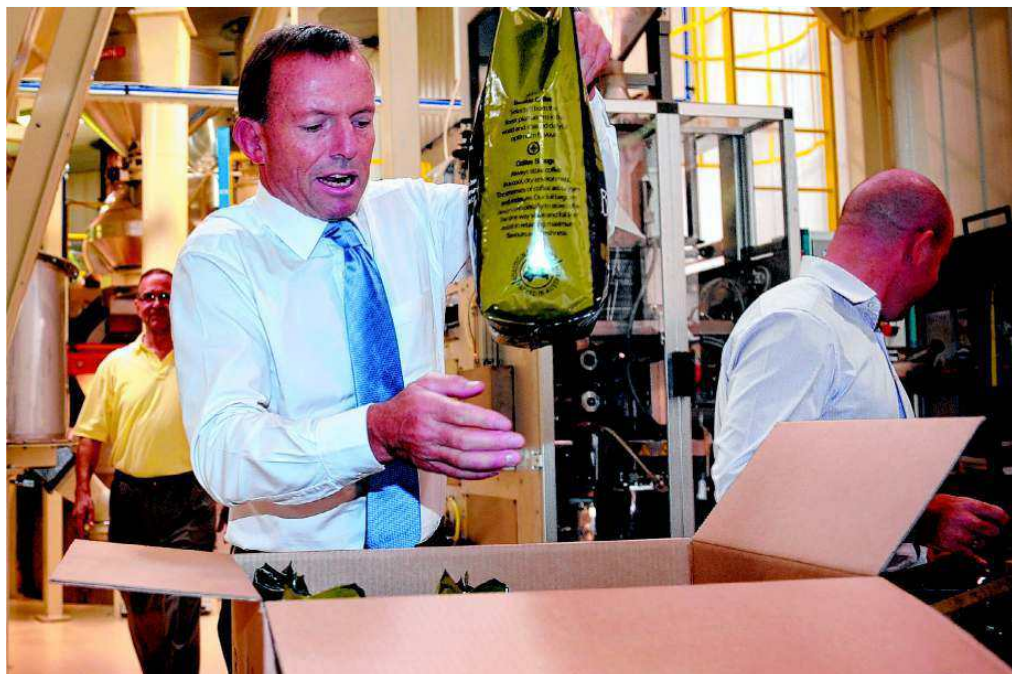
aging director and son Daniel.

A Vietnam War veteran and Coalition voter, Paul said it was the carbon tax that most worried him and the increase he faced on his \$20,000-a-year power bill. Treasury modelling has forecast that electricity prices will rise by 10 per cent in 2012-13. It has forecast the overall increase in inflation at 0.7 per cent.

"The only people who will save Australia from this toxic tax are the Coalition. It doesn't matter who wins on Monday, there will still be a carbon tax," Mr Abbott said.

Later, as Mr Abbott played the part of barista by making his own mocha coffee under supervision from a Beraldo staffer, Daniel remarked that he looked like he had done it before. "I've done a lot of watching," Mr Abbott responded.

For the moment at least, as Labor fights itself, watching is all Mr Abbott really can do — or needs to do.



Tony Abbott, packing coffee at the Beraldo factory in Melbourne, yesterday called on the independents to trigger an election