

Gina's call over Trump tax tack

PAUL STARICK

AUSTRALIA'S richest person, Gina Rinehart, is urging the nation to follow US President Donald Trump's lead by slashing taxes and red tape to spur job creation.

In a speech in Canberra last night attended by former deputy prime minister Barnaby Joyce, Mrs Rinehart said Mr Trump had won power by he and his team listening to the American people.

"The American people told them, they want America to be great again. Their countrymen told them that they wanted, firstly, less government tape, secondly less taxation, and for the USA to grow and provide more sustainable jobs," Mrs Rinehart, pictured, said.

"This is the same message I am suggesting to you tonight but regarding our country."

The mining and pastoral magnate was speaking at a gala dinner to mark the inaugural National Agriculture and Related Industries Day, which was her initiative and of which she is the patron.

Mrs Rinehart warned Australia was heading down Greece's

path by "increasing irresponsible government expenditure and debt", blaming red tape costing \$176 billion annually — or 11 per cent of GDP.

Mrs Rinehart, who tops Forbes' Australian rich list with a fortune of more than \$21.5 billion, praised the agriculture industry's 1.6 million employees nationally, along with 130,000 agribusinesses producing one in every seven Australian export dollars.

In a longer version of her speech posted online, Mrs Rinehart used the example of "people ... in a cafe in an inner city having a conversation about animal rights and the environment and arguing against using more water for agriculture and development in regions of Australia".

Mrs Rinehart argued those same inner-city cafe patrons would be enjoying a range of fine Australian produce, sitting on wooden chairs, wearing woollen or cotton clothes and drinking from plastic bottles made with petroleum products. "The point here is these products which we consume are in our everyday lives, yet some in our communities campaign against what they and their children actually need."

