Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull‘s sound and fury signifies nothing

Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun
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HOW bad is Malcolm Turnbull? Even he struggles to name one thing he’s achieved since becoming Prime Minister.

Wednesday marks a year since Turnbull took over with a promise to give us “the economic leadership this nation needs”.vSo what on earth has he done for us since?

Asked just that last week, Turnbull suggested “jobs and growth”, without naming a thing he’d actually done (rather than merely promised). No wonder. When you compare his achievements to those of his predecessor, Tony Abbott, or Labor’s Kevin Rudd, they look pitiful.

Abbott in his first year famously stopped the boats that had brought more than 50,000 illegal immigrants.

Frustrated and angry, Malcolm Turnbull must watch as his popularity plummets and his authority melts

He also abolished the carbon tax, beefed up national security, dumped the anti-investment mining tax, saved billions by reforming the National Broadband Network, approved $800 billion in new investment projects, and junked Tim Flannery’s Climate Commission.

Overseas, he signed hugely valuable free-trade deals with Japan and South Korea, dropped aid to Iraqis fleeing Islamic State, and rebuilt our relationship with Indonesia after Labor’s live-trade freeze and spying scandal.
He also led the world into challenging Russia after it shot down Malaysia Airline’s flight MH17, and he brought home our dead. Less admirably, Abbott also imposed a 2 per cent wealth tax and increased the fuel tax to curb the Budget deficit.

All that — and more — in just one year. Impressive.

To repeat: these were things Abbott actually got done. I am not including mere plans, announcements or inquiries. But of those, there were plenty, too. Abbott set up a royal commission into union corruption, announced a second airport for Sydney at Badgerys Creek, and got a $2.1 billion road-building program through the Senate.

Abbott’s list dwarfs even that of Rudd, the alleged Energiser Bunny of politics. Most significantly, Rudd spent $10 billion in “stimulus” payments to protect Australia from the global financial crisis.
He also gave tax cuts, and brought in a national school curriculum.

True, some of his deeds were stupid — even disastrous. He scrapped WorkChoices and, worse, ended the “Pacific solution” that had stopped the boats. Then there were Rudd’s purely symbolic “achievements” that so thrilled the Left: ratifying the Kyoto Protocol to cut our emissions, saying sorry to the “stolen generations” and holding the 2020 ideas summit of our “best and brightest”.

But check Turnbull’s threadbare list on the Liberals’ “Achievements in Government” web page. Oh dear. Turnbull’s biggest boast is an innovation plan that you probably don’t understand and you won’t see in full for four years. Haven’t heard of it? Well, it includes a non-refundable tax offset for start-up businesses and money to teach children coding. Yes — trivial compared to Abbott’s trade deals or Rudd’s stimulus package.

Turnbull did also change the Senate voting rules, limit charges on credit cards and scrap a tribunal that threatened to put some owner-operator truck drivers out of business. Mostly peripheral stuff.
One of Turnbull’s few remaining “achievements” is waste and spin: a $1 billion Clean Energy Innovation Fund that’s actually money diverted from a renewable energy agency. It’s a paint job on a donkey.

Malcolm Turnbull is taking credit for many of former Prime Minister Tony Abbott’s achievements. Picture: AP

Turnbull’s official list of achievements is so embarrassingly tiny that his staff have padded it with things they’ve stolen from Abbott’s. It was actually Abbott who drafted the $100 million domestic violence package that Turnbull now claims was his.

It was Abbott who, by stopping the boats, allowed Turnbull to now boast he’s released all children from onshore immigration detention.
It was Abbott who got the free-trade deal with China that Turnbull now crows he formally signed.

How pathetic for Turnbull, desperate for deeds, to claim credit.

Sure, as with Abbott and Rudd, Turnbull has other stuff he's merely promised, planned or got people to inquire into. And he's added some of those, too, to fill out his list of "achievements". He says he's reformed competition law and media ownership, even though Parliament has neither seen nor passed the legislation. The biggest of those promises on his list is actually a scandal: to spend $50 billion on building 12 submarines in Adelaide over the next 50 years.

Again, that promise isn't actually a done deed. Contracts for that project, announced before the election to save Liberal seats in South Australia, have not even been signed. More troubling, the price is horrendous — an estimated $10 billion more than the cost of building those submarines overseas.

Compare again those lists — what Abbott and Turnbull each did in their first year.

What on earth has Turnbull been doing?

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Of 29 islands on Tuvalu, 18 have grown.
Andrew Bolt

Climate change cash splash: Pacific Islands drowning in a sea of money

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PACIFIC island leaders love telling sob stories about global warming drowning their islands, and no wonder. You'd cry for cash, too, if you had Australia dropping another $300 million in your begging bowl.

Sure enough, there was our Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, at a Pacific leaders' forum in Micronesia last week, declaring there was "no more pressing need" than global warming as he handed over your cash to help the Pacific "manage climate change and improve disaster resilience".

He's not alone in paying this guilt money. The US shelled out $40 million.

But what danger do these islands actually face?

The scare that these islands risk drowning as man-made warming melts our ice caps is wildly exaggerated. Professor Paul Kench, an Auckland University coastal geomorphologist, along with Australian scientists, has studied more than 600 coral reef islands. His findings: about 40 per cent have actually grown in size. Another 40 per cent stayed stable, and just 20 per cent have shrunk.

Much of that is because coral islands, essentially living things, grow with rising seas, as well as with sand washed up by the waves. What's more, populated islands can reclaim land.

Result: Betio, Kiribati's most populous atoll, has grown 30 per cent in 60 years. Kiribati's main South Tarawa island has grown 19 per cent over 30 years, as its government poured lagoon sand behind seawalls.

On Tuvalu, it's much the same. Of its 29 islands, 18 have grown. "There is still considerable speculation that islands will disappear as sea level rises," says Kench. "Our data indicates that the future of islands is significantly different."

True, the volcanic main islands of Fiji, Tonga and Samoa do not grow as seas rise, as they've slowly done by around 3.4mm a year for 20 years. But for those islands, such rises are not existential threats.

But what of those other threats that warming alarmists have raised, like cyclones? Again, even the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change admits there has actually been a "slight decrease in the frequency of tropical cyclones making landfall in … the South Pacific", and there's little evidence so far of them getting worse.

So why are we handing over another $300 million? If it's just aid by a different name, why pretend global warming scared us into giving?

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