

Andrew Bolt: Coalition is doomed if it has no heart

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TURNBULL Government MPs are in a world of pain, trying to figure how to save themselves after Saturday's by-elections disaster. But they're asking their questions in the wrong order — starting with whether to keep Malcolm Turnbull as Prime Minister.

Sure, at least most MPs do realise changes must be made after losing all five by-elections. They can't go on like this when a third of Coalition voters in the marginal Queensland seat of Longman deserted them.

Repeat that at the next election and the government would lose seven seats in Queensland alone. Hello, Labor government.

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But to save themselves, the Liberals must not make exactly the mistake they seem to be making. They seem to have decided the last question first — to keep Turnbull as leader — and are now simply working out what new policies he must sell.

That is crazy. Surely, the first question should be what new policies the Liberals need to attract the voters in the seats they most need to win — particularly in Queensland and outer Sydney.

For instance, should the Liberals finally cut the high immigration intake that Turnbull supports, but which is crushing our cities?

Should they wind back the anti-global warming schemes that Turnbull loves, but which are driving electricity prices through the roof?

Should they build a coal-fired power station that Turnbull opposes, but which would give more cheap and reliable power?

Should they ditch the tax cuts for big business that Turnbull this week said he'd keep, but which Labor easily attacks as stealing money from hospitals to give to banks?



Should the Liberals build a coal-fired power station that Turnbull opposes, but which would give more cheap and reliable power? Picture: AAP

If the Liberals do decide to make those policy changes, as many MPs seem to want, fine. That would give them a fighting chance. But only then should they ask which leader would be best to sell them.

You see, the leader must be able to fight for the new policies with conviction, because the sanctimonious media pack will try to murder the Liberals for cutting immigration and going soft on the warming scare.

The Liberals should welcome that, because only a brawl will wake voters to the fact the government has changed direction. But the Liberals will lose that brawl if their leader fights without heart, embarrassed to defend policies he once opposed.

So who is the man — or woman — who'd best fight for the new direction? Turnbull? Really?