

Andrew Bolt: Turnbull no good for ScoMo and must be dumped

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POOR Scott Morrison is in an abusive relationship and can't get out. Memo to the Prime Minister: dump him. Don't send Malcolm Turnbull to Bali. Turnbull is no good for you. You keep giving in to him but he'll keep slapping you around.

So here's where you make a stand: tell that bully he's out. You're not sending him as your representative to next week's Ocean Conference in Bali after all. It is astonishing that Morrison does not see how stupid it is to send Turnbull to a conference where organisers say "participants are encouraged to announce their commitments ... to preserve the oceans' health" from threats including "climate change-related impacts".

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Really? What a dumb decision from the get-go.

After all, Morrison has been trying to convince voters he's actually keener on cutting their power prices than on cutting global-warming emissions, which was Turnbull's obsession.

He's boasted how he won't send another dollar to the United Nations' Green Climate Fund, to which the Liberals handed \$200 million. So how does it help the Morrison Government to now send a red-hot, global-warming believer like Turnbull to a conference demanding more action on global warming?

It can only make Morrison seem a flake or a fraud. If he really needs to send an ex-prime minister to Bali, he should send climate sceptic Tony Abbott, instead. That would send a more accurate or consistent message.

But I get it. Morrison was desperate to keep Turnbull sweet after he was dumped as prime minister two months ago. He didn't want Turnbull lashing out in his famous fury, leak damaging secrets or wrecking the Liberals' recovery — just like Turnbull ratted out late billionaire Kerry Packer to the

Australian Broadcasting Tribunal when they fell out over their bid to buy the Fairfax newspapers.



Scott Morrison should send climate sceptic Tony Abbott to Bali instead, to send a more accurate or consistent message. Picture: Kym Smith

So Morrison gave Turnbull this Bali trip as a sop to his wounded pride. He also guaranteed him a travel fund and, at every stage, insisted on praising Turnbull rather than burying him.

But with every gift, how did Turnbull reward him? With a slap in the face.

Turnbull quit parliament, forcing a totally unnecessary by-election in his seat of Wentworth that would cost the government its one-seat majority. Turnbull also pointedly rejected urgent appeals to help Liberal candidate Dave Sharma, who lost narrowly.

Meanwhile, Turnbull surrogates and relatives urged voters to reject the Liberals and made fake claims of Liberal MPs bullying women. Someone also leaked Cabinet secrets to rob Morrison of credit for government announcements.

It was pathetic. And it was war. How much more evidence does Morrison need that Turnbull has a deep need for the Liberals to fail, to prove to himself that they were wrong to sack him?

Turnbull will keep abusing the Liberals, perhaps for the rest of his life, so for Morrison to keep trying to placate the implacable makes him seem a poor judge of character.

But, worse, it makes Morrison look weak, and in every which way. Here is Morrison rewarding a man who sabotaged his campaign to save Wentworth. That's weak.

Here is Morrison even now making Turnbull look needed, as if sacking him really was an awful mistake by a party which can't now survive without him. That's weak, too.



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Morrison is also presenting Turnbull as the best person he could find — better than himself, his Foreign Minister or his Environment Minister — to represent Australia in Indonesia. That makes his whole government look weak.

What's more, Morrison is giving a platform to a former prime minister who now wants the Liberals dead. That doesn't just make the Liberals look weak, but makes them so.

And Morrison is using Turnbull to promote exactly the global- warming issue that Labor, the Greens and the ABC will use to smash the Liberals at the next election. That weakens the Liberals even more.

Morrison needs to show some strength and independence from the ghost he's invited on to his table.

So ring Turnbull, Prime Minister. Tell him he is a backstabber. Tell him he's neither wanted nor needed. Tell him there are plenty of people in the government who could represent Australia better.

Dump him. No Bali for him.

Of course, you risk having Turnbull's dwindling bunch of mates in the government — people like the ineffable Craig Laundry, say — then going the full jihad on their own side.

That would weaken the government, too. But in this battle of the weak, wouldn't it be good not to seem weak yourself?