

Andrew Bolt: Malcolm Turnbull forcing the Liberal Party into a corner

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IT sounds suicidal. But the Liberals may have to expel Malcolm Turnbull before this sacked prime minister does even more damage.

Already, the Roseville branch has called for Turnbull to be thrown out of the Liberals and federal vice-president Teena McQueen said several branches could join it.

“It is clear that a number of branches can no longer tolerate the damage Mr Turnbull is causing Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the party,” McQueen said.

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Turnbull has already been a big enough rat to arguably trigger expulsion. But that’s not because of all of his sabotage before this week — refusing to endorse Liberal candidate Dave Sharma in the by-election for his former seat, repudiating Morrison’s proposal to move our Israel embassy to Jerusalem, attacking the Liberals’ stand on global warming and savaging Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton.



Malcolm Turnbull has already been a big enough rat to arguably trigger expulsion. Picture: AFP

That hurt the Liberals, but did not meet the key test in their constitution: “State Executive may expel a member where the member has actively assisted a candidate other than a candidate endorsed or approved by the organisation for election to office.”

Turnbull only crossed that line this week — at least in spirit — when he and his wife followed a new Vote Tony Out Instagram campaign dedicated to dumping his conservative rival Tony Abbott from parliament.

True, Morrison would hate the idea of having Turnbull booted from the party, even when his predecessor is helping a campaign against a Liberal MP. That would just tell voters the Liberals are hopelessly divided and would simply free Turnbull to really nuke the party he now loathes.

But it is already clear that Turnbull wants the Liberals to lose the next election to prove they were wrong to dump his magnificent self as prime minister.

It is also clear he will niggle the government right up to election day and has already started to attack it on global warming policy — just when Morrison wants to cut electricity prices rather than emissions.

So here's the Liberals' dilemma: expel Turnbull now and trigger an all-out war with him, or do nothing and leave Turnbull free to blow them up at a timing of his own choosing.

Expelling Turnbull at least has this advantage: it will label all his carping as just the rantings of an extraordinarily bitter, vain and vengeful man of the cultural Left.

Which is true, right?