

Andrew Bolt: Malcolm Turnbull's Party Betrayal Must be Called Out

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I'm not shocked that Malcolm Turnbull is now openly campaigning to defeat Liberal MPs he led six months ago. No, what does shock me is that many political journalists refuse to call out the dumped prime minister as a rat.

Let me show how blatant is Turnbull's treachery and how wilfully blind a journalist must be to not see it.

On Tuesday Turnbull gave a ludicrously generous endorsement to Liberal turncoat Julia Banks, the MP now running as an independent against Liberal Health Minister Greg Hunt.

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"Julia Banks is an outstanding parliamentarian," Turnbull gushed, after flying to Banks' home state, Victoria. "She came to parliament with life experience as a lawyer and in the business world. She is really an outstanding representative."

Really? Banks has been in parliament for less than three years and done nothing of note except boast she could live on the dole.

Then she quit the Liberals in fury at Turnbull's dumping, made totally unsubstantiated claims that the Liberals were bullies and finally deserted the voters of Chisholm, who elected her, to campaign instead against Hunt in his seat of Flinders, 80km away. If that is an "outstanding representative" then Benedict Arnold was a patriot.

Yet Turnbull on Tuesday endorsed Banks' desertion — "I respect the decision she has taken" — and cheered on her campaign against Hunt, who Turnbull loathes for backing the leadership challenge last August. "I believe the people of Flinders will have a very stimulating contest between her and Greg Hunt." For Hunt, Turnbull had not a word of praise.

Turnbull has now done all that's needed for the Liberals to expel him as a saboteur. The constitution of the party's NSW branch, to which Turnbull belongs, states: "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 has backed Banks against Hunt, the Liberal candidate. Case closed, although Turnbull might technically argue that Victorian Hunt isn't endorsed by the NSW branch.

But you want more?

There is increasing evidence — and suspicion — that Turnbull is involved in the spate of so-called “independents” and “moderates” now standing against his Liberal foes and all pushing his signature cause of global warming.



Julia Banks Picture: Tracey Nearmy/Getty Images

Oliver Yates, Turnbull's former head of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, is standing against Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, who replaced Turnbull ally Julie Bishop as deputy Liberal leader. Former Turnbull staffer Alice Thompson is standing against Jason Falinski, who once told Turnbull to shut up.

Former skiing champion Zali Steggall is standing against Turnbull's nemesis, Tony Abbott.

And then there's Banks.

A Turnbull spokesman has denied Turnbull was involved in Banks' campaign, but Banks, when asked by the ABC if Turnbull had urged her to challenge Hunt, replied enigmatically that Turnbull and his wife were "good friends". Turnbull's son Alex, meanwhile, has admitted he himself is helping her.

Don't forget Malcolm Turnbull's other clear signs of vengeance against the Liberals who failed to see how utterly brilliant, loved and successful he really was.

For instance, he pointedly refused to endorse or help Liberal candidate Dave Sharma in last year's by-election for Turnbull's former seat, effectively helping warmist "independent" Kerry Phelp to win it.

He publicly attacked Prime Minister Scott Morrison's proposal to move our Israel embassy to Jerusalem and lobbied Liberals to refer Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton to the High Court, hoping it would rule ineligible the rival who'd challenged his leadership — even if it cost the government its majority in parliament.

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Turnbull then got more brazen, publicly following a new Vote Tony Out Instagram campaign dedicated to dumping Tony Abbott from parliament.

How can so many political journalists ignore or downplay this open campaign to destroy the Liberals? Why is Turnbull not called the rat that he is? Is it because he is of the cultural Left? A warmist?

What makes this failure even more astonishing is the double standard. When Kevin Rudd undermined Labor Prime Minister Julia Gillard, hoping to take back the leadership, he was widely attacked in the media. When Abbott gave the struggling Turnbull government good advice on fighting Labor, he was branded a "wrecker" and "sniper" in every mainstream newspaper.

But at least Rudd and Abbott didn't campaign for the other side. They thought they could help their party to win.

Not so Turnbull. He just wants the Liberals to lose.

Sure, Morrison is too scared to take on Turnbull publicly and have open war, but what's the journalists' excuse?