

Cut Through, July 2, 2026: **Teal, Orange, Green: Who's holding Labor to account?**
All timestamps are approximate

Pauline Hanson on Sky News Australia (00:00)

And I said to David, I said, This is the problem. I said, You took thirty years to get here to stand up and fight for the Australian people. Your performance in there is gonna reflect on me.

Crystal Andrews (00:13)

Hello and welcome to Cut Through, Crikey's spin-free analysis of Australian news, politics, and power. I'm your host, Crystal Andrews, and I am very excited to be back from our little podcast break and be with you all again to talk about the things that really matter. Today we'll be talking about the highs and lows from the past sitting fortnight in Parliament, which was the last chance that our federal politicians will have to get any legislation through before they go on winter break.

Joining me to pick apart everything that's happened is Crikey's reporter at large, Charlie Lewis. How you going, Charlie?

Charlie Lewis (00:49)

I'm not bad, Crystal. How you doing?

Crystal Andrews (00:51)

Yeah, I'm not too bad. I'm ready to get stuck into it with you and our politics contributor, Rachel Withers. Rachel, welcome back to the pod.

Rachel Withers (00:59)

Thanks Crystal. Excited to be on with Charlie who I never get to speak to.

Charlie Lewis (01:03)

This is true. It's the collab that they've all been waiting for.

Crystal Andrews (01:07)

I know, I do feel like I'm intruding slightly. If you guys want to take over at any point and, you know, run this your way, I will understand. No, no, no.

Charlie Lewis (01:15)

We need to cut to an ad and put some tunes on.

Crystal Andrews (01:19)

pull a record out from the shelf behind, go on. ~ look, we have lots to get into, so I think we'll just get stuck in. Rachel, contributors get to go first. So ~ what stood out to you as the most sort of noteworthy development from Parliament over the last fortnight?

Rachel Withers (01:38)

Yeah, I think the most noteworthy, both in in the space of the past two weeks and also for the shape of politics more broadly, is the long-awaited announcement of the Community Strong Australia Party, ~ which is the party that we've been expecting to be announced from some of the community independence. In the end it was just Zali Stegel and Allegra Spender.

Footage of Zali Steggall and Allegra Spender's announcement (02:05)

We are Community strong Australia

because the superpower for Australia is its communities, is its multiculturalism, it's the richness of what everyone brings to the table. Thanks everyone.

Rachel Withers (02:34)

I actually wrote something for Crikey a couple weeks back about the fact it was clearly only going to be them. ~ I had another name in the mix as well, what but man by the name of Malcolm Turnbull, but he is not in this. He's not in this. they're pretty clear about that. ~ but I have been following

the coverage of this and getting quite frustrated at the fact that it's being called the teal party. ~ I think longtime crikey readers and listeners would know that I have a bit of an issue with the teal label. I used to use it myself, but it's increasingly unclear what that means and who it includes. And now we have people calling it the teal party, despite the fact, depending on who your definition of a teal is, only two out of six or seven or eight of them are involved. So it's kind of

For me, it's showing just how ridiculous that label is. But you're also getting people who have long criticized the community independence coming forward and saying, ~ this proves they were always a party, doesn't it? When I would posit it proves the exact opposite, because only two of them are doing it, which ultimately shows that they've all got autonomy here. They've all got agency. They can decide for themselves how best to move forward in this new political climate. And yeah, we are in a particularly

a moment of political flux. There was one piece that I was particularly annoyed by. ~ Jasonsky, former member for McKeller, who was defeated in 2022 by one of these independents, Sophie Skomps, who has not joined this party yet. He wrote a piece. It was in the AFR, he always sort of comes along with these screeds against the teals. ~ and he suggested they were gonna need a marketing

Crystal Andrews (03:41)

Yeah.

Rachel Withers (04:01)

snow job to pull off the idea that they are still authentic. It's pretty clear they're the ones who haven't joined are still independent and that they actually all fall in different positions on this. But I think it's a bit rich from Jason Lundskin be talking about them needing a marketing snow job

when the Liberals are currently discussing a rebrand as they plummet further in the in the polls. And also I think it's worth, you know, acknowledging this is a this is a big moment. Not often are new parties born. I think this one is an interesting

An interesting solution to the problems currently facing ~ parties and independents.

Charlie Lewis (04:38)

Rachel, you've you've written obviously a lot about the the community independent movement for for a very long time. And I'm really interested to get your view on whether w like whether you think this is a good idea, whether whether this is actually something that is workable, and how it's going to play for their voters. Because I was thinking about how because I think with a with a decision like this, you're kind of weighing up kind of the practical gains that it will make for them, presumably in terms of access to greater federal funding, Senate tickets, things like that. But then I'm interested to know how you feel this will play for the people that voted for them

Potenti potentially because they weren't members of a party.

Rachel Withers (05:10)

Yeah, and I think ~ Tina Quinn did a great job in Crikey on Friday looking at the contradictions of party and independent and how the two can work together. I'm reserving judgment on whether this is going to work. Because this has always been about individual communities having individual positions on individual issues. Like for some communities this will be great, for others they'll hate this. ~ even within communities there'll be division. I think there is actually quite serious division in the

independence movement and the volunteers and the donors and ~ a lot of a lot of different opinions. I think that they can square the circle on independent party. I think I think Sally Sagan and Legressman are actually doing a pretty good job of explaining that. Where I don't think they're going to succeed is their main position being economic sensible centerism. I don't think that's what this moment calls for. You know, every party that claims to be sensible center, like middle ground kind of

fades into the background. And I'd rather see them, you know, if they want to be moderate liberals, say that. If you want to be centre right, say that. There are probably some people who want that. ~ You know, there isn't currently a centre right party in Australia. But I don't think I don't think centerism is going to sell. Not for people who are reaching for the one nation lever. You know? They are looking for something to upend the political system, not not like more

People in the middle.

Crystal Andrews (06:41)

I mean, the other thing that I have felt like does get missed a little bit in the the reporting and the coverage and the discussion around the emergence of this new party is the changes to the ~ campaign funding laws which were brought brought through, which which is, to my mind at

least, a significant driver of their decision to to form a party ~ and to make this change because they were going to be quite hampered in

you know, how much and and when and where you can spend going forward as an independent. I think it's also worth pointing out that crikey readers are pretty split on this whole exercise. On the one hand, in support we have Pedantic, a longtime crikey crikey comic, who says the two leading parties have done their best to shut the door on the independence. So forming a new party to circumnavigate their intentions is smart thinking. It can encompass activities that are challenging for the one man band but practical when there is a group.

members can still retain the integrity of independence, vote according to the mandate of their electorate, but retain the broad appeal of being teals that were that you hate Rachel. Although they do say, What a crap name, Community Strong Australia.

Charlie Lewis (07:54)

I'm gonna say it is a dreadful rebrand.

Crystal Andrews (07:57)

It

is it is I mean, it's getting quite a lot of ridicule, I think, ~ across the board. On the other hand, we have Bystander, also a long time crikey commenter, ~ who is not as in favor. They praised Monique Ryan's decision to sort of stay out of the the party, ~ and says with Spender and Stegel's status of being truly independent of political parties now compromise, their reason for being is lost. Something their voter

base won't appreciate. This might be the beginning of the end for them and a backward step by diluting the group influence of the independence if others aren't elected to grow their numbers.

Rachel Withers (08:32)

Yeah. I look I take issue with something in that comment, and it's also something Jason Falinsky said in his piece, which is this insinuation that they were created to subvert the party system. The independent's main goal was to be anti-party. I don't think that's why voices of Indi and voices of Warringer and voices of Wentworth started. I think it's because they had a major party representative that was doing a really bad job of representing their seat. It wasn't

That parties per se were the problem. It's the party in front of them that was the problem. Obviously there are some people who love the idea of independence, but I think there are just as many people who would vote for a independent thinking member of a vague structure of a party that can still represent them properly.

Charlie Lewis (09:17)

Teal voters are not outsiders in the way that say one nation voters would be. sorry to again adopt the word teal, but they they it's it's ~ they they are not anti-system generally in their

outlook. And so I think there is a sense that they want the system run better. And if forming a party and getting organized in that way and getting access to more funding and and you know, a better run with donation laws is the way to do it, I don't think they will necessarily reject that. I think also it's a bit of a question about what the

what the end game for all of this really is. Is it to kind of really dominate the crossbench eventually? Is it to years from now become a kind of legitimate potential party of government? And then of course then you've got to do all the process of factions and vetting weirdo local candidates and and all that kind of stuff. Which I think is the bit that might start to rub the luster off the members of the community strong group. That that that might be the thing that people go, this is exactly what I wasn't voting for.

Rachel Withers (10:13)

Yeah. Well, I mean, I think I'd I just I would go back to kind of what I'm writing about in Crikey today, which is the fact that for some people this might be about eventually being a party government. For others, this might be about having a ~ stronger position on the crossbench. Rather, it might be just about circumventing those donation laws. Like it is a movement that has a diversity of opinion within it. And we are seeing that play out with the fact that nobody can agree on whether this is a good idea or a bad idea. I think it's great. I think it's

It's more democracy, it's more debate, it's more people thinking for themselves how they'd like to be represented, rather than just red box blue.

Crystal Andrews (10:51)

And I mean, indeed, if they are the ones who can pull off having a party structure where dissent on like a policy by policy or issue by issue basis is allowed for within the structure. And as I understand, the way that they see this working is that there would be some like core issues where there must be agreement, but other than that, you get to vote the way that that you deem your electorate would like you to vote. If they can execute that, isn't that what a lot of people saying that they would like major parties

To to do. Like that is being the primary ~ criticism of well, one of the primary criticisms of the Labour Party is that there's clearly dissent on issues within the party. and some of that is coming from those members, you know, communities telling them we don't agree with these positions, but the party enforces this very strict ~ you know, mandate of voting with the party line. ~ and that's what's upsetting people. So I guess if Spender and Stable think they can pull it off, more power to them.

Charlie Lewis (11:48)

Yeah, and that is also supposed to be what the Liberal Party who held these seats that these community members have had for the last few years, who held them basically for the entire time that they existed prior to that, that was what you were supposed to get with the Liberal Party, was a much less rigidly endorsed kind of orthodoxy, a much more a much more freedom of individual kind of members to vote certain ways. It just never really worked out that way.

Crystal Andrews (12:10)

I want to go to some of the policy that we actually did see sort of make it through this sitting fortnight. ~ The obvious one that everybody will have been following and be across is a big chunk of Labour's tax reforms package was passed with the support of the Greens in exchange for some amendments. So we've got the changes to negative gearing and the capital gains discount with a few carve-outs still to come.

That's through. The Greens have closed a loophole for self-managed super funds to purchase property. ~ and they're also getting an eight-week extension for the inquiry into the NDIS. On the flip side of that, it looks like Labour's soft middling gambling reform bill will be delayed again. I know that they still we've still got sort of like a day to go as we record this, ~ where Labour might introduce the bill, but the Greens have said they're not going to support it because it doesn't go far enough.

Footage of Sarah Hanson-Young in Parliament (13:04)

Will you ban all advertising on our public broadcaster so people can watch our great sport without being bombarded by gambling ads?

Crystal Andrews (13:15)

And I think across the board, across the political spectrum, nobody likes this bill. Everybody is unhappy with it. For the most part, everybody is saying that it doesn't go far enough. So I think, you know, despite ~ whatever intentions Labour might have had, that that I'm pretty confident saying that is not going to pass this session. That one's gonna be kicked even further.

down the road ~ before we get any change there. But I just wanted to take a moment to think about the Greens' role in all of this because I remember in our last episode of the podcast for 2025, Rachel, I I think you were on that episode with me, we were talking about how the Greens were looking like the only viable partner for Labour to pass much of anything through Parliament. And ~ I would say for this first half of the year, that is still

the case that they are performing the role as the true opposition while the coalition is in an absolute shambles getting torn apart by this rise of one nation. And it's kind of funny to me that like at the time that we are talking about the Greens as a party, their sort of like, you know, failure to rise to the political moment and and, you know, have any impact in the political discourse, actually within the halls of parliament, like in the Senate, they're the only ones who seem to be doing much of any

thing in particular, either, you know, passing legislation, securing the amendments that they want, pushing things back, getting more time. You know, I I know some people have criticized and said, well, an eight week extension is is not a lot given the scope of the changes. It's something and Labour would have been very keen to just go through with what they had. I wonder ~ how you both would respond to my my view that the Greens are the only ones kind of keeping this thing going.

Rachel Withers (14:58)

Well I mean they are. Because the the Liberals didn't even come to the table on the tax reform. They complained about it, but they didn't negotiate. ~ and the Greens are the sole balance of power. I mean, I came to the conclusion after the 2025 election. I think the Greens are a party of the Senate. They're always gonna struggle in the House. People say, they're stuck at twelve percent. Well, that twelve percent gets you a really significant chunk of Senate seats that are absolutely necessary to pass legislation. And while the coalition has dealt itself out, the Greens should be

Dealing themselves in. There is a huge split among people on the the left as to whether the Greens should be playing ball the way they are. ~ Some people think, you know, they should be positioning themselves more as outsiders, you know, not part of this system, not part of this government. If it means making changes to things and passing things that are good, not things that are bad, but things that are good, like the tax changes, which I do think were mild but good.

~ then they should be getting what their vote entitles them to, which is a little bit of change. I like what they're doing at the moment is the ~ the short answer of after a very long

Charlie Lewis (16:07)

It's it's funny to see ~ what really cuts through and what doesn't. And obviously I guess yes, mm the the the the grabbier stuff, as you say, the the the the stuff that the Australian really catawalled about in terms of of of tax changes and things. Whereas like, yeah, maybe maybe the story here is like, ~ politics occurs in nation's capital. Like some compromises were made, some ideas were thrown about, something that some laws got through. And it is funny, I think it all goes down to I mean, ~ the other big thing with the Greens is obviously their

They have been left a little bit bereft by the outcome of the 2025 election, which rightly or wrongly really appeared to completely stall the momentum that they had gained at the national level in 2022. And whether they've been able to get the kind of as as we as we say on this podcast cut through with what they're doing has been a big a big issue for people ~ who would be, you know, supporters of of their program. And I suppose in terms of the do you play ball, do you not?

You know, do you try and make yourself more of an outsider? I don't think the Greens really have the option of playing outsider anymore. They they're too entrenched, they've been there too long. They they kind of have to take it seriously. They probably do deal with the the most hostile media because you are only allowed to be a voice for popular discontent in this country if you are quite far to the right. It i it would appear to me. The liberals or the or or you know, not that this is really open to one nation yet, but you know, if

parties of the right ~ throw a span on the works and d as you say, Rachel, deal themselves out, then that's a principled stand. But if it's but if the Greens do similar things, they are portrayed as

obstructionist and a rabble and they're not taking it seriously and they they just want to barrack from the sidelines and not actually get anything done.

Rachel Withers (17:47)

mm-hmm. Yeah, it's like you'll find the coverage when they were previously blocking, as the media put it, ~ Labour's bills in the Senate, was negative. And then when they have come to the table, most of the coverage has still been negative. It's like, look at the dodgy deal they've done. Like there was a lot of dodgy deal. I think it was both ~ n News Corp and the coalition's line on the deal that was done. It's like, well, there if there is no winning for them in the mainstream media

perhaps outcomes is the best way to go. yeah, at the other point I'd make, you know, you said about them being bereft after that 2025 result. Even if they had held on to Melbourne and the two green the two Brisbane seats they lost and picked up Wills here in Melbourne, for example, they would still have the same amount of power that they currently have in this parliament. Yeah. They they would still have the balanced power in the Senate and no balanced power in the House. And and it's like at the end of the day in politics

Without the balance of power, you don't really have much say. ~ I was really interested that David Pocock still had a little bit of influence on those tax changes, even though he doesn't have the balance of power in the Senate anymore. The Greens are now a big enough bloc that they don't need Pocock's vote, but sorry, the government doesn't need Pocock's vote. ~ and he still got in there on the on the tax changes and got something in the media and Labour agreed that they would change it in the next tranche of legislation.

Crystal Andrews (19:13)

David Pocock is able to do the the part that the Greens at moment and for a long time have been unable to do, which is the the public messaging bit. He doesn't get anywhere near as hard of a time from the media. ~ and from also a lot of ~ the the public in different types of voters. Like I said, that there are a lot of reasons for that, some down to his skill, others down to sort of immutable characters characteristics of himself, but he's able to do

that part. And I think Labour is particularly sensitive to that and like how they're perceived in response to like his criticism of them. So I almost see it as like, yeah, he can he can go out and like take these points and make these cases to the public and like do that messaging. And then it comes back to the actual process of the Senate. And it is the Greens who actually ~ hold the line on on certain things and are able to perhaps negotiate for

Some bits and pieces and and yeah, maybe he gets a a win in here and there because Labour are, I think, very aware of how well received Pocock is. That's why I think that dynamic between the two of the the you know, between Pocock and the Greens is working at the moment. And I think working well. I mean, yeah, I'm not suggesting the dodgy alliance between Pocock and the Greens. I just I mean, that's just how I see it. ~ Charlie, there was another man.

In particular, a little unlike David Pocock, who got your attention in Parliament over the past fortnight. Who was this man?

Charlie Lewis (20:42)

Yes,

this is ~ One Nation's newest ~ well, the first ever person to win a lower house seat in the federal parliament for One Nation. Obviously, Hansen was a lower house seat in her first incarnation, but she won as a disendorsed liberal and Barnaby Joyce has jumped ship from the nationals. But ~ the first person to yes, run and win for One Nation at that level is David Farley, who took over from former opposition leader Susan Lay's seat of Farah quite comfortably in the end. He's

Well he's an interesting guy, which I guess we'll get we'll get into during our chat. But it was an interesting little test, sort of early test of his role in Parliament, you'd have to say probably failed because he ~ from the sounds of things accidentally ~ sided with ~ the the community independents and the Greens to vote in support of winding back ~ a a a a fuel tax credit.

Footage of Andrew Bolt interviewing Pauline Hanson (21:33)

What do you what do you what can you tell us?

I had two discussions with him today and when when it was brought to my dis my attention and I was point blank with him. He said I didn't know I walked into that chamber and he said I actually ~ thought I was voting the way that we had to it was an amendment. He didn't vote for the bill, so you know, he didn't vote for the bill ~ as a whole because it went through in the voices, but anyway the amendment and it was a mistake.

Charlie Lewis (22:00)

That didn't end up being a particularly disastrous mistake because ~ Labour and the coalition p oppose it anyway, so it it didn't go.

Rachel Withers (22:06)

No balance of power for the crossbench of the lower house. Like it doesn't really matter what he does.

Charlie Lewis (22:10)

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Crystal Andrews (22:11)

And who won't do it who won't do a dodgy deal with the Greens? Like everybody every

Charlie Lewis (22:16)

The the nefarious plot gets to gets further and further. ~ I mean so and as I say, Farley is an interesting guy. He he has he has background of it came out during the campaign that he had,

you know, at some point spoken to Labour, possibly running for them. He had expressed support for the the comedian independent in that seat in previous instances. And he knows he's been sort of ~ he wouldn't really call them gaffes, but he's like he's he was asked by I believe it was Barry Casty during a a debate about ~ immigration levels and whether they were too high.

and he said probably not, which is I think even the most ill informed voter would know that's not really one nation's stance on these things. And it's an i mean it's interesting, he was there's there there was like speculation ~ because of those those differences with the party line, and also with ~ Hansen's kind of legendary inability to ~ to continue to get along with people for very long periods of time and to share the spotlight with them, that he might abscond from One Nation pretty quickly. Obviously that that hasn't happened.

Rachel Withers (23:14)

Maybe he could join a a community based party.

Charlie Lewis (23:18)

That would be something I don't know ~ I don't know how we would deal with that particular twist. ~ He was not at. The other thing that's interesting is that he was not at when ~ Hansen addressed the National Press Club. He was the only member of the elected arm of the party not to show up. There wasn't much made of that, and I don't know if there was anything particularly to that. But h her Senate team turned up, but he didn't.

And I think also the other thing that I find really fascinating about Farley, he's got the toughest job probably of any Federal One Nation member because he actually has constituents. He has he has voters he is he is answerable to. ~ whereas if you're a member of Hanson's Senate team and you are Malcolm Roberts, for example, who's the one person who since she returned to Parliament has been able to

stay on side with her and not and not fall out with her the way that say one someone like Rod Collison or Brian Burston did in the in the first round. But if you're on that snow team and can keep your head down and not and not offend her, you've got a you've got six years to to follow your your theories about weather patterns and what whatever it else is that ~ that you find interesting. And and obviously Barnaby Joyce, ~ both because and despite the fact that he is Barnaby Joyce, can kind of coast along on name recognition. The thing that's interesting, there was a there's a poll a few weeks ago that found that 50% of the people who are considering a vote

For one nation, don't think they're yet ready to govern. Which ~ is not a particularly significant sub you know, this far out from an election, that's that's fine for them. They they've they've got plenty of time to win win people over in that way. ~ but things like this, and w combined with like the lack of policy detail, gaffs of this sort start to look a little bit more serious in those terms the closer you get to an election. So I suppose that's kind of the thing to keep an eye on.

Rachel Withers (24:58)

I immediately go, where was Barnaby Joyce during this vote? You know, like I sort of accept, I accept that David Farley could make an administrative error. Like being in Parliament must be pretty confusing ~ the way they vote, the way they, you know, Barnaby Joyce wasn't there for David Farley to follow to the correct side of the house, presumably because he was over in the UK at Jordan Peterson's Conservative Talk Fest. Exactly. So it's sort of like there is the issue here of

Well, David Farley voted wrong, but there's also the issue of other One Nation MPs don't show up to work. ~ and maybe that will also start to bother people who've put them in there to represent them. ~ but as you say, Charlie, how you represent such a diverse mixed bag of voters is is not clear.

Charlie Lewis (25:47)

As Senator Anton said, ~ it's far too hard to sack workers who don't show up to work and other

Crystal Andrews (25:52)

~

Especially when when you're not really the one who can sack them when when they're in the lower house, right? It's it's the it's the voters. I do think it's worth just making sure everyone knows here that David Farley did leave himself, I think it was in perhaps it was a radio interview not long after he was ~ elected, after he won that by election, he did leave himself a little bit of room when he was asked about whether he would ever sort of go away from the

party line. And he, I I don't have the exact quote to to hand, but he said something to the effect of, like, you know, I believe in one nation's policy positions. Like, you know, that's why I'm I'm a member of the party. But I will represent the interests of my community, like I'm accountable to the el the the electorate, which I thought was a good answer. But but it does leave this little this little gap and I think indicates that he is very aware that he is accountable to the people who have

put him into parliament to the voters of Farah. And if I was to go out on a limb, that he is very aware that Pauline Hansen's brand is let's say it's fickle. This is a turbulent situation and that, you know, it it might be riding high right now. But I I d I don't know if I'm being maybe too generous to him, but I I I get the sense that he is just moving with a little bit of caution.

Rachel Withers (27:14)

Yeah. Once again, can I direct his attention to a new party called Community Stro

Seriously, not to not to bring this back to my topic of the week, but like, you know, when we're talking about what a an MP is supposed to do, how accountable they are to their community versus their party versus the people who actually voted for them, ~ versus the country as a whole. Like it's it's a real complicated role to be a member of Parliament, I would say. And you're

seeing this early with David Farley, who I think was actually quite a good representative of the people of Farah. Like there's

He won not just because of the one nation thing, but because he's like, you know, ex-farmer, head of the farmers federation, like country bloke, looked like what they wanted, sounded like what they wanted, seemed to speak quite authentically, I think, that which is why we saw these We saw these gaps emerge in the campaign because he was willing to offer his own views and then also justify them. And he had an authenticity about those views that people were fine with, you know, like i it used to be considered like, you know, ~

campaign ending for someone to di diverge from the party line or or to discreate their leader. Like he he pulled it off. And so yeah, I think it could be interesting to see if he ever does leave. wow the puppy got out. if he ever does leave One Nation. ~ You know, would he be interested in something like Community Strong? Would he be interested in being an independent? ~ And then I I like look to people like Andrew G, another

Charlie Lewis (28:36)
Yeah.

Rachel Withers (28:48)
regional independent who is very much like of his seat, the seat of Collaire, he left the nationals over the voice and then got reelected at the last election. I mean, could something like Community Strong, if it can sort out its centrist messaging, be for him as well? Like, who knows? Like Community Strong may not be the Teal Party. It could be the people who want to represent their communities party.

Crystal Andrews (29:11)
Zali Stegel Allegrispender, if you are watching this episode of Cut Through, please email me. As well. As I'm sure they are, please let us know. ~ Andrew G and David Farley if they ~ you know, if they're interested, are they welcome in

Charlie Lewis (29:28)
That

that is the thing, I guess that w the the the question does become ~ what's a what's a red line, what's a deal breaker to be a member of this party? ~ how how far can the spectrum extend in in each direction? ~ and and and there is an argument for a party that yes, has people who are far more right wing than us. I mean we have that within the major parties. Why why would it be more Well it was. And the question becomes, yeah, w w well, if that's

Rachel Withers (29:47)
Broadshit.

Charlie Lewis (29:55)

If you have that level of diversity and that level of community individual focus, what is it that you collectively are able to get done? And what what can you live with in terms of a compromise, in terms of because obviously th you would assume that there are many, many people within Farah who would, you know, gnaw their own foot off before voting for a a a teal candidate.

Rachel Withers (30:15)

I think for a long time, you know, we go left, right, Labour Liberal, One Nation, Greens. For voters, it isn't actually about left or right or this or that. It's like I want someone who's gonna go and speak for me. ~ and who, you know, at the moment, it seems like One Nation is winning that, is winning the public fight to pretend to be that voice. I I would say pretend because like you only have to look at who's funding One Nation and, you know, where they actually stand on issues to realize that it's not actually about community representation.

But you know, that's what everybody is competing for right now, to be the community's voice.

Crystal Andrews (30:51)

We will see how this plays out, where the moves are made, how this goes, but I think we're gonna have to call time on the meat of this discussion here. Before we go, it's time for our new segment, The Snoop, in honor of Crikey's new tips column edited by our tips hog, Coshon, who is always on the lookout for juicy tips and curiosities to investigate further. Charlie, do you have any tips or tidbits of information you'd like to refer to the pig?

Charlie Lewis (31:21)

yes, absolutely. I would like the ~ the pig to continue to look into an item that was reported in the column a bit earlier this week. Lobbyist group ~ Nuclear for Australia have been walking the the halls of parliament as as is there, right? And ~ that prompted a tipster to get in contact with with Gushan to kind of break down their most recent financial statement, which found that they had made about one point eight million in donations, but only about

760 bucks in in other form, which is all in the form of merchandising, which we did a little mass and broke down that that meant that at most their \$45 t-shirts had sold about 16 copies. Which then leads you to the fact that there's a carousel of images along the bottom of the merch page with people brandishing their mugs or or holding up the t-shirts. And it raises the the distinct possibility that literally every single bit of merch that they've ever sold is represented in that.

In that carousel of images. That was that's the funny side of it. But ~ but the the other sort of question to this is obviously they don't have to declare where this where this money comes from because they're not considered an ~ what you know, a third party by the Australian Electoral Commission. ~ despite the fact that and and Cracky has written about this before, there are there are suspicions and not unfounded ones, ~ that that that they are fairly in favour of the ~ the LNP. So

It's an interesting one that I think is worth extra scrutiny and is another reminder, as we say, of the the slightly skew if ways that money moves around in Australian politics.

Rachel Withers (32:58)

Damn, that's a good snoop.

Crystal Andrews (32:59)

It is a really it is a really good snoop. ~ Rachel, anything that you wanna point the the listeners and viewers' attention towards in the coming week?

Rachel Withers (33:09)

I mean, the mm the one thing that that I wanted to draw as many people's attention to this week is what on earth National Senate leader Bridget Mackenzie is up to. She was over in the UK at this Jordan Peterson conference that has been covered in in Crikey. And she's doing a lot of like, you know, they're all doing a lot of right-wing social media posting. She's got this like snappy little like closing

logo that says the Honourable Senator Bridget Mackenzie doesn't have any national branding on it. It's like a little it's got a little camera click. And I think she is potentially considering her options. I think obviously I don't think she can join One Nation. I think she is too much of an establishment politician, but she is certainly looking to ride the right wing grift. her speech at that conference was very much about Western values and universities grooming the elites to

indoctrinate the children, like just absolute right wing gibberish. ~ and so I would be keeping an eye on her and what she's saying and what she's doing and who she's trying to appeal to online.

Crystal Andrews (34:18)

Very, very interesting. ~ yes, everybody take a look at those two little tips. If you find anything that you think Crikey should look at and the SNP column should look at, ~ we will have the contact details in the episode description. ~ but for now, Charlie, Rachel, thanks for joining me for our for our first episode back. It's been such a pleasure to ~ unpack it all with you both today.

Rachel Withers (34:42)

Thanks, Crystal. It's been so fun.

Charlie Lewis (34:43)

Thanks so much guys.