

Pauline Hanson knows how to hurt. She tweeted this week: “When you look at Bill Shorten’s recent rhetoric it seems Labor is now taking its cues from Pauline Hanson’s One Nation. Good to see.”

Of course Shorten strongly rejects any such thing. But after Donald Trump’s win, the mainstream parties are looking towards those people who, squeezed by economic change, alienated and often angry, swelled One Nation’s vote in July.

Their concerns will be increasingly accommodated in the next couple of years. The question is how far that accommodation will push policy towards more inward-looking and status-quo stances.

In a speech warning against countries retreating from openness, Malcolm Turnbull on Thursday said in an understatement: “The need to undertake reforms that will deliver long-term gains – but which may create winners and losers in the near term - isn’t keenly felt in many parts of Australian society.”

The disruptive effect of Trump’s victory is rippling through Australian politics, delighting Hanson – who is relishing the possibilities that lie in the next Queensland election – but discombobulating the main parties, which know its risks, although for Labor there is also the smell of opportunity.

Trading on the perceived unpopularity of Trump here – 59% believed Australia’s economy would be worse off with Trump in the White House, according to a [post-election Ipsos poll](#) – Shorten is now referring to Turnbull’s company tax package as his “Donald-Trump-style corporate tax cuts”.

When Shorten addressed the Victorian ALP conference on Sunday the United States was firmly in his mind.

He pointed to “the long-term decline of the economic security of working people [there] – the squeezing of the middle class, the rise of the working poor”.

And “some of the seeds of the disquiet we see overseas are present [and] growing in this country, although we are not there yet”, he said. Labor would “heed the lessons from the mines and mills and factories of Detroit, of Ohio, of Pennsylvania”.

Shorten has a set of slogans, likely to appeal to the disquieted: “Build Australian first. Buy Australian first in our contracts. Employ Australians first.”

Turnbull is also looking to what he describes as the “rising disquiet”, saying the presidential election had taught that policy changes must be fair.

But more problematically, Turnbull wants to define fairness “in a very broad sense”. Rather than looking at winners and losers narrowly, decision by decision, he sees it as a matter of “making sure our overall system is fair, examining the transfers of goods and services over a person’s lifetime and asking ourselves, does this reflect the benchmarks we set ourselves of an open, fair and just society?”.

Short-termism is the hallmark of our politics, however, and the prospect of voters adopting Turnbull’s “broad” concept of fairness in the current environment wouldn’t seem high.

This week the Trump ripples played out particularly over the issue of foreign workers with Shorten, who toured regional areas in Victoria and Queensland, revisiting 457 visas.

“Employers are using and abusing temporary work visas to bring in cheap labour,” he said. “Manipulating the visa system to import and exploit overseas guest workers.”

The government’s reaction was to have things both ways, attacking Shorten for hypocrisy – saying as employment minister he was an “Olympic-grade 457 visa issuer” – but also

announcing a tightening (a decision it had already taken) and flagging further action.

At the same time, government and Labor are jostling over the tax arrangements for backpackers, with the opposition trying to cut back the tax rate for them from the Coalition's proposed compromise.

Labor is also seeking to position its foreign policy stance for the age of Trump but it has found this slippery ground.

Shadow Foreign Minister Penny Wong wrote in an [opinion piece for Fairfax](#) : “We are at a change point, and face the possibility of a very different world and a very different America. Our collective task now is to carefully and dispassionately consider Australia's foreign policy and global interests over coming months, and how best to effect these within the alliance framework.”

While reaffirming Labor's commitment to the US alliance she said that Australia needed “to work harder in our region”.

The article was unexceptionable, and the Shorten office had seen a draft. Nevertheless, the government was quick to exploit it, with Turnbull saying this was an instance of “Labor being hopelessly divided on national security”.

It's not just the government that will face a challenge on foreign policy in the Trump era. For Labor, it's a matter of striking the right rhetorical balance.

The ascension of Trump will add a new element of uncertainty for Turnbull as he faces trying to regroup in 2017.

With the final parliamentary fortnight starting next week, he hopes to end this year by securing the passage of the industrial relations legislation, including to re-establish the Australian

Building and Construction Commission.

The deal with the US to take the refugees from Nauru and Manus Island can be claimed as an achievement, though it can equally be seen as belatedly dealing with a problem. The tough lifetime ban on visiting rights for ex-Nauru and Manus people faces a struggle in the Senate. And the government can only hope there is no reassessment of the refugee deal from the Trump administration when it takes power.

The government's priorities for next year look demanding. As part of refreshing its agenda, it wants to do something on housing affordability, as well as focus on infrastructure (Turnbull has an infrastructure statement due next week) and cities, linked closely to the jobs narrative. There is a tertiary education policy to be unveiled (finally). A review of climate change policy has to be made.

As we move through 2017 the implications of the Trump revolution for Australia and the responses required will become clearer.

And all this will be against the need for Turnbull to improve perceptions about his performance.

Sydney shockjock Ben Fordham was blunt and brutal when he interviewed Turnbull this week. "Can I tell you prime minister what people are actually saying about you at the moment? ... They're saying you're not doing a good enough job as prime minister. They're saying that you are out of touch with the average Australian."

In the time of Trumpism, there are few worse things to be condemned for than being "out of touch" with average people.

Michelle Grattan does not work for, consult, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has disclosed no relevant affiliations beyond the academic appointment above.

Grattan on Friday: Trumpism has Shorten and Turnbull focusing on the politics of 'disquiet'

Written by Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

Authors: Michelle Grattan, Professorial Fellow, University of Canberra

Read more <http://theconversation.com/grattan-on-friday-trumpism-has-shorten-and-turnbull-focusing-on-the-politics-of-disquiet-68995>