

Former Victorian Liberal senator Judith Troeth is no stranger to speaking out forthrightly on issues, even when that goes against her party's position.

In this podcast, Troeth says the party should adopt quotas to rectify the “abysmally low numbers” of Liberal women in parliament. “We should have quotas, but not forever ... to get the numbers up”.

One of the group of moderates when she was in parliament (1993- 2011), Troeth is concerned about the party's drift to the right. “Sometimes i feel as though i am standing on the extreme left ... when everyone who knows me knows i'm certainly not”. She partly attributes the present situation to newer MPs being reluctant to rock the boat. Troeth's advice to them? “Be brave and let your conscience be your mouth piece.”

On asylum seekers - an issue over which she confronted then prime minister John Howard - Troeth believes “quite strongly” that on humanitarian grounds people who have been processed and found to be refugees on Manus and Nauru should be allowed to come to Australia and stay.

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