

In the weeks before the 2022 election I was reading about the various candidates in Cowper.

Searching apart from the candidates' pages I found two groups which had obviously carried over from local government elections: one private and another public. There were threads in each which indicated that there were axes being ground. Some of the members were in both and also appeared on the pages of the independent candidate as strong supporters.

I posted the following in the closed group which was inviting discussion surrounding the campaign of the independent candidate:

A model for the newly elected representative for the Cowper electorate:

Whether you voted for me or not, I gained more than 50% of votes in the last election and I have accepted the responsibility to convey to the parliament your intentions for how our community can contribute to and benefit from government.

My first task is to work towards establishing two way communication with each voter so that I can let you know what's happening in parliament and you can tell me whether I'm doing what you need me to do. To do that effectively I'll have a couple of helpers. I'll introduce them to you when they are settled in.

As soon as I get to know my way around in Canberra - who does what and how - we will migrate this temporary home to cowper.mygov.au - don't bother looking there yet - it's a vacant lot!

Once we move in we'll offer each voter in the electorate a space of their own – cowper.mygov.au/space - and an email address @cowper.gov.au You'll be able to redirect that email to your own private mailbox if you wish and set your preference for how you would like to interact with me - by email or by text if you want me store your mobile number.

What I propose is this:

Whenever a bill comes up for debate in parliament I will send you a link to a poll asking you whether you are in favour of the bill or not. You will be offered a precis of the bill with a link to a full description and prompted to respond with a simple yes or no. The poll will naturally have a closing date before the bill is presented in the house.

I will take the result of the poll into consideration when casting my vote in the house. If a majority of voters in the electorate have voted in favour or against the bill then that is how I will vote. If not, I will vote according to the platform on which you have elected me taking into account the poll result and any other information I can gather about the wishes of the people in the electorate who have been able to convey their wishes in other ways.

The tally of our poll will be shown on our web site and a history of all the polls we've held and how I've voted in the house.

Disclaimer: I will vote against bills that are too convoluted and clumsy hoping they will be defeated forcing the proponent to redraft. (Some of the motions that are put to the house are bizarre to say the least!) I'll communicate this on the site but won't hold a poll.

Obviously this will work best if all or most of the voters in Cowper participate so when we get going whenever the opportunity presents I will be encouraging that (but I won't bomb your letterbox with glossy brochures!).

Our site will have other features which you will be free to use - along the lines of my.cowper.cloud - so there is scope for a lot of discussion, articles of interest, publicity for groups - a lot of information can potentially be made freely available to the voters of Cowper.

I'll refer to this post later in this document.

My persistent enquiries as to who was who had resulted in me being evicted from the closed group. I had inserted myself between opposing parties, one of which was the group's moderator.

I began to engage in the public group and became embroiled in a discussion of sorts with the group's administrator. The group was fairly quiet with mostly snipes at the sitting member.

I offered a comment on citizen initiated referenda. It's a bit of a thing with me, being a fan of Geoffrey Robertson. My reference to 'slaves' triggered a vigorous response.

I've created a transcript. I have edited freely in an attempt to deal with the idiosyncrasies of facebook's threading and preserve the continuity but I've also tried to preserve the tone of the participants.

It might turn out to be worth the effort.

ME- Just one candidate touts CIR - citizen initiated referenda - as policy. Without that we remain slaves. Would any of the other candidates care to support?

MR- Slaves? Sounds like Freedumb Fighter nonsense to me. What are you talking about.

ME- As Geoffrey Robertson delights in reminding us, "real democracy only exists if politicians give the courts power to defend citizens against abuses of their human rights by governments and public servants".

Slave owners rewarded their human property with barrels of salted pork.

Chapter 8 of the constitution contains a single section. 128. "Mode of altering the constitution." It rules that the constitution can only be altered by an act of parliament and that when a proposed law to change the constitution is submitted to the electors the vote "shall be taken in such manner as the Parliament prescribes". You don't get a say. You're a slave.

MR- Yes, I read your garbled rant already. No need to copy paste it here.

I think that was about my imaginary new member contribution which I had posted elsewhere – see above and also referred to later when I posted it in MR's group.

Your reasoning is unclear. Using the term slave is deliberately used to evoke emotion rather than reason. Australian democracy may not be healthy, but voters are not slaves. Try putting a bit more thought into it and stop trying to appeal to emotion.

I thought that was a bit condescending!

ME- Granted "Slave" is emotive. However, apart from the occasional opportunity to select a representative, we the voters are excluded from government "by the people". Slave: a person who is the legal property of another and is forced to obey them. If you don't obey Peter (*Dutton*) can take away your (legal) citizenship. He owns you.

MR- You need less/more coffee.

That amused me and encouraged me to persist.

ME- I need a representative in parliament who will vote on and present bills in accordance with the will of the electorate.

MR- You need a civics lesson. Is the electorate to be polled prior to every vote/bill? Or does the electorate just agree on every issue? Back to the drawing board, mate.

Condescension? I don't think the coffee quip was intended as humour.

ME- When a bill is up for debate the rep can ask the electorate for their will. At present we trust them to vote in accordance with their (or their party's) promises. Look how that's turned out!

MR- Ask how? How would you ensure the electorate's wishes are represented without polling everyone? I'm not saying the current system is flawless. I'm saying what you're proposing would piss everyone off within the first month. We elect a representative to make decisions on our behalf for that term. If we don't like the decisions they make we can vote them out. I'm done here.

ME- Give up? I'm just getting started! A yes/no response to a text/email is all that's needed. The rep has the electoral roll. Instead of sending out glossy junk mail, invite those who wish to participate.

MR- Absurd. Would that be managed directly by the MP? Or would an independent body oversee it? The cost would be gargantuan, and the participation would be low, and so there'd be no guarantee the electorate's wishes would be upheld.

KL-ME- There is some truth in there but presented badly and "her" - try using " them".

ME-KL- Thanks KL. I'm partisan in predicating a win for Caz.

KL-ME- my elected rep Gurmeh Singh blocked me on social media . I asked too many questions and kept at it.

ME-KL- Yes, I'm blocked on another Cowper group. We love our own agenda.

ME- Yes. That's the MPs job. That's what their (paid for) office staff should be doing. It's just a database and an app. Why would participation be low?

MR- It's not the MP's job to hold a mini-plebiscite every time there's a vote in parliament. And if they manage it themselves, what's to prevent them corrupting the feedback they get to suit their own agenda? You haven't thought this through at all.

ME- It is the MP's job to take our will to the parliament. How do they know what we want? 1

vote on a handful of confected "issues"? Only integrity will prevent corruption

SB- CIR would halt corruption. Those who can't abide that thought may have an agenda?

MR-SB- You're dreaming.

ME- SB's not the only one. Imagine! We hope some day you'll join us.

MR- I will concede that CIR can play an important role in democracy, but what you were proposing was not CIR. What you are proposing was an unscientific approach to making a certain part of the electorate feel like they are being listened to, with absolutely no way of ensuring any form of success.

I'm interested in which candidate you think has CIR-informed policy, and why.

ME- Pauline's party! They state "One Nation will push for the introduction of a Citizens Initiated Referenda, enabling Australian citizens to put forward legislation or a referendum question without waiting for politicians to listen and act." Malcolm Roberts has all manner of weird notions. A referenda?

ME- <https://www.onation.org.au/citizen-initiated-referenda>

ME- Pity they want to burn the house down.

MR- Now it all makes sense.

ME- Any elector who wishes to participate can have their vote heard. Only way to see if it works is to do it.

MR- You can't answer the simplest questions about it. Let's not pretend you've thought it through.

ME- ask me a simple question

MR- I already did, and your answer was ridiculous.

ME- But I answered. And you ridiculed.

MR- Okay, I'll rephrase: You can't satisfactorily answer the simplest questions.
i.e. every answer you've given so far just poses more questions.

ME- Which I will answer.

MR- No, you won't. Because you think the entire population should be polled prior to every act of parliament. It's preposterous.

ME- Not preposterous! (more ridicule) We spent weeks/months/years "checking in" to every venue. Lots of people used an app to monitor their associations. All manner of data collection and management is now commonplace. This would be a yes/no reply to a handful of prompts each sitting session. (It doesn't have to be every bill. We can trust our reps to some extent.)

ME- . I have thought this through. Silly place - more ridicule?

MR- You may have done a lot of thinking, but you started from an irrational place and got sillier

from there.

MR- Yes, I am ridiculing your ridiculous comments.
No, I'm not suggesting the current model is working well.
I'm saying your proposal presents more questions than answers.

ME- There are answers for those questions.

MR- Then why can't you answer them?

MR- If you post ridiculous comments, you should expect ridicule.
How do we decide which actions the electorate are polled for and which ones aren't? Is a poll necessary to decide that?
Who manages the feedback? How do you ensure the feedback is reflected in parliament?
See what I mean? Every solution you think you have raises more questions.

ME- yes. i answer, you ridicule. I get the sense that you would prefer to rail against a dysfunctional parliament than to engage in government by the people.

ME- Every time a bill is presented for debate they poll the participating voters of their electorate. Software manages the feedback. Yes or No. Integrity demands the rep votes accordingly (if they have managed to get enough participants. Otherwise it's just a useful tool to help them gather opinion.)

MR- "The participating voters" How does that ensure the electorate's wishes are represented? It doesn't. Give up.
You're saying there should be a mini-plebiscite for selected parliamentary actions.
Who decides which action invokes a mini-plebiscite?
You're saying representatives can be trusted with some decisions. Who decides which decisions can be left to the representative and which can't? That would require a mini-plebiscite prior to each mini-plebiscite.
Catching on yet?

ME- It is ensured if everyone participates.

MR- Who enforces participation?

ME- Not enforces - invites.

ME- If a bill comes up for debate which is on some trivial procedural motion that wouldn't cause too much dissent in their electorate then the rep could make a call to go with the voices.
Let's give them some room for discretion.

MR- Room for discretion means room for corruption.

ME- Yes, I know what you are saying. The rep decides. Part of the job. If they make the wrong call we can protest after the fact - same as we can now.

MR- Many people only vote in elections to avoid the fine, and then vote informally anyway.
You think the whole electorate is going to participate in every parliamentary action?

ME- Realistically, no. I don't think everyone will participate. But whenever someone enrolls to vote their rep has an opportunity to engage. A good rep will have more success than a seat warmer. And any feedback on the electoral will is better than just the golf club bar.

MR- If everyone doesn't participate, what's to say the will of the electorate is reflected in the result? Why can't you understand what I'm saying.

And you're wrong. Under your proposal, feedback could be easily manipulated to reflect the will of the candidate. That's counter to your aim.

MR- We're going in pointless circles here.

ME- I do understand what you are saying. If everyone doesn't participate then the poll will only be of use to the MP as a guide, along with their "platform". But if everyone - or perhaps just a majority? - participates then the MP would be better advised of our will.

MR- If you understood what I'm saying you'd know the answer to the question.

ME- Which particular question is that? I think I've answered all that you've asked.

MR- You haven't proposed a 'government by the people' though. You've proposed a convoluted alternative that not only would NOT ensure participation (so fails at its own aim), but which would likely drive non-participation, and would in no way guarantee what it is attempting to achieve.

You most definitely have not answered all the questions I've asked, but you can't so I'm not going through it again.

ME- Giving up? More ridicule? It's just a data gathering tool to help inform MPs of the will of the electorate they represent. Right now we rely on them to keep the promises they have made during a 6 weeks shouting match. And we have to watch them collude and connive for years while we wait to make another choice. The caucus race - see Alice.

MR- I'm giving up beating my head against the brick wall of your nonsense, yes.

ME- I have provided an answer to every question that you've asked starting with "what are you talking about".

ME- I do understand you. Yes, if not everyone participates then the result is a reflection of the will of the participants. The MP can use that along with their 'platform' to decide how to vote in parliament. But if everyone participates then the MP would be encouraged to concur.

ME- What I am describing is not an alternative. It's a mechanism which could be employed to assist our democracy. It's not convoluted. It's simple. An app accessing a database of 100000, a list of bills and a log of votes. The elements are already in place. There is no claim to ensure participation and no basis to claim it would drive non-participation. It is guaranteed to provide an MP with a little or a lot of indication of the will of the electorate.

MR- It is not guaranteed to provide an indication of the will of the electorate. It is only guaranteed to provide an indication of the will of those that participate. And if it is implemented and overseen by the MP, there is potential for the MP to manipulate it to their will.

ME- It is guaranteed to provide an indication of the will of those that participate. An MP who would manipulate is a poor choice. Perhaps making the results available to the group could curb that.

MR- Yawn.

MR- I already stated the basis for the claim that it could drive non-participation.

ME- Because you surmise that people would be over it in a month? That's no 'basis'. I responded that people "checked in" repeatedly, daily, for months, under compulsion! This voluntary mechanism would prompt yes/no a handful of times each session.

MR- The key words there are "under compulsion". You have already said they would be no compulsion to participate in what you're proposing, making it absolutely meaningless and leaving it vulnerable to manipulation.

It's his repetition of "absolutely meaningless" that got up my nose!

MR- You still haven't answered who would decide which parliamentary actions would require participation and which wouldn't, apart from saying "we can have some trust". Because you can't.

MR- Jesus. My basis is that many people can't even be bothered participating in an election once every three years, but you think they'd want to participate in the minutia. You're either deliberately missing the point, or it's going over your head. Either way, it's tedious.

ME- Wrong. The meaning of each poll result provides information to the MP about the proportion of the sample in favour of the bill. Manipulation would require the source code to be altered. An ethical code developer guards against that.

MR- If participation is not universal, it can be manipulated, making the results meaningless. For the results of any poll to be statistically meaningful, you need to poll a meaningful cross-section of the population. There's much more to it than just asking for voluntary participation.

ME- "Meaningless"? Information has a context. This data provides information in the context of the proportion of the electorate which participates.

MR- "Statistically meaningless". You've already shown you don't understand what that means.

This is where I began to dislike this guy!

ME- "Statistically meaningless" is meaningless. Analysis of data has no outcome called "meaningless". Significant? Maybe. In context.

ME- I said that we should trust our Rep to decide. There are some motions that are decided on the voices or a show of hands. Some of those would not require a poll of constituents in the opinion of our trusted member who has been generous enough to give us an avenue of input into how they represent us in the house. Any bill that is too convoluted and tangled up with amendments I would suggest should be rejected and sent back to the drafters for clarification.

ME- It's not what I think Or, with respect, what you think. It's, given the opportunity, how many would actually accept the invitation to participate.

ME- Sorry, I rather dangled a preposition. I wrote "It's"... I should have said "The point is" not what you or I think. It's, given the opportunity, how many would actually accept the invitation to participate.

MR- You have no idea what the answer to that is.

This arrogance began to be upsetting. My intention was to invite a discussion of community building to enable participation in decision making. This guy is flaming!

ME- You wrote "no compulsion to participate in what you're proposing, making it absolutely meaningless and leaving it vulnerable to manipulation". Is that not what you think? Or did you write it without thinking?

MR- You're making less sense over time, not more.

ME- ad hominem

MR- Cool, In addition to not understanding civics or statistics, you also don't understand the meaning of 'ad hominem'. You are very talented.

ME- Ouch. This fallacy occurs when, instead of addressing someone's argument or position, you irrelevantly attack the person or some aspect of the person who is making the argument.

MR- I understand what it means, hence my comment. I haven't attacked you personally, I've attacked your argument and your lack of understanding in forming it.

ME- sarcasm notwithstanding. You have a limited idea of my talents.

ME- You attack my understanding of 'civics' and statistics without foundation and offering only sarcasm in support.

MR- The foundation is the profound lack of understanding you've exhibited in this discussion.

ME- In your opinion? Or is that just "common sense"?

ME- 3 years ago we sent Pat off to represent us in parliament. On his first day he asked Bananaby what to do. Now he wants to buy me a beer.

ME- Is that 'civics'?

MR- No, that's a strawman.

ME- see my (admittedly copied and pasted from my own blog) rant in public. That's civics.

ME- "A parliament is a group of people, or owls.

To control us our owners have created imaginary 'divisions' and periodically cunningly compile a list of names of people from which they demand that we choose one for each division to join their parliament where they are rewarded with wealth and privilege. Some even acquire power.

To justify their privilege these people present their notions for how to sustain their existence to the group. Those who persevere with having their notions accepted can see them embodied into rules that apply to everyone not in the group. But not to themselves. They make special rules for themselves.

Nobody from outside the group can participate."

MR- That's the conspiracy theorist's version, touted primarily by UAP and PHON, who use it to sow distrust while actively supporting the status quo.

ME- The bastards. Did they steal it? Not that it's a secret. Lesson 2 tells how our 227 reps are split up into lots and force fed. Our only way out is to have the power to initiate referenda. Just 1 would do so to insert a clause for democracy with an amendment to section 128 granting us the power to initiate further referenda. Then we could manage the people who make the rules.

MR- Right.

MR- And the circle is complete.

ME- Lesson 2: We've ended up with 227 people who gather together to make the rules. The first rule, "we make the rules" was made in 1900 by 110 old white males.

MR- Cool.

ME- check out MY group.... <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cowper>

MR- I get the feeling you'll get a better reception there.

ME- 100%

SB- Holy shit! What's with the hysterical continuous tagging? Putting words into my mouth that I never even said in this thread. Think I made one comment and nothing you (or Karen) has said is relevant to those 10 or so words.

Seems like Michael is feeling a mite triggered? Does anyone know who he is and whether or not he's an actual human because his ranting looks and feels a bit like a bot. Nonsensical jibber jabber. Or does he always go off like that when presented with novel ideas?

Or perhaps you just need a nice cup of tea and a hug? No need to be nasty, here's a flower!

MR- Yeah, I tagged you a couple of times accidentally while responding to David. Apologies for that.

Only my first response was intended for you.

You came into my group and immediately accused me of having an agenda for simply disagreeing with the nonsensical agenda you and David have pushed. Now you accuse me of being a triggered bot, which makes about as much sense as your initial comment. Then you tell me not to be nasty. Do you see the irony there?

I have to conclude you usually only interact with people that immediately agree with your "novel" ideas? Well, I'm not one of those people I'm afraid. Please see the group rules. Being told you are wrong is not "people being nasty".

If you have an idea, you need to be able to defend it from criticism. Failing to do so is called intellectual cowardice, and is about as far from "novel" thinking as you can get.

ME-SB- Michael is an admin for the group! Yes, I backed him into a corner and forced him to concede that I had a viable notion for our democracy and that his reactionary views were inappropriate in the current political climate. He might not agree with this assessment. I did notice he was jumping around in the thread tree by replying to you. Facebook isn't the best at managing threaded discussions. I think I agree with you. Citizen initiated referenda are essential for our freedom and our democracy.

MR- You are correct about my assessment. But nothing else. All day. It's almost impressive.

SB- Omg he's an admin lol
What am i doing here?

You have the patience of Jove ME- .
This page has a bit of a Fawlty Towers vibe but the condescension is too much for me.
Life's too short for this kind of aggro
See ya

MR- SB You shan't be missed.

ME-SB It was Job who was patient. Jehova tested him beyond endurance. The book of Job addresses the problem of theodicy - why does god permit evil in the world. By Jove.

ME- btw I abhor Onenationism and Christianity.

MR- It's still here.

That was day 1. MR barred me from posting for 3 days for what he later described as breaking a rule by complaining about being disagreed with!

I had spent time imagining what it would be like to be a newly elected member to parliament with no party affiliation. I had written and posted the following musing to a public group which MR must have seen and it is this that wound him up.

His group wasn't really very big or active – mostly leftovers from local elections sniping at the press reports of the incumbent and the minors and giving tacit support to the independent candidate.

Next day I posted the it in his group. MR had seen it elsewhere prior to this. That is the italicised section at the start of this document starting:

A model for the newly elected representative for the Cowper electorate

KL That sounds like government for the people by the people.

MR No, it doesn't.

KL It does actually. Not saying it does not smell like a rat but it certainly does.

MR Can you imagine if Pat gets back in and implements something like this that it would have any integrity whatsoever? There's no oversight, and a good chance that the MP would only use it to bolster their own decisions.

Most people would not participate making it at best pointless, and at worst open to manipulation.

KL yes voter apathy is a huge issue. We need someone that is not a stooge who reflects our values from the beginning and is independant. A tough call.

MR Okay, but this proposal wouldn't do a single thing to help with that.

ME- Well what would? Must I go back to cynicism? It's so debilitating.

KL in theory only.

ME- Pat had his chance. We only have 1 independent. The others all have bosses who wouldn't let them engage like this. A good member, with access to the electoral roll, can work to

overcome apathy. Give peas a chance.

MR ?

MR I'm all for fighting voter disillusionment, but this wouldn't do it.

KL so #caz4cowper is the only true independent?

ME- as true as they come. Climate200 pays for some of her ads.... but they ain't the boss

MR I don't mind if you want to live in a dreamland. Just don't expect me to join you.

ME- Life is but a dream. do you know the ballot draw?

KL Simon Chaseling?

ME- LibDem - small government - winner takes all - devil take the hindmost

ME- Campbell Newman and the qld plutocrats

ME- That rodent smell is the fear of having one's privacy invaded. It's part of the conditioning we're being subjected to to keep us in the box. (My paranoia - self: get a grip)

ME- You may say I'm a dreamer

But I'm not the only one

I hope someday you'll join us

And the world will live as one

ME- Pointless? Manipulation? still on about that? You make these assertions as though they are factual. It will deliver information - a little or a lot. And that can provide knowledge. And understanding. Better than none. Better than status quo. An honest independent rep will not tolerate manipulation.

MR Yeah, I'm still on about it, as you haven't been able to address my concerns. You haven't even tried. Anyone that thinks there's a simple fix to the failures of Australian democracy is deluded. You've said multiple times that it would be simple.

KL I don't believe he said that at all.

MR Then you should read his comments.

ME- And you keep saying yair/nah and now suggest delusion on my part. Your concerns are 1. participation 2. manipulation. Yes? Ok. Again, for the people up the back: write this down: 1. The greater the participation rate the better the information. A good rep will work at increasing participation. 2. A good rep will not tolerate manipulation.

MR So it should only be implemented if we get a "good rep"?

ME- It won't implement itself. A good rep will want to take as accurate a measure of the will of the electorate to parliament as possible. If there is a mechanism to aid that then they would be able to implement it with a minimum of cost and effort. Until now we haven't had any mechanism beyond the pub test.

MR - KL - He said it again.

MR You didn't answer the question.

I'll rephrase: Would you trust the results of this idea if it were implemented by the sitting member?

ME- This sitting member would not be permitted. Bananaby would take away his pocket money. But no I would not trust this kind of public poll tool in the hands of any of the bands of criminals engaged in party politics.

MR I rest my case.

ME- I didn't realise you had a case. Apart from accusing me of being deluded - would that be a matter of opinion?

ME- "You didn't answer the question." Which particular question is that? This thread is quite convoluted. I've answered every question I've seen. This lawn won't mow itself.

ME- You are deluded. You think all this money and effort should be undertaken, but only by a rep you trust. Do you see the ridiculousness in that? If you can trust the rep, why not just trust them to make the decisions on our behalf for their term?

ME- Could, not should. Cheap. Same effort as now. I see you again ridiculing. When a bill comes up for debate how will they know the will of the electorate? They were voted in by stating their 'position' on a handful of 'issues' bodgied up by the main parties and the mainstream media. A responsible rep would make every effort to determine how the electorate wills them to vote. If there is a mechanism to assist that then they may wish to use it.

MR - KL - And again.

ME- "And again" - Is this about simple? Well, a database, an app, a web interface, an administrator. The app would be complex - most apps are. Still not a huge ask. Design, code, implement, test. The most difficult part is the language the rep would need to employ to engage the electorate. But they're good at that. Good ones are.

ME- You didn't answer my question about which question you think I didn't answer.

ME- "whatsoever - no oversight - good chance - most people - pointless" - language warning - sweeping statements

MR "We are slaves." Insensitive, ignorant statement.

ME- "we are slaves" Sweeping perhaps - there are a handful who have managed to evade the bonds but ignorant? No. Factual: a slave is a person who is the legal property of another and is forced to obey them. Most of us are slaves. "Insensitive"? I'm not delicate enough to know what you mean. Vassal?

MR you're not 'delicate' enough to understand that using the term slave is insensitive to people that have actually had to deal with slavery? I can think of a few more words that apply in that instance.

We are not the legal property of politicians and are under no obligation to obey them. So yes, very ignorant.

Vassal is way off as well.

Karen you still wanna defend this guy?

ME- You don't know what my experience of people in slavery may be.

Try telling Dutto that he can't revoke your citizenship and that you won't obey him.

Yes, to be a vassal you have to actually hold land but on conditions of homage and allegiance. Help Karen - he's ad hominem'ing me.

MR You really need to learn what ad hominem actually means.

ME- ad hominem "a rhetorical strategy where the speaker attacks the character, motive, or some other attribute of the person making an argument rather than attacking the substance of the argument itself" or (employing sarcasm) am I displaying ignorance again?

MR The latter (no sarcasm).

ME- Perhaps I should have said "Correct me if I'm wrong" but you'd probably say "google it" so I did. I think I have it right. Your rhetoric is shonky.

MR Show me one example of where I attacked you personally without attacking your argument. Just one.

ME- You attack ME for having "no clue about statistics" offering nothing to support that false statement. Had you something to show how sample size did not contribute to the significance of survey data then you could argue the point. But you chose the "no clue" rhetorical option. I'm not obliged to trot out my background in this area, particularly in such a basic implementation of counting. Statistics is a collection of quantitative data. It works by collecting it.

ME- I know you only asked for one example of ad hominem in your rhetoric but I'm cranked up. So here's another. You accuse ME of being "ignorant" without offering any substance as to what knowledge I am lacking or how my general awareness is compromised and with no knowledge of my education. I confess to being unsophisticated.

ME- Anyway, do you dispute the meaning of ad hominem which you ironically employ to suggest I should really find out?

ME- and then you entreat Karen to drop any support for ME she may have expressed without reference to the substance of the discussion. Ad hominem. Have at you.

MR Again, I cited your comments that demonstrate a clear lack of understanding of statistics as my basis for that. This comment is another example.

Statistics deals with quantitative AND qualitative data. It doesn't work just "by collecting it". It works by having a scientific design, which includes methods for ensuring the sample is reflective of the population. I already explained why sample size does not necessarily equate to good data, but I'll do it again because you're incredibly slow on the uptake. If you exclude ANY portion of the electorate (which by your own admission your proposal would do) means that the results are not meaningful to the WHOLE electorate. If you poll only a section of the electorate, the results are only an indication of the feelings of THAT SECTION of the electorate. It's not a difficult concept.

You keep saying that that is useful information regardless, but it's usefulness is severely limited.

Implementing a large scale data-mining program for LIMITED usefulness is not a good use of taxpayer resources. Especially when it can be readily manipulated to produce certain results.

If you don't believe data can be manipulated by manipulating the sample, you've proven my point.

Now you will say your proposal should only be implemented by a trustworthy representative, but who decides that? Given no candidate is likely to get more than 50% of the primary vote in Cowper, how do you expect the electorate AS A WHOLE to consider

whoever is elected as trustworthy?

And if they are trustworthy, why can't we just trust them to make the right decisions on our behalf?

I have asked all these questions already, and you haven't answered any of them satisfactorily (i.e. without raising even more questions). It's incredibly tedious.

MR I called you ignorant for referring to voters as slaves, because (a) it doesn't fit the definition at all, and (b) it diminishes the experience of people that have actually experienced slavery and it's impacts.

MR I asked Karen if she wanted to still defend a guy that ignorantly throws around the term 'slave' for emotive purposes only.

MR None of those examples are ad hominem attacks.

ME- Fallacious ad hominem reasoning occurs where the validity of an argument is not based on deduction or syllogism, but on an attribute of the person putting it forward. You called ME ignorant and clueless. You falsely deduce that because in your opinion I made remarks with which you disagree. I don't think remarks can be ignorant or clueless. They can be erroneous, false, untrue, libelous in which case they can be corrected - or they may be even true.

MR I deduced that you are ignorant and clueless from the ignorance and cluelessness of your arguments. I have provided reasoning for why I think your arguments are ignorant and clueless, and for why I disagree with them. Multiple times.

ME- Not. Arguments are arguments. They aren't clueless or ignorant. Perhaps you meant uninformed or without foundation? You say my arguments are clueless because you say I'm clueless. That's not reason. That's rhetoric and fallacious reasoning. Remind me of the reasoning behind your claim for example that I am clueless about statistics.

MR It would be fallacious if that was what I'm doing, but I'm doing the opposite. I laid out my reasoning in detail above. But in short, it's because you think the size of a sample is the only thing that determines the validity of the results.

ME- Je ne pense pas, j'en suis sûr! It's a poll Michael. The population is about 120000. They can each choose one of two options. If you collect them all then the tally, unless it's a draw, has a majority and a minority. If you only collect half then the poll represents half the population. Are you trying to do a Barnaby on me?

MR And again, that is not how statistics works, unless you poll the entire population which you have admitted you wouldn't.

ME- "laid out my reasoning above" ? Remind me.

MR My god you are punishing.

Statistics deals with quantitative AND qualitative data. It doesn't work just "by collecting it". It works by having a scientific design, which includes methods for ensuring the sample is reflective of the population.

I already explained why sample size does not necessarily equate to good data, but I'll do it again because you're incredibly slow on the uptake. If you exclude ANY portion of the electorate (which by your own admission your proposal would do) means that the results are not meaningful to the WHOLE electorate. If you poll only a section of the electorate, the results are only an indication of the feelings of THAT SECTION of the electorate. It's not a difficult concept.

I've tried to be generous in retrospect here. I suspect his parenthesised "(which by your own admission your proposal would do)" is referring to bias - only those who can be recruited to take the survey are represented. Even in that case it is my contention throughout that any sample is better than none and that if as more people are encouraged to participate, the sample grows. Community building! At the time I took him to mean that the result from any sample of the population is not significant. Dealing with this lack of clarity at the outset would have saved a lot of grief!

ME- "that is not how statistics works" Is that your reasoning? The statistics in a poll are gathered by counting. The result is two numbers. Usually one is larger than the other. That is statistically true. The information that those numbers convey is that more of one section of the sample has voted one way than another.

MR And again, you are overlooking the fact that - even if you managed to poll the entire population - the results would only be useful if the entire population knew what they were voting on, which would take a lot more than an email with a yes/no option. To think there's anything remotely simple - or cheap - about educating the entire electorate on the contents of a bill, then polling them, you haven't thought it through.

ME- Aha. I haven't seen this before Michael. However I haven't anywhere tried to claim that if you exclude ANY portion of the population that it would mean that the result is meaningful to the WHOLE population. Nor would I. "The information that those numbers convey is that more of one section of the sample has voted one way than another."

MR Something tells me if you haven't got it by now, or you're not going to, and possibly don't want to.

ME- back at you

MR I copied it from above.

Maybe you haven't tried to claim that, but you have - on multiple occasions - tried to claim that polling part of the electorate is useful for informing how the MP votes.

When your goal is to have an MP that votes in accordance with the ENTIRETY of the electorate's wishes, what's the good in a program that would only ever show A PORTION of the electorate's wishes?

I'm not going to respond anymore until you answer that question.

ME- Yes I have and do claim that the good in such a program is that by polling the electorate the rep can get MORE information than they would have had without doing so. They can use that information to ASSIST in deciding how to cast their vote. Yes, I have said this several times (in the face of your criticism) and I have asked, several times, without reply, "how else do they decide how to cast their vote?" Yes, the aim is to engage the whole electorate. If that is ever achieved then the rep will know exactly how we want them to vote in parliament. Wouldn't that be democratic? Here is an idea for an enabling mechanism to gather data which can yield information to ASSIST the democratic process. You don't have to respond. I won't in this thread if you don't. The good in having spent time talking with you is that I have more information about the limits of reasoned discussion than I had before. But not much data.

ME- Note: from my original post this morning in the voice of the rep - the source: "If a majority of voters in the electorate have voted in favour or against the bill then that is how I will vote. If not, I will vote according to the platform on which you have elected me taking into

account the poll result and any other information I can gather about the wishes of the people in the electorate who have been able to convey their wishes in other ways."

MR blocked me from posting again. After three days or so away from it I replied to KL's comment about a good candidate:

ME- – KL caz4cowper - "someone that is not a stooge who reflects our values from the beginning and is independent." She mostly does reflect my values. You? I think she's a bit preoccupied gathering support to try to add citizen initiated referenda and what MR sees as my deranged agenda to her platform. But who knows - she may become the first to benefit from the electorate polling app

KL she is a good choice.

MR jumped in here – it's his group

MR In my opinion she is the only choice. The majors need to be shown that the stagnation inherent in party politics at the moment is no longer acceptable to the electorate. And that corporate donors have no place in our democracy.

MR And all the other non-major candidates are loony.

ME- She has some critics of her 'association' with some Coffs crackpots? Or are the critics the crackpots? There's a lot of it about.

In the private group I had seen comments claiming that Caz's associates were undesirable.

Then MR took it up again:

MR At risk of getting back into it, there is a big difference between CIR and what you have proposed.

And I didn't say you had a deranged agenda. I said your proposal is unworkable, and gave multiple reason for why I think so.

MR Some of those 'crackpots' are in this group. Isn't it funny how the conservative side of politics is never punished for their supporters? It's only ever an 'issue' for progressive candidates. The PM literally tried to get a paedophile-enabler into the White House. Our current member is a proud ally of Barnaby Joyce. But those associations are A-OK apparently.

ME- Yes. But I reckon we need a thing like an app (ed: to help) get CIR. Sorry - 'deluded'. But anyway. The app is looking good. But the AEC holds the keys to the roll. How does Pat know where we all live? Friends in high places?

MR I didn't say you had a deluded agenda either. I said anyone that believes there's a 'simple' fix to our problems is deluded. Your agenda is noble, but as proposed it is unworkable. I'm not exactly proud of some of my comments, I was just getting very frustrated with your repetition of points I'd already refuted. But hey, that's Facebook.

ME- Refuted points are red rags to a bull. We could get a lot more out of our myGov account. Voting on line is a - what's that thing? - a no brainer? In Rome a plebiscite was law. Here - not so much. A bill which is repeatedly passed by one house but denied by the other can be decided by GG. The tools are there but we aren't allowed to touch them.

KL just wondering. Who is an independent for Cowper in your opinion?

MR -KL - There's only one.

KL thank you. I don't know anything about the Liberal Democrats candidate at all.

MR – KL - Today's the first I even knew they were fielding a candidate.

MR Yeah, na.

BM “A two way communication with each voter” yeah right! 125,000 electors.

ME- facebook has billions! Anyway, its their job!

MR- BM - He hasn't thought it through at all.

ME- You know he has. I've even got the costings. For 1 electorate or 151. Special price for 76 senators.

ME- When Pat got to parliament Bananaby told him where to sit. Full stop.

MR You haven't thought about the problems though. You had an idea, thought “This is great”, then failed to consider why it wouldn't work, or worse be counterproductive.

MR You haven't thought about the level of attention the community would have to pay to each individual bill for it to function.

You think it's as simple as a yes or no response, but how do people make an informed decision? It's hard enough for MPs to decipher exactly what's in a bill, even with their advisers. How the hell do you expect the public to be across the minutia in any meaningful way? It's absurd.

ME- You don't know what I thought and considered apart from what I have communicated. What you see as shortcomings are just wrinkles that are eradicated in the implementation. Information is available in data. Any data. Even the absence of data has information. And information is the foundation of knowledge. And we know what knowledge is, don't we.

MR You haven't thought about how participation could be manipulated.

MR You haven't thought about the limitations most people would have to participation.

ME- The role of the MP is to inform us, help us to make a decision and then carry that decision to parliament.

ME- Limitations? Read? Interpret? Click? Tick? We do it every day.

MR No, the role of the MP is to make decisions on our behalf for their elected term.

ME- Manipulate how? Its x% yes, (100-x)% no.

ME- So how do they make their decisions? They ask the 'constituents'.

MR Most people don't read and decipher legislation every day.

If it's up to the MP to explain each piece of legislation, the door is wide open for them to frame the issue however they please and by doing so manipulate the feeME-ack they get.

MR You're proving my point that you haven't thought about it.

ME- If the bill is worded properly then it's for-word will contain the essential provisions. If it

doesn't, MP votes no and hopes to send it back.

You think I just invent these replies without thought? You are mistaken.

MR I'm not saying you haven't thought about it. I'm saying you haven't thought it through. You've only considered it from an idealistic perspective, and ignored the flaws. Your comments have made that very clear.

ME- I have addressed what you call flaws. Of course non-participation takes away from the effectiveness. But the more who take part the better the information is. Of course 'manipulation' would corrupt the outcome. But a good rep won't engage in corrupt practice.

MR Once again, you're showing you don't have a clue how statistics work. A larger sample does not necessarily mean more precise results. This method would exclude large portions of the community, resulting in biased results. It might make some people feel more involved, but it would likely make just as many turn off.

ME- I have clues. A larger sample will yield a result based on a larger number of votes. That is information.

MR But if that sample excludes portions of the electorate, which this would do, it would be meaningless information. There's more to statistics than sample size.

ME- You really don't listen do you: ALL information has meaning. The result of a yes/no poll is a single boolean value.

MR "All information has meaning" is all you need to say to demonstrate you have no clue how statistics work.

MR The result of a yes/no poll, which excludes large portions of the electorate, is statistically meaningless when it comes to understanding the feelings of the electorate.

ME- – BM - mygov has several million. servicenw too - they spam all the time - 125000 is a doddle, and cheap

MR And how many of those emails go unopened?

ME- and texts - straight to the bin. But they are shotgun 'info/' - not offers to engage

KL – BM - good gauge for voter apathy.

ME- – KL Even if only for that. It's all information. And a good MP learns. What else do they do? Is it working?

I was going to a candidates' forum and had thought of a question to pose so I posted it in MR's group. It provoked a new thread with MR – he appears to think he must respond to and relish refuting anything that appears in his group.

ME- Candidates' Forum

We will elect one of you to represent us and to convey our views to parliament.

The parliament can ignore you and us.

We have the right to petition the parliament.

The parliament can deny the petition – with a simple “no”.

Only the parliament can hold a plebiscite.

It can then deny the result.

Only the parliament can hold a referendum.

It can ignore the result.

Recently people called out for a referendum to alter the constitution.

Our parliament said no - "why would I?"

People called out for a plebiscite to ask for a referendum to alter the constitution.

Parliament said no.

Rhetorical: Why do we have a parliament that will not hear and obey the will of the people?

Questions for Candidates:

If a majority of Cowper residents are in favour, are you able to submit a private member's bill to call for a referendum?

If no, why not?

because my party won't let me

because as your rep I will make those sorts of decisions for you

If yes, will you?'

yes

yes, if my party will let me

Immediately,

MR- A referendum for what? What changes to the constitution are you referring to?

DH- my question too.

DB- For starters, Uluru - The Uluru statement recommended a referendum to include a representative body (voice to Parliament) in the Australian Constitution. Turnbull said no. Morrison said "why would I?".

But in general a change to Section 128 would do it. "Alteration of the constitution". To alter it there has to be a referendum. Only the parliament can initiate a referendum!

Change that so that we can initiate a referendum and it becomes our constitution.

MR- You really want to trust the public - who votes for the LNP more than half the time; who votes for UAP and PHON; who are easily swayed by Murdoch misinformation campaigns; who are scared of refugees in leaky boats; who have watched Grey's Anatomy for 18 seasons - with the ability to change the constitution on a whim?

DB- Whim? No. Binding plebiscite. I am public. I trust me.

DB- Also, trust Emperor Dutton?

MR- That's a false dichotomy.

The result may be binding, but the decision to hold the referendum could easily be a knee jerk to some event (ie a whim) Once again, you're being naive. You're not the public, and by no means can you presume the public would always act in its own best interest. As per my examples above.

You need to develop a lot more detail before it's even a question that can be seriously put to a candidate.

I kinda admire the simplicity with which you see things, but not the risk inherent.

Tumbleweeds- I was over him. I left the group membership but still followed.

DB- I attended the forum last night. Put my question - abbreviated to a dixer for Caz. The others all said 'me me me' but we knew they had to ask mummy.

Anyway. the incumbent was moody and unpleasant. The others were nice. Just as well the mod kept the lid on or there would have been blood on the golf club carpet.

DB- Doubling down on my simplistic idealism, I perceive that we Cowper people need a rep who can help us get our shit together to send them off with a clear remit.

MR- You're making less sense over time.

DB- You've seen ([link to video from meeting](#))? The community isn't cohesive. We don't have a collective vision. We have the resources to create whatever we want here. We lack capital, and a united will.

MR- The lack of collective vision is exactly why your idea for 'informing' our rep would be a waste of time and resources.

DB- Yes but: can we not try to develop such a vision? We have schools, tafe, uni apprenticeships, radio, tv - everything we need - institutions up the wazoo. Let's have a go

DB- All hail the secret service:

(Link to Guardian article)

“Confronted about his inaction on the Brereton reforms, Peter Dutton attempts to shoot the

messenger”

MR- I get the frustration with the parliament being able to flatly ignore issues, but giving the power to the Australian electorate would very likely result in decisions that make Brexit seem well considered and rational.

What threshold would you propose for a referendum to be held?

DB- Me? Propose? Not my job. I am Spartacus. A mechanism. Plebiscite? Threshold for that? Majority of 151 reps? Where do the reps get their instructions? The electorate. How does the electorate inform the rep? A mechanism.

It's us or Dutton the Great.

MR- Again with the oversimplification.

Anyway, I can tell this is gonna go in circles so unless you can do better than you have so far, I'ma leave ya to it.

DB- Already a circle. 2500+ years so far and still haven't closed the loop

Then the election happened. A day or so later I posted a link to a community social networking framework.

ME- <http://my.cowper.cloud>

MR was straight onto it..

MR Good luck with that.

ME- I hear your sarcasm. Got anything better?

MR Nothing that hasn't been said before.

ME- That wasn't better. I guess you're more of a live and let die kind of a guy.

MR You haven't bettered your 'idea'. Why should I go over it again

ME- No reason at all for you to spell out your cynicism again. I've got conflict fatigue. Get on board. Or don't. Or can me again. Hey, it's a free cuntry.

ME- Maybe hosting a facebook group courtesy of Meta Zucker is an investment of sorts. Well done you.

MR If you think it's such a silly idea, what's this?
(screenshots of Facebook group "Cowper" created by ME)

ME- I didn't say this group is silly. It is what it is. And it's Mark's. Same as mine. I made mine

'Cowper' so others couldn't - squatting.
cowper.gov.au is the ultimate destination. Meanwhile cowper.cloud works. .com.au etc
requires ABN etc.
The cloud is big.

MR Well done you.
What does "It's Mark's" mean?

ME- Meta Mark - Zuckerberg.
Ning is not Mark's. It's not open source either but it, like most, evolved from open source.

MR It's not cynicism, it's logic. If you don't like this group or how it's administrated, you are free to leave.

ME- I thought we'd moved on from logic.
I like this group because it's small and I can put stuff here that wouldn't be appropriate elsewhere. I have only been barred twice.

MR How can you move on from something you never arrived at in the first place?
You're free to post whatever you wish, just as I'm free to disagree with it. The reason I've suspended you twice is because you're continually crying about being disagreed with, which is against the group's rules.

ME- Revised from above: No reason at all for you to spell out your logic again. I've got conflict fatigue.

MR Do you really expect me to believe that after 8 comments inside an hour, most of which have been combative?

ME- I refer to your initial response to my invitation to you to offer something better: "Nothing that hasn't been said before."
That, along with the wars I've waged with the freedom mob, is the conflict which is wearing.
We previously established that I'm an idealistic dreamer. Deal with it.

MR Na, what we've previously established is that you haven't thought your idea through.
And given that it hasn't been developed in the slightest since you first raised it, I declined your invitation.

ME- So have you got any idea for how our democratic process could be improved?

MR I have many.

ME- For public consumption?

MR Improving regulation to minimise tax evasion.
Banning political donations over \$1000 and improving regulation to make it enforceable.
Moving to publicly funded elections.
Introducing term limits.
Restrengthening the separation of church and state.
Restrengthening the public broadcaster.
Increasing diversity of media ownership.
Universal childcare.

Investing more in public education.

Making tertiary education free.

None of them are actually my ideas, but they've all been proven elsewhere, and could be easily implemented here.

However they don't have any relevance to the flaws in your idea.

ME- Do you have any ideas about what we can do to bring about these changes?

MR Vote in good representation.

ME- I tried that. It didn't work.

MR It worked just fine.

ME- Wow

MR It didn't work exactly how I would've liked for Cowper, but that's exactly why I don't like your idea.

We've seen clear evidence this past week of how the Nats misuse surveys for their own ends.

ME- His 'survey' was faulty. Participation is the key. Knock on doors.

MR Yes, and unless you can guarantee full participation in yours, it will be too.

ME- We watched the whole of NSW checking in and out 10, 20 times a day sending and receiving kilobits. That was faulty too but it was serving a purpose. Scanning QRs, tapping on, tapping off. That's the way we do things now Michael. It just needs implementation. Build it and they will come.

MR That was legislated participation. Are you proposing that participation in your survey would be legislated somehow? You haven't worked to close any of the flaws in you idea at all, have you?

ME- Ok legislate it. Good idea. Thanks.

MR Coherent as usual.

ME- There are 25000 fans ready and willing to be recruited right now.

MR a) You don't know that.

b) 25,000 is still only around 25% of the electorate. Worse, it's a part of the electorate with primarily the same core values, which would make any survey of them statistically meaningless in regards to the electorate as a whole.

c) Do you really think Pat would pay any attention to a survey of his political opponents? He didn't even listen to the one sent to his followers.

d) By your logic, Pat has 40,000 followers ready to go.

Good ideas can only be good ideas if they withstand critiquing. You've can only be confident you have a good idea if you've critiqued it yourself, which you clearly have not done. To do that you need to stop overlooking the reasons it won't work. You can't do that when your reflex is to be defensive.

ME- (a) 25000 responded on Saturday and are listening now.
(b) From little thing big things grow. There are many who watch her on facebook just begging to be given an avenue of engagement. In 3 years, with nurturing, Caz could have a large functional online social network. These mechanisms are quite popular in the actual world.
(c) I would not be expecting the incumbent to be involved. He is accountable to his overlords, not us.
(d) Pat has nowhere for them to go.
I will propagate the idea to others who will contribute positivity.

MR You mean she could have a feedback loop. How would that help her represent the electorate as a whole?

ME- How would it help? Listen to yourself.

MR Read the rest of the sentence.

ME- 'as a whole' - that's the rep's job! Having an active online social network is a powerful communication mechanism. Nurturing that community will make it grow. The bigger it gets the more useful it is. Obviously.
I think Caz started with a few around a kitchen table? Now she has a team of many volunteers and 25000 on side.

MR That's not how statistics works. At all. Not even a little bit.
If your aim is for the representative to be able to communicate with their followers, your idea might have merit (although it'd just be easier to have a Facebook page).
If your aim is for the electorate - As. A. Whole - to inform the representative's actions in Canberra, your idea has zero merit. Just like it always has.
Besides which, Caz has conceded defeat. So we should be talking about Pat's 40,000, not Caz's 25,000.
Do you think his followers would be a good representation of the electorate's wishes? Or only the ones you agree with?

ME- "inform ... zero merit"
This is where you are wrong and always have been. Data yields information.
If any rep can recruit 60000 to a poll then an answer to a well posed question could be quite indicative of the electorate's will.

MR That's not how data works either. Not all information is statistically meaningful.
Can you answer my questions? Or does the denial prevent you?

ME- "Not all information is statistically meaningful"
I'll put that on my tombstone.
Did you mean to speak of statistical significance? As in "statistical significance helps quantify whether a result is likely due to chance or to some factor of interest."
"Statistically meaningful" is tautological or something.
If 60000 answer yes, that's a majority.
I think Pat's 40000 followers would represent 40000 of the electorate's wishes.
I don't know if I would agree with any of them.
It is a worthwhile aim for the representative to be able to communicate with their followers.
It is a worthwhile aim for the electorate - As. A. Whole - to inform the representative's

actions in Canberra.

MR I'm not saying it's not a worthwhile aim though, I'm saying your idea won't go anywhere near meeting that aim. It's not a difficult concept. The only reason you could have for misunderstanding me is because you don't want to understand me.

MR The fact that you can say "I think Pat's 40000 followers would represent 40000 of the electorate's wishes", but somehow can't see my point is evidence of that.

ME- I understand what you keep saying. I can't understand why you keep saying it. If everyone in the electorate has an opportunity to vote yes or no and does so then the majority of answers is very likely to be either yes or no. Unless there is an even number and there is half yes and half no.

If only most of the people participate then the majority answer is a less reliable indication of the whole electorate's answer.

The smaller the sample the less reliable.

Is that your 'point'? It's not very pointy!

MR If you understand what I'm saying why are you asking if that's my point?

ME- I withdraw the question. Your point is not very pointy. The bigger the sample the higher the statistical significance. Aim for 100% of the population. Hard to achieve. Very, very hard to achieve. Got it. Get to 51% for a somewhat useful indication. Or more. Less would be insufficient but better than nothing.

We had all that 2 weeks ago.

MR I have said about 4558893 times your idea would be worthwhile only if the whole electorate participates.

I have said around the same number of times that you have no way of getting the whole electorate to participate, which means your idea is not worthwhile. All other parts of your comment prove my point, not yours.

MR Don't talk to me about statistical significance. You've shown you have no idea about that subject.

Even if you managed somehow to get 51% of the electorate to participate, it's not statistically meaningful unless you can show that the sample is representative of the whole population.

MR Yes, we had all that weeks ago, but your idea hasn't progressed at all since then.

ME- The whole population resides at aec.gov.au

A robot can knock on 130000 doors in a couple of minutes and wait for an answer until it is told to stop.

A robot can get every 18 year old in Cowper on the beach in a white T shirt at 2 am on Sunday morning.

A robot can get every 32 year old female in Cowper to the mall on Saturday morning.
cowper.app

There is no such thing as 'statistically meaningful'.

Statistical significance is precise.

Meaning is an attribute of information.

"1" can mean "yes, I will come to the beach in a white T shirt at 2 am on Sunday" or "yes, I am in favour of locking asylum seekers up without charge".

MR Good luck with that.

ME- This quality "worthwhile" to which you seem so attached: how are you measuring that?

MR Can it achieve its aim? If not, it's not worthwhile.
Your idea cannot achieve its aim, so it's not worthwhile.

MR It's your attachment that's in the way here. You spent too much time thinking about how it might work, and not enough time thinking about why it won't.
The only thing I'm attached to is logic.

MR The fact that you think a bot can do the things you said above is proof you don't have enough background knowledge for it to ever work.

ME- Quod erat demonstrandum. We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.

MR So is the sentence "There is no such thing as 'statistically meaningful'".
The idea that a non-representative sample of the population is reflective the whole population's desires is just plain wrong.

ME- The aim is to provide for two way communication between the population and its representatives. It is achievable and worthwhile.

MR Idealism is great. I'm not criticising your desire for change. I'm just pointing out that you've mistakenly gotten on the wrong train. Again, I know what your aim is. I'm saying you won't achieve it by these means.

ME- I certainly agree that a non-representative sample of the population being reflective of the whole population's desires is just plain wrong. A petition shows the will of those who signed it.

ME- I certainly won't achieve much if I appoint you CEO of Cowper Inc.

Thankfully that is the end. What an embarrassment.