

THREAT  
ANALYSIS

Recorded Future®

By Insikt Group®

August 28, 2023



# Malign Narratives Oppose “the Voice” Ahead of Australia’s Referendum

## Executive Summary

We assess that false information surrounding the possible creation of a new advisory body in Australia's parliament, the "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice" (also known as "the Voice"), overwhelmingly opposes the Voice and is very likely seeking to manipulate or influence voters to vote against the proposed change to Australia's Constitution in a referendum scheduled for sometime between October and December 2023. We identified that the majority of online manipulative content surrounding the Voice is currently produced by conspiracy theorists, political activists, and ideological groups such as the neo-Nazi, anti-Semitic, and white nationalist group National Socialist Network (NSN) and the far-right, white supremacist group Patriotic Alternative. Furthermore, according to the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), the Communist Party of China (CCP) is likely sponsoring an ongoing influence and disinformation campaign targeting the Parliament of Australia through the amplification of divisive narratives surrounding the Voice. We did not observe state-sponsored information operations emanating from the governments of Russia or Iran targeting the Voice at this time.

We identified 5 primary malign influence narratives targeting the Voice: 1) The Voice will result in an apartheid system of racial segregation in Australia; 2) The Voice is part of a larger Jewish plot to decrease Australia's sovereignty; 3) The Voice is a "trojan horse" designed to change Australia's system of governance to communism; 4) The Voice will enable a globalist invasion of Australia; and 5) The Voice will establish an "aboriginal tax" to fund aboriginal programs. Influencers supporting these narratives are using a wide array of influence infrastructure such as alternative news websites, traditional and alternative social media platforms, and video-sharing platforms.

False information propagated by these narratives has the potential to influence voter behavior leading into the referendum, particularly false information amplified by political representatives and news personalities that has the ability to reach a broad audience. Future developments associated with the Voice, such as official announcements, events, and public statements by prominent political figures, will very likely provide malign influencers with additional content they can use to continue to exploit these narratives. If the referendum passes, the subsequent advisory body will likely be a continued target of opportunity for malign influence actors. A continued whole-of-government approach integrated with private industry to publicly identify, announce, and refute false information about the Voice will likely reduce the ability of malign influence narratives to persuade Australian citizens. Additionally, business executives' and public figures' awareness of false information surrounding the Voice will reduce the risk of misinformation spreading across broad audiences and mitigate any potential negative impact on personal and organizational brand reputation.

## Key Findings

- Politicians, political activists and organizations, media personalities, and ideological groups opposing the Voice are very likely utilizing false information to decrease support for a "yes" vote during the upcoming referendum.

- Neo-Nazi, anti-Semitic, and white nationalist group NSN and far-right, white supremacist group Patriotic Alternative continue to amplify false information surrounding the Voice.
- Malign influence narratives fueling negative sentiment against the Voice are very likely rooted in preexisting conspiracy theories, ideological beliefs, and negative opinions related to the concept of Indigenous representation within the government of Australia.
- The CCP is likely sponsoring an ongoing influence and disinformation campaign amplifying divisive narratives surrounding the Voice.
- State-sponsored information operations emanating from the governments of Russia or Iran targeting the Voice were not observed at this time.<sup>1</sup>

## Methodology

For this investigation, Insikt Group reviewed data in the Recorded Future® Intelligence Cloud and conducted additional open-source searches for evidence of possible information operations<sup>2</sup> activity by governments and malign influence operations<sup>3</sup> by non-government entities targeting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice referendum, commonly referred to as “the Voice”. This investigation identified and analyzed malign influence narratives derived from these actors, including attempts to misinform and manipulate audiences through online discussions. We focused our investigation on mainstream and alternative social media, online forums, chat applications, and other sources of online news and information detailed in the body of the report. Throughout this investigation, we utilized Recorded Future’s [Diamond Model for Influence Operations](#), Atlantic Council’s [SCOTCH Framework](#), and the DISARM Foundation’s [Red Team and Blue Team Frameworks](#) to identify and summarize the predominant malign influence narratives targeting the Voice.

## Background

On June 19, 2023, the Parliament of Australia [passed](#) the Constitution Alteration Bill, authorizing the government of Australia to conduct a referendum to modify Australia’s Constitution. According to the government of Australia, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice referendum seeks to [establish](#) an “independent and permanent advisory body” to [advise](#) the government on matters related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Mainstream media sources and social media users commonly refer to the referendum as the “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice”, “the Voice”, and “Indigenous Voice to Parliament”.

According to data collected by a Newspoll survey [conducted](#) for The Australian in June 2023, Australian public opinion on the Voice has been [split](#) in recent months, with no majority supporting or opposing the

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<sup>1</sup> Insikt Group notes that Russia has been [accused](#) of interfering in Australian politics and Iran has [attempted](#) to conduct foreign interference within Australia.

<sup>2</sup> The US Department of Defense [defines](#) information operations as “the integrated employment of information-related capabilities (IRCs), in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision-making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own”. Information-related capabilities include electronic warfare (EW), computer network operations (CNO), psychological operations (PSYOP), military deception (MILDEC), and operations security (OPSEC).

<sup>3</sup> Insikt Group defines influence operations as the coordinated, malign, or manipulative use of information and narrative storytelling to achieve a competitive advantage over an adversary or competitor and further one’s own objectives.

referendum. Recent polling also indicates a [divide](#) along political party voting lines, suggesting the Voice almost certainly represents a political wedge issue for Australian voters.

## The Voice “Yes” vs. “No” Campaigns

According to Australia’s Constitution, a federal referendum involving a national [vote](#) is required to approve any changes to the Constitution. All Australian citizens over the age of 18 are legally obligated to enroll with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and vote on the referendum or [face](#) possible monetary fines. The referendum’s date has not been announced; however, it is anticipated to take place between October and December 2023. In preparation for the vote, the AEC is required to [distribute](#) “Yes and No cases” based on input from respective parliamentary committees (1 committee supporting the Voice, 1 committee opposed). The committees completed the distribution of the “Yes and No cases” on July 17, 2023.

The AEC’s distribution of “Yes and No cases” followed months of campaigning by unofficial groups on both sides of the referendum debate, which has [included](#) public discourse involving false information. In response to the propagation of false information surrounding the Voice, the AEC [maintains](#) a “Disinformation register” to “list prominent pieces of disinformation”. Insikt Group notes that various pieces of disinformation listed on the AEC’s “Disinformation register - Referendum process” were observed throughout this investigation; however, they represent singular components of the overarching malign influence narratives further analyzed in this report.

## Foreign Malign Influence Narratives

On July 24, 2023, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) [published](#) an article identifying coordinated inauthentic behavior (CIB) on US social media platforms, which the ASPI assessed as a likely “ongoing Chinese Communist Party influence and disinformation campaign targeting Australian domestic and foreign policies, including by amplifying division over the Indigenous voice referendum”.<sup>4</sup> The ASPI further describes likely cyber-enabled foreign interference by the Chinese government targeting the Australian parliament, large companies operating in Australia, and the ASPI directly. According to the ASPI, accounts engaging in CIB continue to amplify divisive narratives surrounding the Voice; however, they assess that these efforts have very likely been limited in effectiveness as most accounts only achieved minimal online engagement. Recorded Future data indicates that Chinese state-controlled media outlets continue overt coverage of the Voice referendum; Insikt Group reviewed such content and found it was generally neutral and did not include mis- or disinformation. This suggests ongoing efforts by the CCP to influence the outcome of the Voice referendum likely remain limited to the covert activity identified by ASPI.

Our investigation did not observe coordinated information operations from Russia or Iran targeting the Voice at this time. Recorded Future data indicates that similar to China, Russian and Iranian<sup>5</sup> state-controlled media outlets continue overt coverage of the Voice referendum, providing generally

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<sup>4</sup> Meta defines CIB as “coordinated efforts to manipulate public debate for a strategic goal where fake accounts are central to the operation”.

<sup>5</sup> [https://newspaper\[.\]irandaily\[.\]ir/7319/1/2810](https://newspaper[.]irandaily[.]ir/7319/1/2810)

neutral content that does not include mis- or disinformation. We did not identify any Russian or Iranian CIB from covert social media accounts.

## Malign Influence Narratives Targeting the Voice

Insikt Group identified 5 primary malign influence narratives targeting the Voice. The narratives in this report are arranged from 1 to 5 in order of magnitude based on the assessed volume and reach of the content to its target audience. We note that due to the nature and scope of influence operations, especially covert information operations conducted by foreign governments, all numeric values associated with these narratives, such as social media posts, likes, shares, and other impressions, remain approximate and ongoing.

### Narrative 1: The Voice Will Result in an Apartheid System of Racial Segregation in Australia

#### *Summary*

Political representatives, groups, activists, and news personalities are using mainstream and alternative media, traditional social media, and messaging platforms to decrease support for the Voice by amplifying false information comparing the Voice to an apartheid system of racial segregation.

#### *Narrative Content*

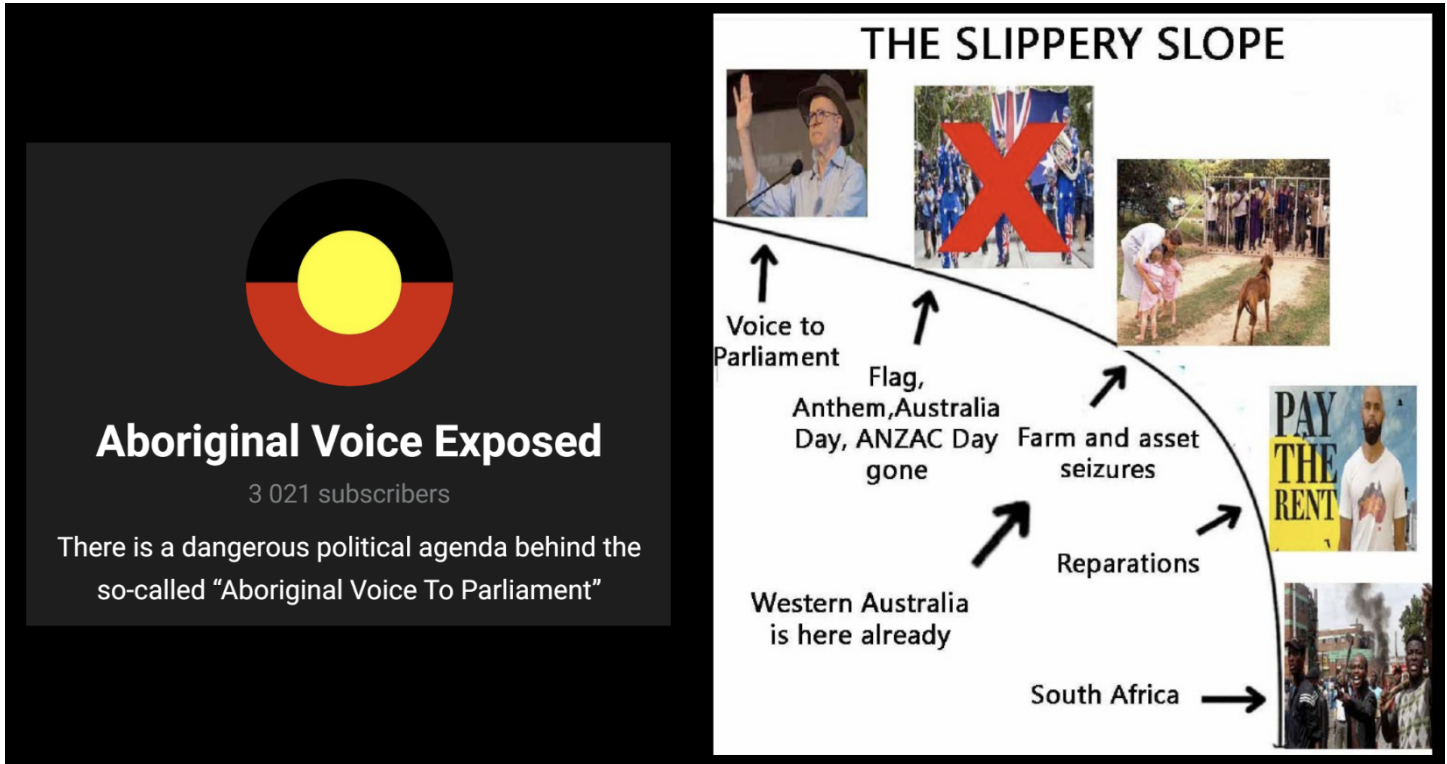
Content identified in support of this malign influence narrative [compares](#) the Voice to apartheid in South Africa, a system in which the government of South Africa implemented racial [segregation](#) between white and non-white South Africans from 1948 to 1994. In addition to comparisons with apartheid in South Africa, Insikt Group also identified false information [comparing](#) the Voice to New Zealand's Waitangi Tribunal with false claims that the Voice would give the newly created body the power to veto laws passed by Australia's Parliament.

#### *Influencers*

According to the nonprofit and independent news organization The Conversation, certain Australian politicians and lobbying groups such as the Institute of Public Affairs have [spread](#) misinformation claiming that "the Voice is a form of apartheid" or that the Voice will have the capacity to [veto](#) decisions made by parliament. On April 30, 2023, Sky News commentator Cory Bernardi [claimed](#) that if Australians approved the Voice, "We're effectively announcing an apartheid-type state, where some citizens have more legal rights or more rights in general than others". In May 2023, Australian prime minister Anthony Albanese expressed concern over supporters of a "no" vote [propagating](#) "a 'great lie' by saying the proposed amendment would put race in [Australia's] constitution". According to Albanese, this claim is false as racial elements have existed in the constitution since the Federation of Australia.

**Infrastructure and Capabilities**

The Infrastructure involved in the ongoing amplification of this narrative includes various news and fundraising websites, Telegram, YouTube, and a popular mainstream social media platform. Observed capabilities supporting this narrative include the dedicated hashtag #VoteNoToApartheid, as well as the hashtags #VoteNoToRacism and #VoteNoToRacistVoice.<sup>6</sup> Interest-based networks established on social media platforms, such as the Telegram channel Aboriginal Voice Exposed, which has approximately 3,200 subscribers, continue to produce memes and content supporting this narrative.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 1:** (Left) Screenshot of Telegram channel Aboriginal Voice Exposed (Source: Telegram<sup>8</sup>). (Right) Telegram channel Aboriginal Voice Exposed post published on June 21, 2023, which received over 9,000 views (Source: Telegram<sup>9</sup>).

Additional capabilities observed promoting this narrative include editing government-affiliated graphics to produce deceptive content as well as creating low-quality deepfakes impersonating Prime Minister Albanese (see Figure 2).<sup>10 11</sup>

<sup>6</sup> DISARM Technique T0104.006: Create Dedicated Hashtag and DISARM Technique T0104.005: Use Hashtags

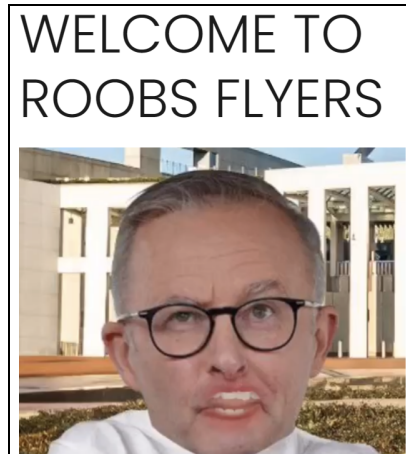
<sup>7</sup> DISARM Technique T0104.004: Interest-Based Networks and T0086.001: Develop Memes

<sup>8</sup> [https://t.me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed/317](https://t.me/aboriginal_voice_exposed/317)

<sup>9</sup> [https://t.me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed/254](https://t.me/aboriginal_voice_exposed/254)

<sup>10</sup> <https://roobsflyers.com/>

<sup>11</sup> DISARM Techniques T0086.003: Deceptively Edit Images (Cheap Fakes) and T0087.001: Develop AI-Generated Videos (Deepfakes)



**Figure 2:** Screenshot of a low-quality deepfake video featuring edited mouth and voice audio of Prime Minister Albanese (Source: [https://roobsflyers\[.\]com](https://roobsflyers[.]com))

In addition, the Aboriginal Voice Exposed Telegram channel promoted merchandise comparing the Voice to apartheid on the website *roobsflyers[.]com*.<sup>12</sup> We note that this website has also historically provided in-depth coordination for a “mass flyer drop”, demonstrating the capability to coordinate the physical delivery of influential content.<sup>13</sup> Similar to products for purchase on *roobsflyers[.]com*, *shop.onenation[.]org.au*, a fundraising website associated with Australian politician Pauline Hanson’s One Nation political party, was observed promoting similar merchandise as exemplified below.<sup>14</sup>



**Figures 3 and 4:** (Left) Screenshot of Telegram channel “Aboriginal Voice Exposed” post published on July 11, 2023, promoting bumper stickers for sale on *roobsflyers[.]com* (Source: Recorded Future). (Right) Screenshot of similar bumper sticker for sale on *shop.onenation[.]org.au* (Source: *shop.onenation[.]org.au*<sup>15</sup>)

Throughout early July 2023, various social media users posted details of a “Rally Against the Referendum” [incorporating](#) the #VoteNoToApartheid hashtag and calling for attendance at the events.<sup>16</sup> According to digital posters shared on social media with over 35,000 views, the rallies are scheduled to

<sup>12</sup> [DISARM Technique T0061: Sell Merchandise](#)

<sup>13</sup> [https://roobsflyers\[.\]com/mass-flyer-drop](https://roobsflyers[.]com/mass-flyer-drop)

<sup>14</sup> [DISARM Technique T0017: Conduct Fundraising](#)

<sup>15</sup> [https://shop\[.\]onenation\[.\]org.au/collections/vote-no/products/vote-no-voice-to-parliament-1](https://shop[.]onenation[.]org.au/collections/vote-no/products/vote-no-voice-to-parliament-1)

<sup>16</sup> [DISARM Technique T0126: Encourage Attendance at Events](#)

take place on August 19, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. (local time) in front of the Parliament House in Melbourne and on August 26, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. in Hyde Park, Sydney.<sup>17</sup>

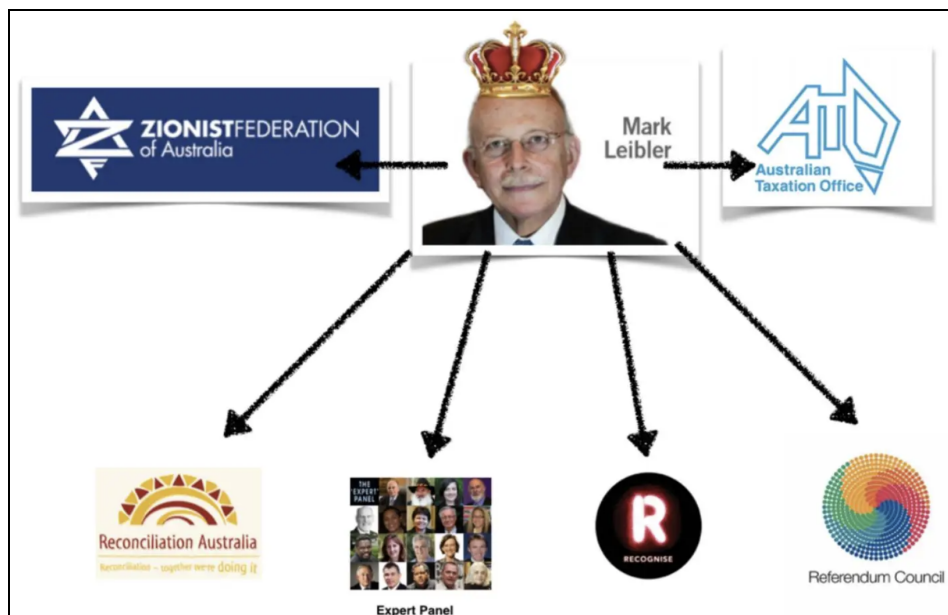
## Narrative 2: The Voice Is Part of a Larger Jewish Plot to Decrease Australia's Sovereignty

### Summary

NSN, Patriotic Alternative, and conspiracy theorist groups and individuals are using 4chan, Telegram, Vimeo, YouTube, Odysee, alternative news websites, and a popular mainstream social media platform to decrease support for the Voice among Australian citizens by exploiting existing prejudices and anti-Semitic conspiracy theories.

### Narrative Content

Content identified in support of this malign influence narrative alleges that prominent Australian Jewish individuals are implementing the Voice as part of a broader covert agenda to weaken Australia's sovereignty.<sup>18</sup> On May 18, 2023, The Australian Jewish News published an article [describing](#) how the "far-right and conspiracy theorists" were targeting Indigenous activist Mark Leibler and former Liberal Party spokesperson for Indigenous affairs Julian Leeser, making claims suggesting that both men, who are Jewish, are the "masterminds" behind the Voice. Specifically, the conspiracy theorists claim that Mark Leibler is the principal architect of the referendum, which, according to this narrative, was designed to reduce Australia's sovereignty and [empower](#) "jewish [sic] ethnic lobbyists".<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 5:** Screenshot from the article published by The Australian Jewish News on May 18, 2023, titled "Loony extremists' spread Voice conspiracies" (Source: [The Australian Jewish News](#))

<sup>17</sup> [DISARM Technique T0057: Organise Events](#)

<sup>18</sup> [https://t.me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed/285](https://t.me/aboriginal_voice_exposed/285)

<sup>19</sup> [DISARM Technique T0081.005: Identify Existing Conspiracy Narratives/Suspicious](#)



### ***Influencers***

On July 3, 2023, alternative news outlet XYZ [published](#) the first article in a 3-part series titled “Jewish Architect of the Voice Exposed”, which focuses on the life of Mark Leibler. The articles associated with the series include content originally [published](#) by alternative news outlet The Occidental Observer in 2020 discussing the life of Mark Leibler, as well as content from the book titled *The Powerbroker: Mark Leibler, an Australian Jewish Life*. According to The Occidental Observer’s mission statement, the outlet [presents](#) “original content touching on the themes of white identity, white interests, and the culture of the West”. On July 14, 2023, XYZ’s Live Stream [published](#) a video described as “A deep dive into the background of Mark Leibler, the ‘Powerbroker’ behind the Aboriginal Voice to Parliament” on [YouTube](#) and [Odyssey](#), a YouTube-like video hosting platform. Throughout the video, hosts discuss the written XYZ series about Leibler and mention the possibility of the next “PSYOP” (psychological operations) or “false flag” operation from the Voice “Yes Campaign”.

On July 18, 2023, a Telegram channel connected to the founder of the far-right, white supremacist group Patriotic Alternative, Mark Collett, posted links to view XYZ’s Live Stream episode about Leibler mentioned above.<sup>20</sup> Mark Collett has [been identified](#) as a British neo-Nazi who has over 16,400 subscribers on Telegram and [leads](#) Patriotic Alternative, which claims to have 15,000 members. Similarly, the [leader](#) of the [neo-Nazi, anti-Semitic, and white nationalist](#) group NSN Thomas Sewell has utilized a personally associated Telegram channel with over 9,300 subscribers to support this narrative.<sup>21</sup> Additional Telegram channels associated with NSN continue to publish content supporting this narrative.<sup>22</sup> Insikt Group notes that a Telegram channel entitled “Jews News Australia” posted content on August 7, 2022, claiming Leibler was “behind it all”, referring to the Voice, featuring a video with Josephine Cashman, who is discussed further below.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> <https://t.me/markacollett/9513>

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Sewell is the [leader](#) of both the [European Australia Movement](#) (EAM) and the NSN.

<sup>22</sup> <https://t.me/croweater/151>

<sup>23</sup> <https://t.me/jewsdotcomau/241>



**Figure 6:** Screenshot of the Telegram channel of Mark Collett (Source: Telegram<sup>24</sup>)

### **Infrastructure and Capabilities**

Infrastructure supporting this narrative includes 4chan, Telegram, Vimeo, Odysee, alternative news websites, a popular mainstream social media platform, and physical actions like graffiti carried out by the NSN. Multiple Telegram channels have been observed sharing the same narrative content across groups/channels.<sup>25</sup> Channels observed sharing mutually supportive content in support of this narrative include:

- [t\[.\]me/markacollett](https://t.me/markacollett) (16,400 subscribers)<sup>26</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/joeldavisx](https://t.me/joeldavisx) (9,470 subscribers)<sup>27</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/Thomas\\_Sewell/3493](https://t.me/Thomas_Sewell/3493) (9,383 subscribers)<sup>28</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/RealLandDownUnder/74684](https://t.me/RealLandDownUnder/74684) (6,070 subscribers)<sup>29</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/FUCK\\_THE\\_ABC/1874](https://t.me/FUCK_THE_ABC/1874) (3,796 subscribers)<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> <https://t.me/croweater/151>

<sup>25</sup> [DISARM Technique T0119.001: Post across Groups](#)

<sup>26</sup> <https://t.me/markacollett/9513>

<sup>27</sup> <https://t.me/joeldavisx/2414>

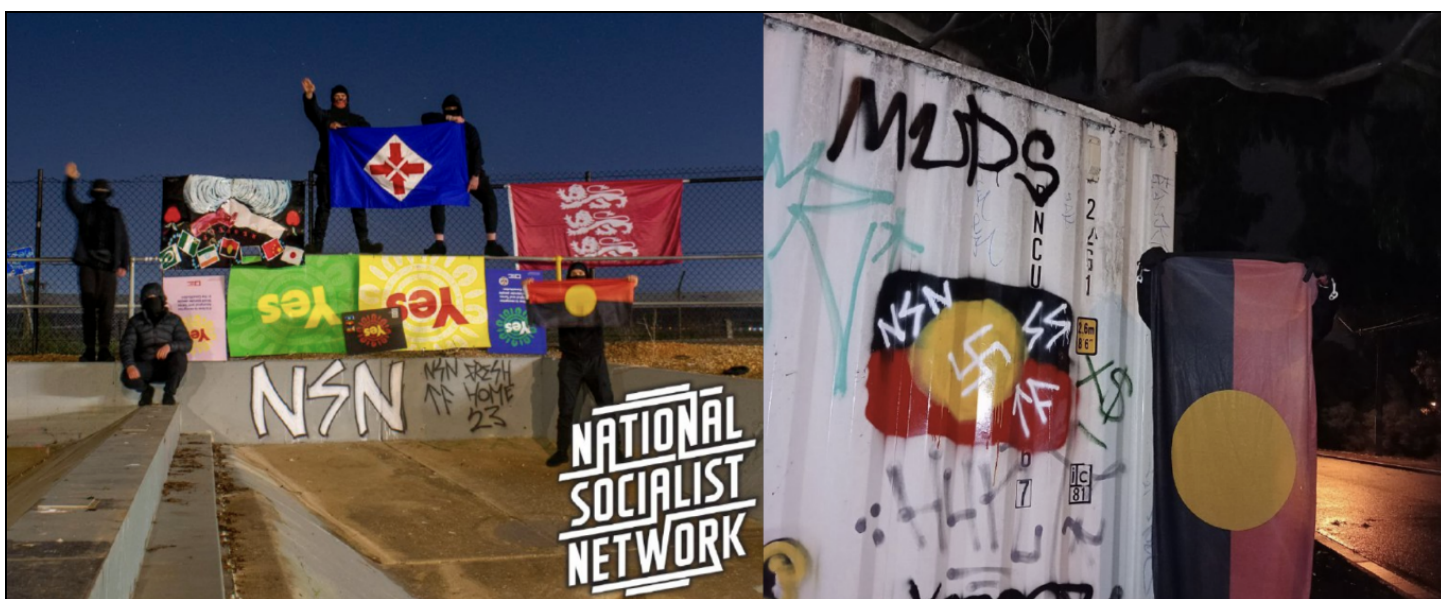
<sup>28</sup> [https://t.me/Thomas\\_Sewell/3493](https://t.me/Thomas_Sewell/3493)

<sup>29</sup> <https://t.me/RealLandDownUnder/74684>

<sup>30</sup> [https://t.me/FUCK\\_THE\\_ABC/1874](https://t.me/FUCK_THE_ABC/1874)

- [t\[.\]me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed](https://t.me/aboriginal_voice_exposed) (3,244 subscribers)<sup>31</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/s/australiansovereigntyalliance](https://t.me/s/australiansovereigntyalliance) (3,090 subscribers)<sup>32</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/jewsdotcomau/241](https://t.me/jewsdotcomau/241) (2,507 subscribers)<sup>33</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/tasmanforth/423](https://t.me/tasmanforth/423) (645 subscribers)<sup>34</sup>
- [t\[.\]me/croweater151](https://t.me/croweater151) (354 subscribers)<sup>35</sup>

Capabilities observed include a range of tactics and techniques including [cherry-picking](#) facts and manipulating information to construct aggregated evidence in support of this malign narrative,<sup>36</sup> as well as the demonstrated capability to conduct physical actions to amplify messaging.<sup>37</sup> Telegram channels associated with NSN have stated that “most of our campaigning for an Aryan voice to Parliament takes place on the street”, and have included pictures of various graffiti and vandalism.<sup>38</sup>



**Figure 7:** Screenshot of the Telegram channel Crow Eater depicting physical actions taken by NSN in opposition to the Voice, with the caption, “So long as the Jews push for their Voice to Parliament, all White men of good conscience must fight against it” (Source: Telegram <sup>39 40</sup>)

An additional capability observed in support of this narrative is content and links directing social media users to different platforms.<sup>41</sup> For example, links posted on the Telegram channel associated with self-proclaimed “[Australian nationalist](#)” and “[White advocate](#)” Joel Davis directed users to a popular mainstream social media platform post from the account @OJhitler (now removed from the platform),

<sup>31</sup> [https://t.me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed/285](https://t.me/aboriginal_voice_exposed/285)

<sup>32</sup> <https://t.me/s/australiansovereigntyalliance>

<sup>33</sup> <https://t.me/jewsdotcomau/241>

<sup>34</sup> <https://t.me/tasmanforth/423>

<sup>35</sup> <https://t.me/croweater/151>

<sup>36</sup> [DISARM Technique T0086.004: Aggregate Information into Evidence Collages](#)

<sup>37</sup> [DISARM Tactic TA10: Drive Offline Activity](#)

<sup>38</sup> <https://t.me/croweater/100?single>

<sup>39</sup> <https://t.me/croweater/151>

<sup>40</sup> <https://t.me/croweater/52>

<sup>41</sup> [DISARM Technique T0119.002: Post across Platform](#)

which stated that Leibler was the architect behind the Voice and that “Jewish Power in Australia is more secure if White Australia is weakened”.<sup>42</sup> The post received 32,200 views prior to being removed from the platform. Insikt Group notes that the terminology “Juice it” was observed in association with posts directing social media users to follow links to other platforms. In this context, “Juice it” almost certainly represents coordinated messaging to amplify corresponding online content.<sup>43</sup>

### **Narrative 3: The Voice Is a “Trojan Horse” Designed to Change Australia’s System of Governance to Communism**

#### ***Summary***

Conspiracy theorists and political activists are using Telegram, YouTube, alternative news articles, and a popular mainstream social media platform to decrease support for the Voice among Australian citizens by connecting it to pre-existing conspiracies and suspicions related to communism.

#### ***Narrative Content***

The book *Red Over Black*, published in 1982, [alleged](#) that throughout history, the Australian Communist Party has attempted to exploit Aboriginal land rights issues as a political wedge issue with the ultimate goal of turning Australia into a communist country. In October 2022, a video of the author discussing the book’s content in 1984 was [published](#) on YouTube with the associated hashtag #Referendum2022. The video’s text description [connects](#) the Voice referendum in 2023 to the original narrative in “Red Over Black”, claiming it is a modern version of the exploitation of Aboriginal rights issues in pursuit of a communist agenda.



**Figure 8:** Screenshot of video originally from 1984 of *Red Over Black*’s author discussing the book (Source: [YouTube](#))

<sup>42</sup> <https://t.me/joeldavisx>

<sup>43</sup> [DISARM Technique T0118: Amplify Existing Narrative](#)

The author of *Red Over Black* describes his goal in publishing the book as follows:

This book is ... a call for action for the defense of Australia against the psychological warfare being waged upon us. My own original concern has naturally stemmed from what I learned about communist strategy and tactics through a lifetime in the Labor and Trade Union movement, and intensified by the years I spent inside the Communist Party. As a member of the party I learned about communist opposition to the “White Australia” policy and plans of making Australia a Communist Country by establishment of Black Republic areas of Australia inhabited by Aboriginals.<sup>44</sup>

This malign influence narrative connected to the Voice builds upon conspiracies derived from *Red Over Black* and uses a wide array of digital graphics, written content, and government documents released under Australia’s Freedom of Information (FOI) Act to allege that the Voice is a modern-day “Trojan Horse” campaign to deceptively carry out a hidden communist takeover of Australia.

### ***Influencers***

Multiple Telegram channels previously identified in this investigation, such as the Aboriginal Voice Exposed, Land Down Under, Australians vs. The Agenda, and Australian Sovereignty Alliance, have posted content referring viewers to the “Red Over Black” YouTube video and claiming it “extends through to the modern Constitutional Voice to Parliament in 2023”.<sup>45 46 47</sup> Similar to the previous narrative analyzed above (Narrative 2), alternative news outlet XYZ published 2 articles in April 2023 (separated into [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)) titled “The Voice: Trojan Horse to take our land”. The articles describe the Voice as “a gift akin to the gigantic wooden horse once wheeled within the unsuspecting walls of ill-fated Troy. If we accept it, if we welcome it into our chambers of Parliament — it will destroy all from the inside”. The articles provide a link to another alternative news outlet website, “Just One Focus - Truth” and specifically to an [article](#) titled “The UN and Corporatocracy – The Insidious Agenda Behind The ‘VOICE’ To Parliament”. We also observed a general trend of [references](#) to Australian political personalities and “Yes” vote campaigners Thomas Mayo and Marcia Langton in manipulated content that seeks to support this narrative, which is further analyzed below.

### ***Infrastructure and Capabilities***

Multiple comparisons of the Voice to a “Trojan Horse” have been [observed](#) on a popular mainstream social media platform as well as posts sharing content originally published on Fair Australia’s website. Specifically, users on mainstream social media have [referenced](#) an article [published](#) by Fair Australia on April 17, 2023, titled “The first big step towards division”, which provides what is described as “secret documents from the Uluru Dialogues” obtained by the organization through the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.<sup>48</sup> Following the publication of this article, which includes a [government document](#) obtained through FOI, social media posts emerged referencing the government document and [claiming](#) that the

<sup>44</sup> [https://veritasbooks\[.\]com.au/products/red-over-black-behind-the-aboriginal-land-rights-g-mcdonald](https://veritasbooks[.]com.au/products/red-over-black-behind-the-aboriginal-land-rights-g-mcdonald)

<sup>45</sup> [https://t\[.\]me/RealLandDownUnder/74888](https://t[.]me/RealLandDownUnder/74888)

<sup>46</sup> [https://t\[.\]me/s/ausvstheagenda](https://t[.]me/s/ausvstheagenda)

<sup>47</sup> [https://t\[.\]me/australiansovereigntyalliance/926](https://t[.]me/australiansovereigntyalliance/926)

<sup>48</sup> [DISARM Technique T0089.001: Obtain Authentic Documents](#)

true purpose of the Voice is to “allow for creation of a NEW sovereign state”; the posts included references to words in the “Red Over Black” video and terms it connected to the communist takeover narrative such as “Self-determination”. Similar to capabilities identified in the previous narratives, digital content such as memes and low-quality edited photos were observed [circulating](#) on a popular mainstream social media platform with the hashtags #votenotocommunist as exemplified below.



**Figures 9 and 10:** (Left) Screenshot of a social media post comparing the Voice to a “Trojan Horse” that received over 2,000 views (Source: [Social Media](#)). (Right) Screenshot of a social media post alleging that Thomas Mayo is a communist, which received over 7,000 views (Source: [Social Media](#))

## Narrative 4: The Voice Will Enable a Globalist Invasion of Australia

### Summary

Conspiracy theorists are using Telegram, Vimeo, YouTube, websites, alternative news articles, and a popular mainstream social media platform in an attempt to decrease support for the Voice among Australian citizens through exposure to maps, videos, and interviews that warn of a globalist invasion of Australia as a result of the Voice.

### Narrative Content

Josephine Cashman previously served on the Australian government’s advisory group on the Voice until her removal in January 2020 due to [allegations](#) surrounding a campaign to discredit Aboriginal Australian author Bruce Pascoe. Following her removal from the advisory group, Insikt Group has observed multiple websites and social media accounts affiliated with Cashman that host content [suggesting](#) the Voice is part of “Empire 2.0”, which, according to Cashman, “refers to a global plot that revolves around the recolonisation of the planet”. More specifically, according to Cashman, the Voice [represents](#) a “device to install global governance”. We note similarities between this narrative presented

by Cashman and the broader “New World Order” conspiracy theory that [suggests](#) the existence of a clandestine effort by a secret group of elites around the world to establish a totalitarian world government.

### ***Influencers***

On May 7, 2023, alternative news outlet XYZ [published](#) an article titled “THE VOICE OF DECEPTION: How The Voice will be used for the Globalist Invasion of Australia”, which references and provides a [link](#) to an article on “Stephen Reason’s Substack”. Much of the content of the XYZ article and the “Stephen Reason’s Substack” article is identical.<sup>49</sup> The bottom of the “Stephen Reason’s Substack” article references and provides a [link](#) to “Josephine Cashman’s Substack”. Cashman’s Substack contains content supporting various conspiracy theories and includes a 20-minute podcast audio interview titled “The Globalists Voice”, in which she [labels](#) the Voice as “the big lie”. The Telegram channel Aboriginal Voice Exposed has contributed to this narrative with posts sharing the XYZ article alleging a “Globalist Invasion of Australia”.<sup>50</sup>

### ***Infrastructure and Capabilities***

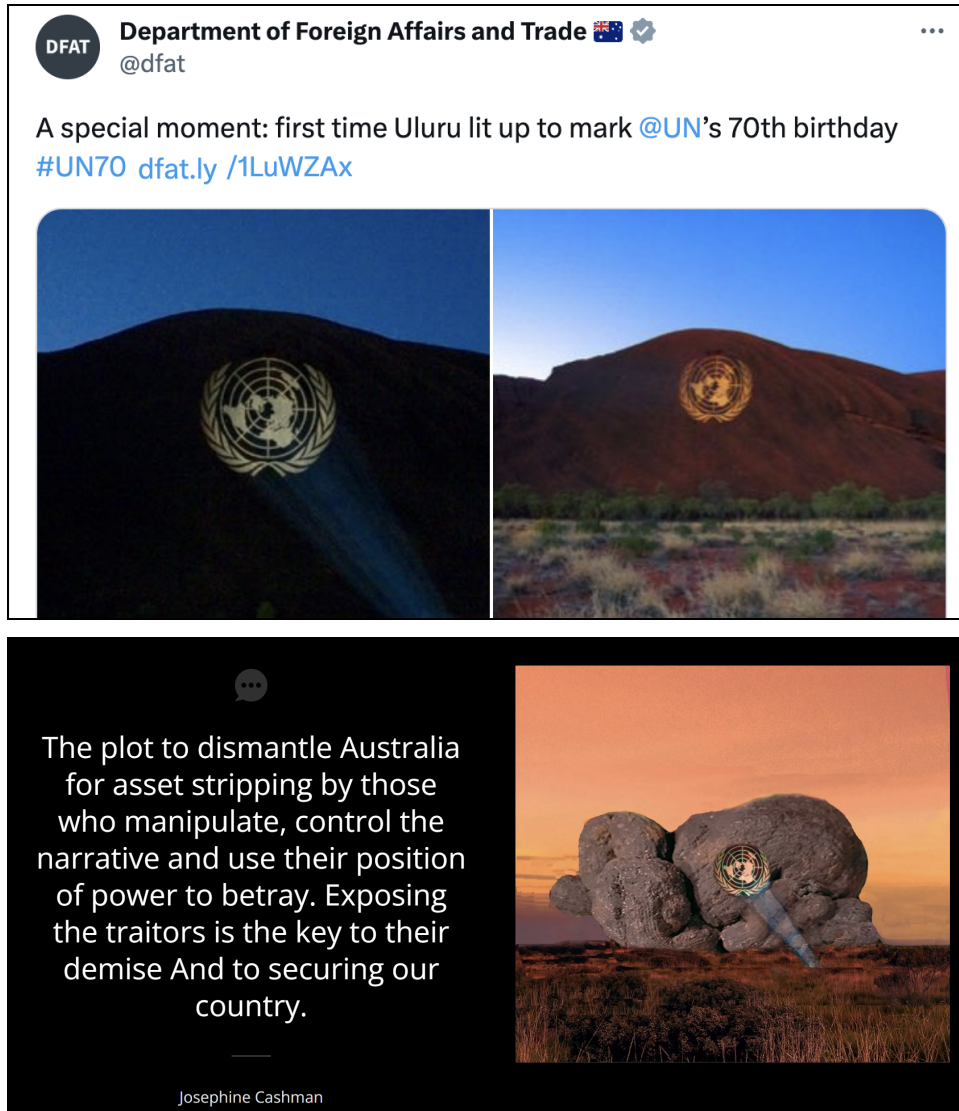
Infrastructure enabling this narrative includes multiple social media accounts directly affiliated with Cashman, One Voice Australia’s website ([onevoiceaustralia\[.\]com.au](#)), Josephine Cashman’s website ([josephinecashman\[.\]com.au](#)), and the Telegram channel Aboriginal Voice Exposed. Cashman currently has over 16,000 followers on her mainstream social media platform [account](#) and has [received](#) over 70,000 views of content directly associated with this narrative. Capabilities associated with this narrative include the [production](#) of videos that overlay voice audio from statements made by prominent Australian political figures with low-quality produced graphics to reframe the context of such statements.<sup>51</sup> Additional attempts to reframe the context were identified using imagery of the United Nations (UN) symbol on Uluru, also known as Ayers Rock.

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<sup>49</sup> [DISARM Technique T0084.001: Use Copy/pasta](#)

<sup>50</sup> [https://t\[.\]me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed/134](https://t[.]me/aboriginal_voice_exposed/134)

<sup>51</sup> [DISARM Technique T0023.001: Reframe Context](#)



**Figures 11 and 12:** (Top) Screenshot of an image posted by Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2015. (Source: [Social Media](#)) (Bottom) Screenshot of an image from Josephine Cashman's website. (Source: [Josephine Cashman](#))

## Narrative 5: The Voice Will Establish an “Aboriginal Tax” to Fund Aboriginal Programs

### Summary

Political activists are using Telegram, YouTube, and social media platforms to decrease support for the Voice among Australian citizens by amplifying misleading information and playing on fears that passing the Voice will result in a new “Aboriginal Tax”.



### ***Narrative Content***

On June 19, 2023, a social media account affiliated with Pauline Hanson [posted](#) content that included a video of Hanson quoting Thomas Mayo as saying that “the voice is a vital step to implement a race-based rent tax”. Various social media users also [continue](#) to use Mayo’s comments to directly affiliate the Voice with a “race-based rent tax”. Hanson continues to [oppose](#) the longstanding Australian concept known as “Pay The Rent”, in which non-Indigenous people in Australia [provide](#) money to First Nations people for occupying land traditionally occupied by Aboriginal tribes. The “Pay the Rent” concept was originally [developed](#) in the 1970s by the National Aboriginal and Islander Health Organisation and [continues](#) to be a controversial political wedge issue in Australia.<sup>52</sup> Prominent Australian politicians such as Lidia Thorpe and political personalities like Thomas Mayo continue to [advocate](#) for the “Pay the Rent” concept; however, the concept has not been officially endorsed by the Australian government. According to certain advocacy groups and activists, such as the group Pay The Rent, “Australia is [founded](#) on land that was stolen from Indigenous people”, which is the basis of the “Pay the Rent” concept. Some mainstream social media users continue to [associate](#) the Voice with the “Pay the Rent” concept, questionably [asserting](#) that the Voice will increase taxes on Australian citizens.

### ***Influencers***

On June 15, 2023, the Telegram channel Aboriginal Voice Exposed posted content that alleged the Voice will “usher-in higher taxes to fund new special payments and programs for Aboriginal people”.<sup>53</sup> The post also included a picture referencing “the Aboriginal tax” (see Figure 13). On July 16, 2023, social media users [compared](#) the Voice to a 7NEWS [story](#) involving the Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation requesting 2.5 million Australian dollars from nonprofit restoration group Landcare as payment for approval to plant 5,500 seedlings along Perth’s Canning River. On July 17, 2023, the Australians vs. The Agenda YouTube channel [posted](#) a video of the same 7NEWS story involving the Whadjuk Aboriginal Corporation, and titled the video “The Voice hasn’t even gone through yet but Aboriginal Corporation DEMAND \$2.5 MILLION to plant trees”. Other alternative social media discussions included claims that the Voice will implement higher taxes and that it will be used to steal property.

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<sup>52</sup> DISARM T0081.006: Identify Wedge Issues

<sup>53</sup> [https://t.me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed/228](https://t.me/aboriginal_voice_exposed/228)



**Figure 13:** Screenshot of an image posted by the Telegram channel *Aboriginal Voice Exposed* (Source: Telegram<sup>54</sup>)

### ***Infrastructure and Capabilities***

Infrastructure enabling this narrative includes Telegram channels and a popular mainstream social media platform. A prevailing capability demonstrated to support this narrative is reframing the context of information, such as news stories, to suggest the Voice will negatively affect the financial situation of Australian citizens. Additionally, content associated with this narrative associates historical Australian government policies and organizations with emotive themes such as “land grab” and “land transfers”, distorting facts related to the Voice.<sup>55 56</sup>



**Figure 14:** Screenshot of a video posted by *Australians vs. The Agenda* comparing the Voice referendum to the land rights issue described in a 7NEWS story (Source: [YouTube](#))

<sup>54</sup> [https://t.me/aboriginal\\_voice\\_exposed/228](https://t.me/aboriginal_voice_exposed/228)

<sup>55</sup> [DISARM Technique T0023: Distort Facts](#)

<sup>56</sup> <https://t.me/MainBeachMedia/5103>

## Outlook

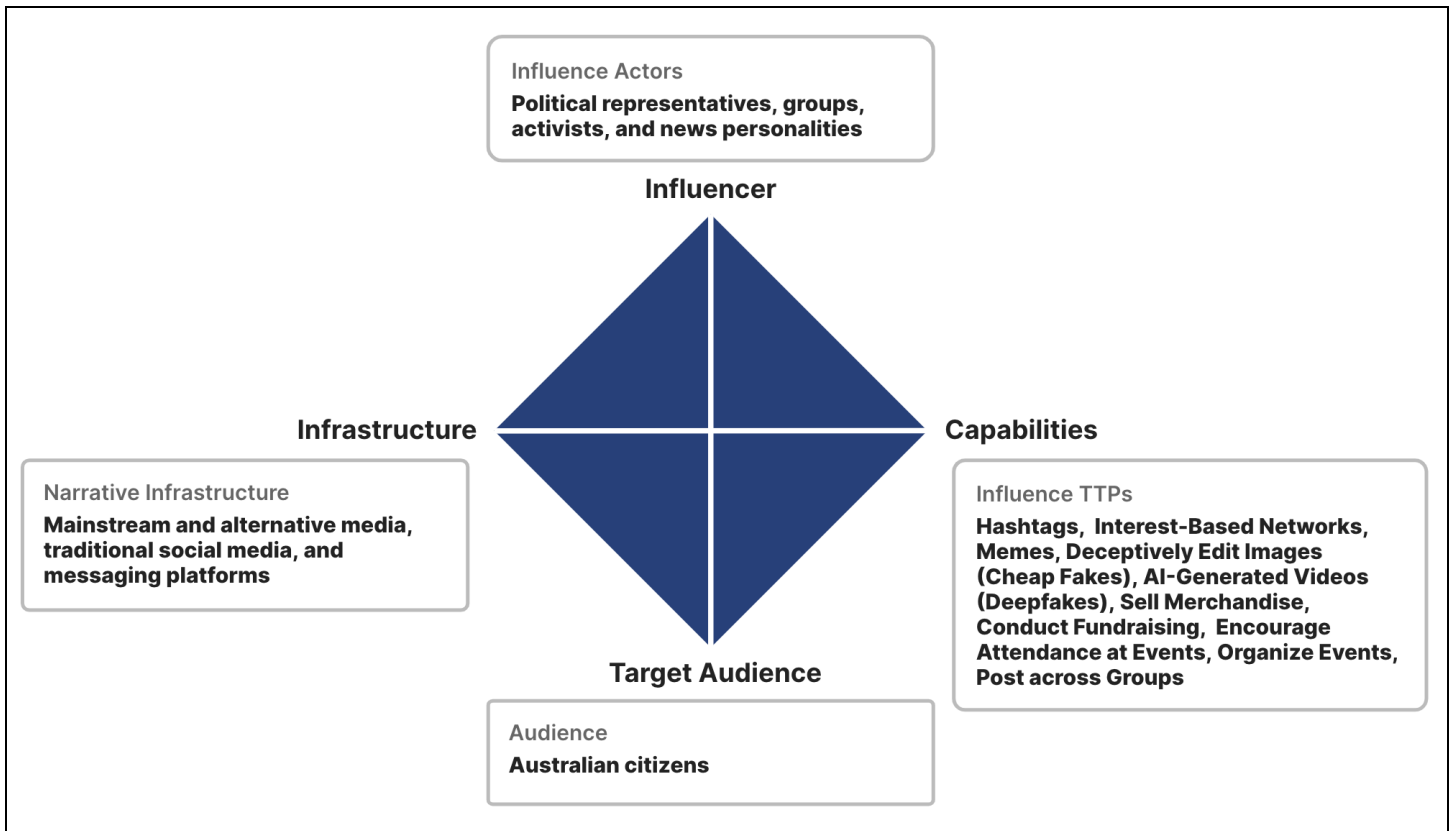
The 5 malign influence narratives analyzed in this report remain ongoing. Content associated with these narratives will almost certainly continue to be produced and amplified by the sources discussed throughout this report in the lead-up to the referendum. While nation-states were not primary actors in the overwhelming majority of this activity, the recent ASPI [publication](#) of likely Chinese state-sponsored information operations, combined with the aforementioned rhetoric derived from ideological groups like NSN and Patriotic Alternative, represent a continued threat to information integrity surrounding the Voice. Additionally, physical actions in opposition to the Voice, such as scheduled rallies in Melbourne and Sydney on August 19 and 26, 2023, respectively, likely present increased levels of physical risk associated with the referendum.

Future developments associated with the Voice, such as official announcements, events, and public statements by prominent political figures, will very likely provide malign influencers with additional content they can use to continue to exploit these narratives. Additionally, consistent with recent [claims](#) of Chinese state-sponsored malign information operations in Australia, the Voice very likely provides an opportunity for China to amplify divisive political themes that are sensitive to Australian voters regardless of the outcome of the referendum, as similarly [seen](#) during the 2022 US midterm elections.

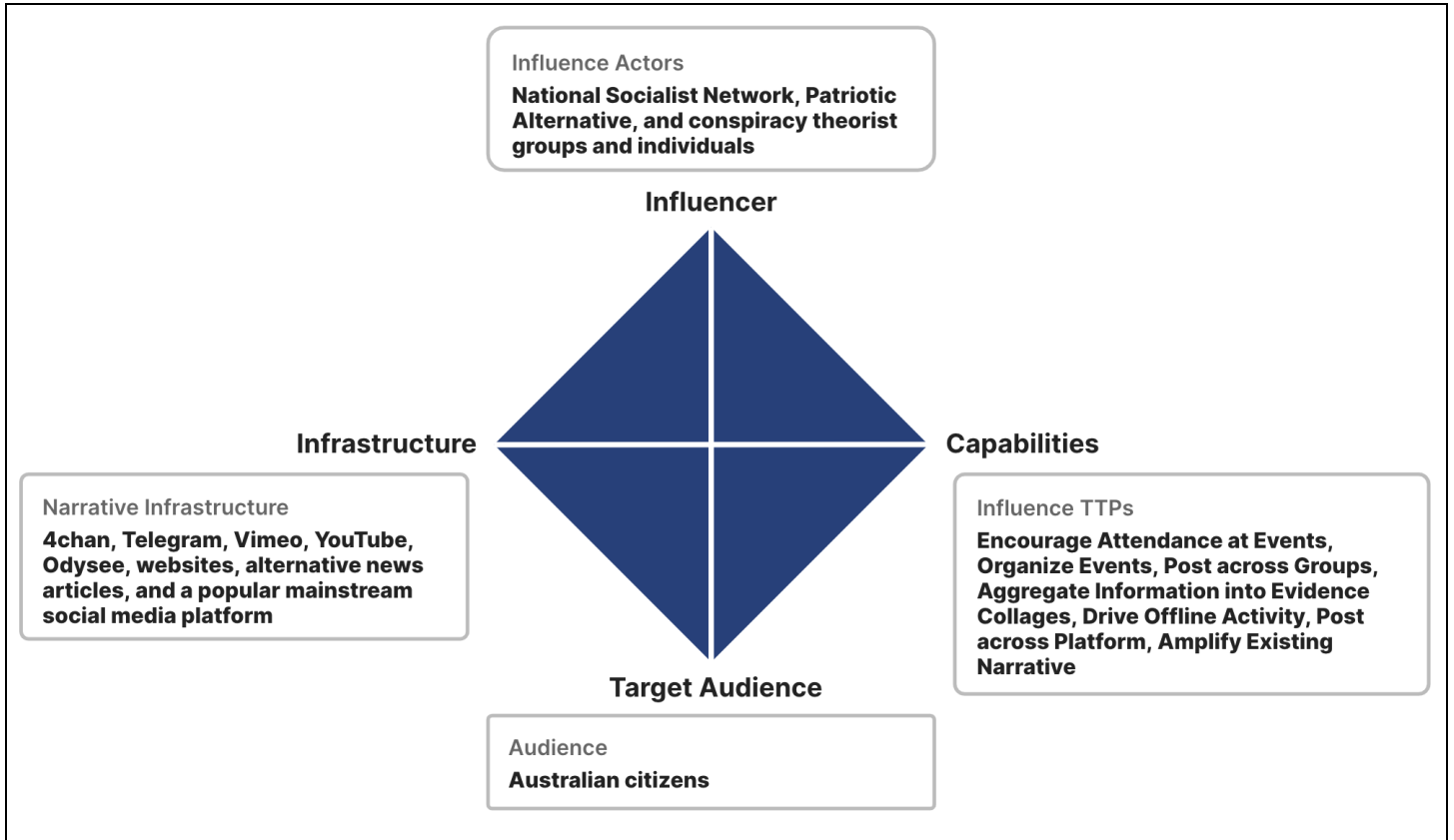
A continued whole-of-government approach integrated with private industry to publicly identify, announce, and refute false information circulating about the Voice will likely reduce the ability of malign influence narratives to persuade Australian citizens. Additionally, business executives' and public figures' awareness of false information surrounding the Voice will reduce the risk of misinformation spreading across broad audiences and mitigate any potential negative impact on personal and organizational brand reputation. Proactively monitoring Australia's information environment to identify emerging influencers, infrastructure, and capabilities supporting false information surrounding the Voice will enable early warning and deliberate response (such as countermeasures provided in the DISARM Foundation's Blue Team Framework) to disrupt malign influence narratives prior to influencing intended target audiences.

## Appendix A: Diamond Models for Influence Operations

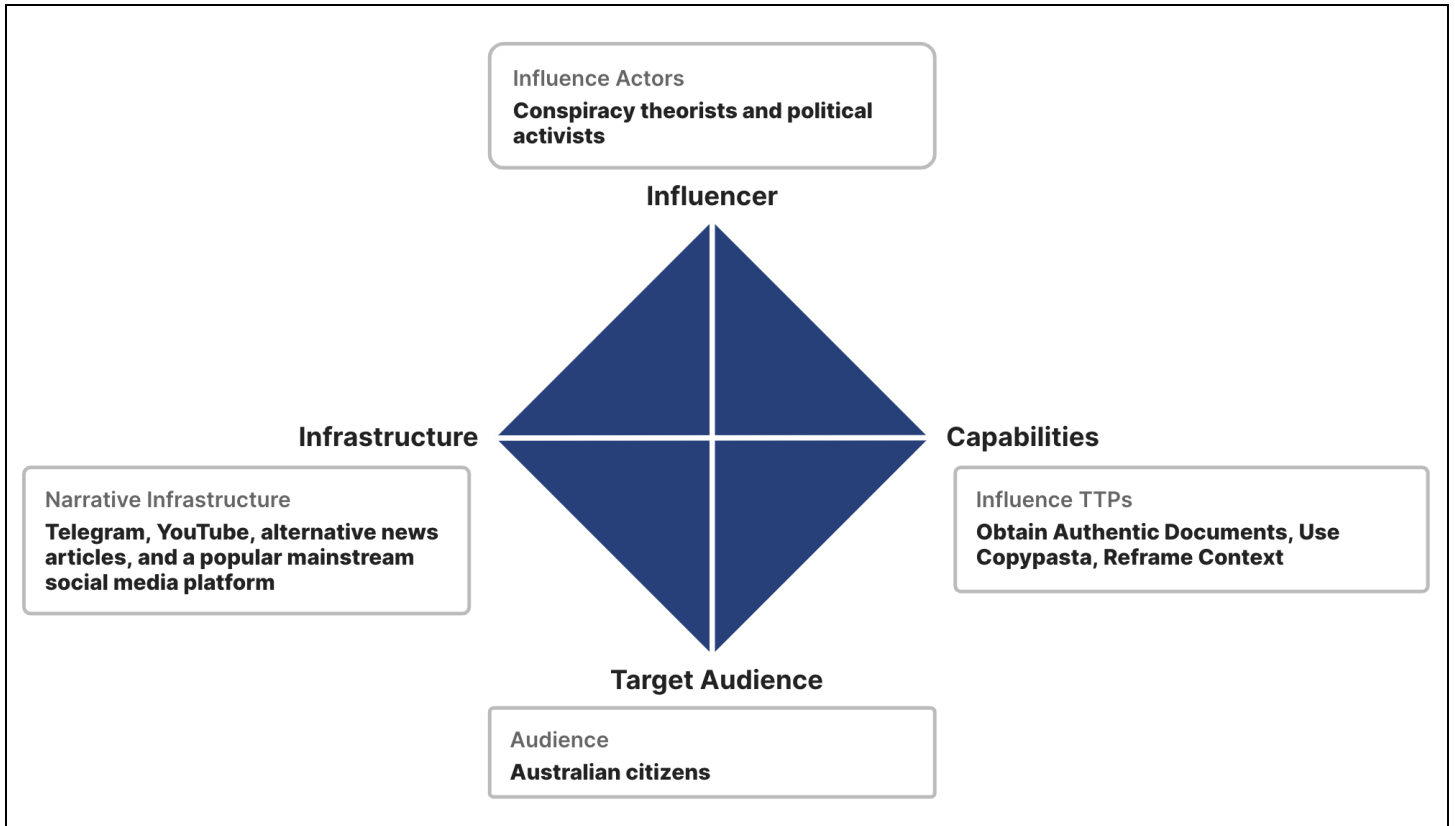
### Narrative 1: The Voice Will Result in an Apartheid System of Racial Segregation in Australia



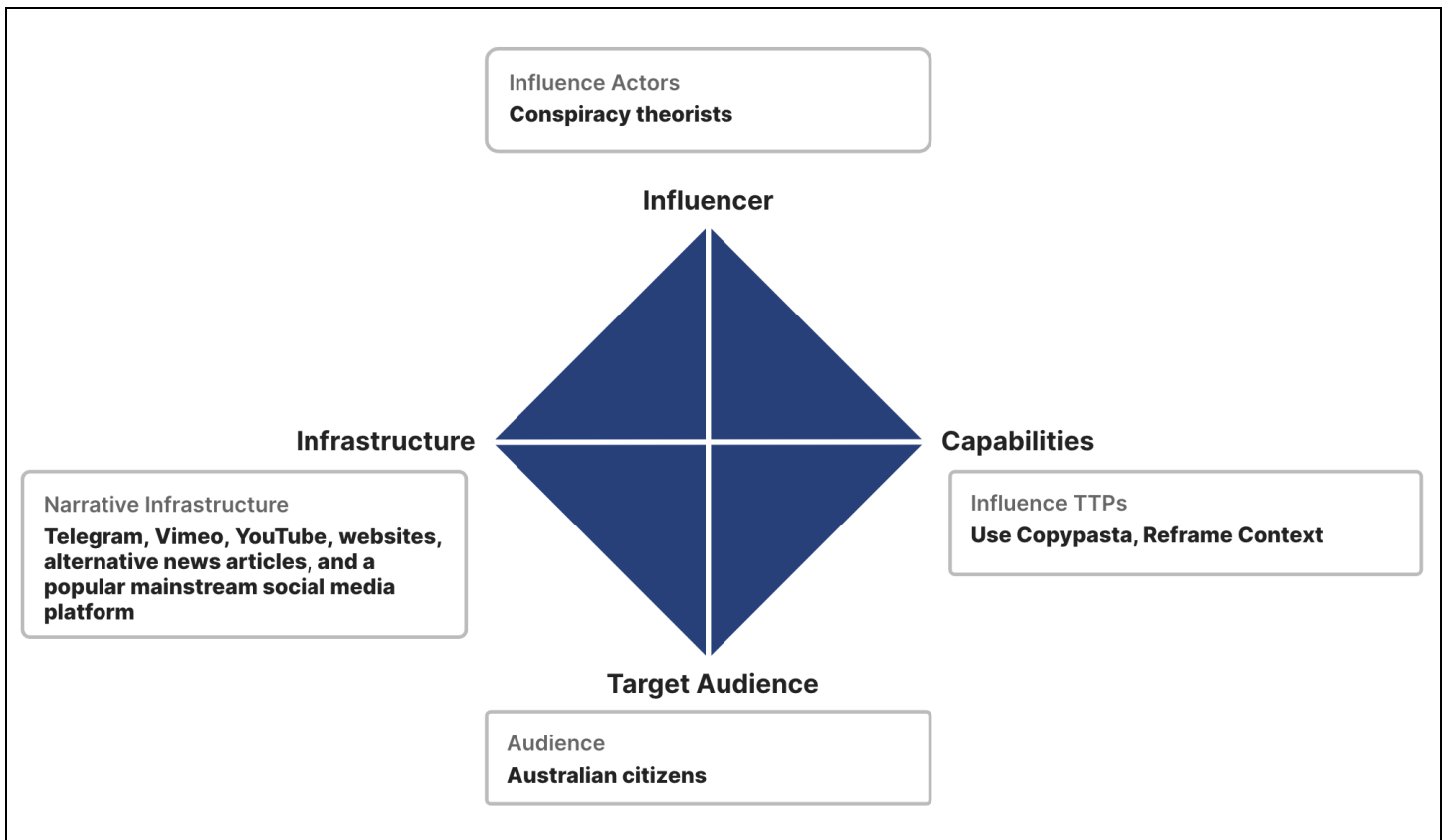
## Narrative 2: The Voice Is Part of a Larger Jewish Plot to Decrease Australia's Sovereignty



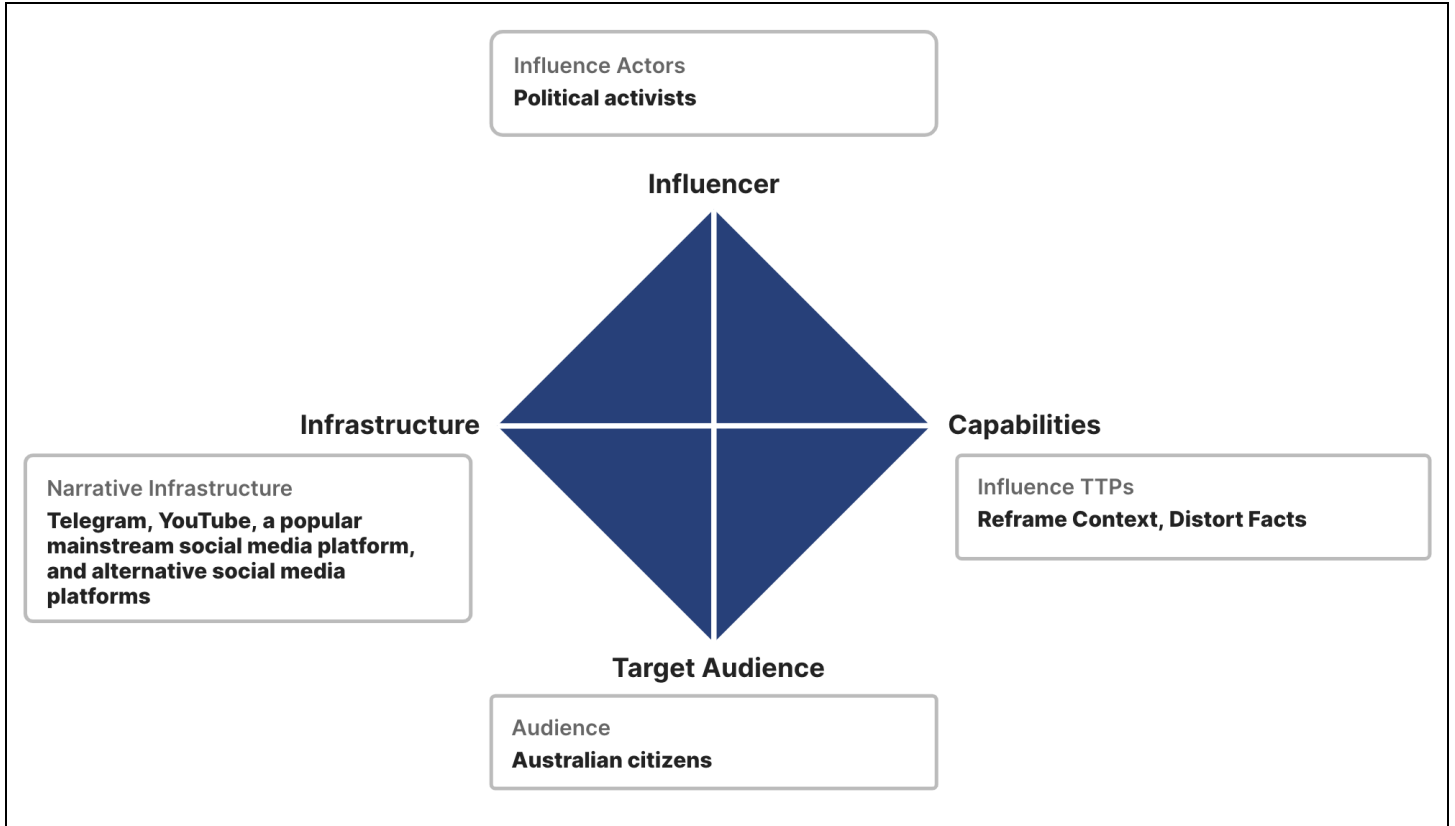
### Narrative 3: The Voice Is a “Trojan Horse” Designed to Change Australia’s System of Governance to Communism



### Narrative 4: The Voice Will Enable a Globalist Invasion of Australia



### Narrative 5: The Voice Will Establish an “Aboriginal Tax” to Fund Aboriginal Programs





## About Insikt Group®

Recorded Future's Insikt Group, the company's threat research division, comprises analysts and security researchers with deep government, law enforcement, military, and intelligence agency experience. Their mission is to produce intelligence that reduces risk for clients, enables tangible outcomes, and prevents business disruption.

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