

*March 17th 2026*

# HOODIES DAILY

GOVERNMENT TOO BROKE &  
WOKE TO STAMP OUT  
TOBACCO WARS



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# EDITORIAL

\$7,812.50 is what the 16,000 or so named businesses in the COVID claim against the state government of Victoria will get out of the \$125 million agreed to by the government. \$7,812.50 is what a small business owners suffering is worth. But \$7,812.50 isn't going to bring back to life any of the lost loved ones. It's not going to pay back the loss of a house, the loss of revenue, the ATO debt, the super, the suppliers. In fact it's nearly how much Daniel Andrews was getting pre tax per week when he was offering his daily sermons of shit at the height of the COVID crisis! \$125 million is a lot of money but when Allan can't account for \$15 billion of tax payer money it's really just a slap in the face for all those suffered during Covid. But the kicker? The tax payer picks up the tab.

Struth! I think Anthony Catalano has probably had better weeks! The somewhat maniacal lifestyle of the media mogul has really hit the papers now and with it Catalano's money tree, Alex Waislitz. Alex the billionaire investor in Catalano's media empire has distanced himself from the man himself and has said he basically hopes all the staff and anyone potentially involved are ok. Isn't it funny how a good portion of these situations could've been avoided had anyone had the balls to say it's time to go home?

Are you ready? Can you hear it? What's that!?! It's Jim Chalmers practicing his speech for after the RBA sticks up interest rates again! What's that Jim? It's not my fault! It's overseas conflicts that are keeping rates higher than we'd like but we know Australians are hurting! So we're cutting the fuel excise for the next three months! Ok he won't say that last bit but I bet he says it's not his fault!

The Oscars yesterday were I thought great especially with the legendary Barbara Streisand coming out to sing part of the song the way we were. The woman herself showed why a legend is a legend and it was a very touching moment in honour of her friend the equally legendary Robert Redford.

And finally when Fat Tony and Mick Gatto catch up for lunch, where do they go? The Flower Drum. The home of the long lunch, the business deal, the criminal underworld, the flashy and those who just want to be seen where else would the last survivors of the gang land war go?! It's kind of fitting that Mokbel and Gatto broke fortune cookies at the Flower Drum with so many of their fallen comrades having eaten there, but what we'd really like to know is what the fortune cookies said for them...

Have a great day to all!



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# THE OSCARS IN 2026

As much as I'd like to slot those who still made political statements at this year's Oscar's I'm not going there and what I'm going to say is I thought they were great. Some very deserving people won, some undeserving people didn't and it wasn't a toxic mess of politics, hate, trans rights, Me Too, war and racism. The Oscar's even showed that they cared about creativity and quite rightly slotted the white suited ponce Timothy Chalamet for his comments about opera and ballet. The appearance of the thought retired Misty Copeland in the Sinners scene was another middle finger at little Tim.

Apart from the pointed criticism of Chalamet the Oscars hosted by Conan O'Brien were a reminder that movies still matter. That being creative matters, that story telling matters, that performances of note need to be acknowledgment and that at its core the creative arts don't recognise gender, colour, race or religion, they are one industry that supports and respects everyone that is part of it.

Yeah ok there was the glitz and the glamour and the absence of some Hollywood megastars but it was almost like there was a shift to a new guard. Micheal B Jordan as best actor, Autumn Durald Arkapaw as best cinematographer, Ryan Coogler for best original screenplay, Paul Thomas Anderson for best adapted screenplay, Paul Thomas Anderson for best director and Jessie Buckley for best actress...

The Oscar's are Hollywood's night of nights and while a great portion of Hollywood is still utterly delusional about how the real world works the 2026 Oscars were welcome relief. A relief from the virtue signalling crap we have been subjected to in recent times and a relief that some of the most famous and influential people in the world reminded us all that creativity still really matters.

# TOO WOKE AND BROKE TO END THE TOBACCO WARS

Victoria's so-called tobacco wars have become one of the most visible examples of a government losing control of the consequences of its own policy. In recent years, Melbourne suburbs have seen a surge in illegal tobacco shops, firebombings and organised crime activity linked to the booming black-market cigarette trade. The Victorian Government's response has largely been to promise crackdowns and to close illegal retailers. But shutting down shops is like trimming the branches while the roots keep growing underground.

The problem is economic before it is criminal. Australia now has some of the highest tobacco taxes in the world, with the federal tobacco excise pushing the price of a pack of cigarettes to eye-watering levels. When legal cigarettes become unaffordable, a black market inevitably fills the gap. Criminal networks move in, supply cheap imported tobacco, and suddenly an underground industry worth billions appears almost overnight.

Closing illegal stores might make good press conferences, but it barely dents the demand that created the market in the first place. Another shop opens, another supply chain appears, and the cycle continues. Enforcement becomes a game of whack-a-mole.

Critics increasingly describe the situation as the product of a "woke and broke" policy mindset: governments eager to moralise about smoking while ignoring the economic incentives they themselves created. High taxes may have been designed to discourage smoking, but they have also created an irresistible opportunity for organised crime.

If Victoria genuinely wants to weaken the illegal tobacco trade, the uncomfortable solution is obvious. Reduce the tobacco excise, narrow the price gap, and remove the profit motive that fuels the black market.

# PRESSURE WITHOUT FEAR

Pressure is the hidden curriculum of hospitality. Anyone who has spent time in a serious kitchen knows that service is not a gentle classroom; it is heat, noise, time limits and the expectation that things must be right the first time. Orders pile up, tickets print endlessly and mistakes cost money and reputation. In that environment young cooks learn something that no lecture can teach: composure. They learn how to move faster than they thought possible, how to stay calm when the room feels like it is closing in, and how to deliver under scrutiny.

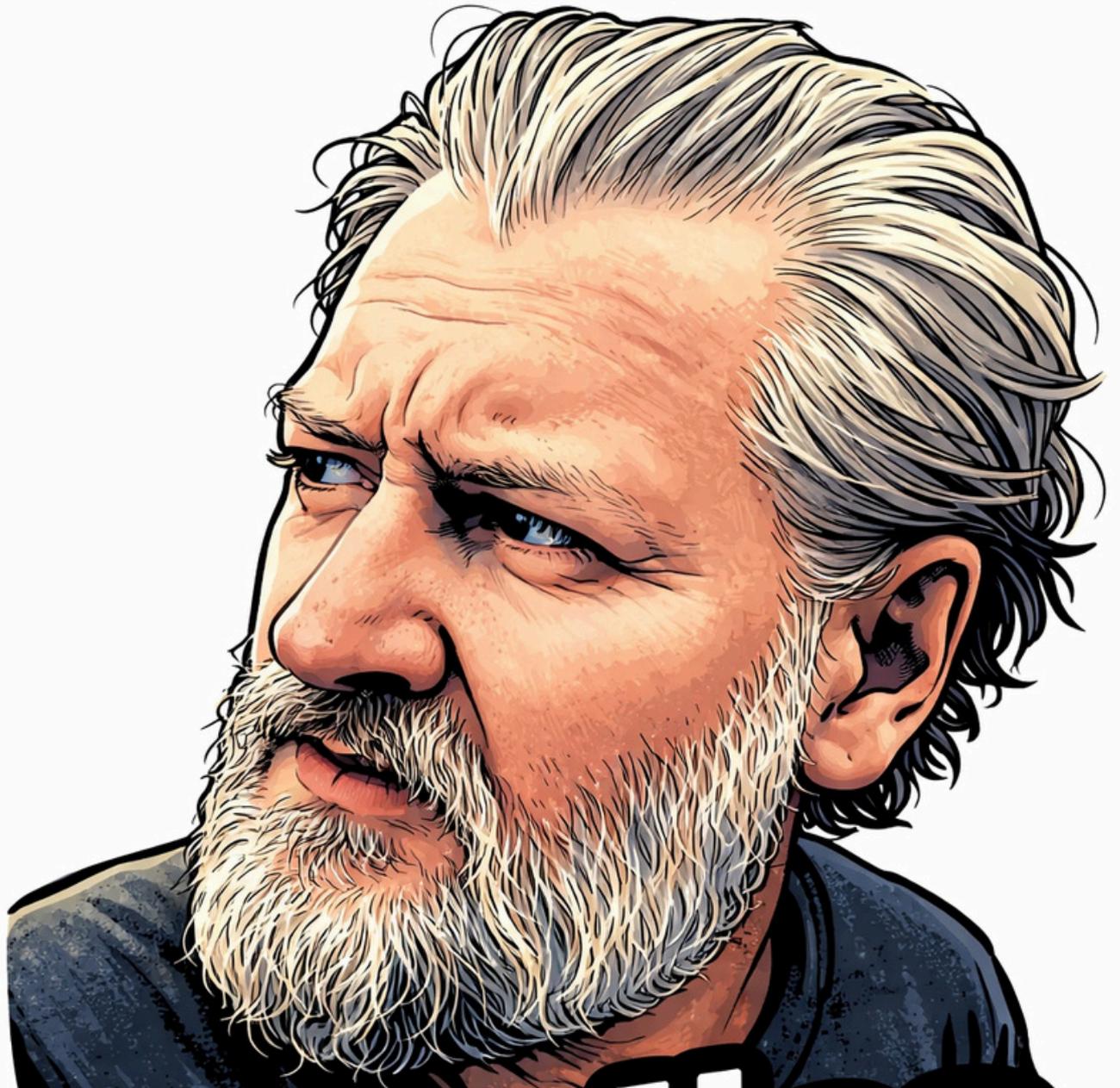
The recent stepping down of René Redzepi from Noma has reopened the debate about pressure in elite kitchens. Redzepi built one of the world's most influential restaurants, but the stories of relentless standards and intensity also sparked criticism. Few people would argue that every kitchen should run at those extremes, yet the reaction risks swinging too far the other way.

Pressure, handled properly, is a teacher. Young people entering hospitality—or any profession—have to discover what it feels like when expectations are real and consequences matter. If mentors are no longer allowed to be demanding, and if every uncomfortable moment is removed, where does resilience come from? Kitchens once provided that training ground. The challenge now is to teach toughness without cruelty, urgency without humiliation, and standards without fear.



It's not my  
fault!

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