

Expecting truth from Shorten is a fool's game

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Bill Shorten is bidding to be prime minister but perhaps he has been seduced by the opinion polls because he has forgotten a golden rule of life and politics and sport.

If you don't do the homework, you have no hope of passing the exam. At the end of the first full week, Shorten has to be given a massive F for fail.

You mean to say that a potential prime minister announces a policy about electric cars and he does not know how long it takes to charge the battery but pretends to know and finishes up about eight hours out.

Then in his budget reply speech he played the emotional card Labor do so well — cancer treatment would be free. Except it is now clear if that policy were implemented, it would cost \$6 billion more than Mr Shorten offered.

Never mind, Labor will subsidise MRI scans. How much will that cost? Don't know. They don't know how many MRI machines there are in the country.

Stand negative gearing on its head. Why? Well only 7 per cent of those investing in housing, and negatively gearing, are investing in new homes. So the negative gearing tax breaks don't assist the building of new housing stock.

Sounds OK. Except the Bureau of Statistics entered the field of play. They said there was no such figure. Yet Chris Bowen had said in January: "The most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics data shows 93 per cent of new investment loans go to people purchasing existing housing stock."

Not a bad mistake. A 93 per cent mistake.

Bowen and his leader have said for months, unapologetically, that Labor would be raising \$200bn in extra taxes.

Remember he said if you don't like it, don't vote for us.

A massive hand in our pockets. Except that Treasury in the first week of the election said the figure was \$387bn.

No wonder by week's end, with the Labor Party swimming in mistakes and made-up figures, they deleted a whole heap of detail about tax from their website.

There were previously almost 100 paragraphs with charts and diagrams explaining their housing policy and negative gearing. Well, the Bureau of Statistics blew them out of the water so approximately 90 policy paragraphs were deleted.

Signature policies. But hang on. You cannot make this stuff up. We are only in the first week.

Shorten said there would be no new taxes on superannuation.

Not bad except Labor has already announced a \$34bn tax on super. So Labor have scrapped their superannuation tax change policy from their online manifesto.

And what about that brave young Network Ten reporter Jonathan Lea, who sought to ask Shorten a few questions on how much Labor's climate change policy would cost the economy. He asked over and over again. No answer. Couldn't answer.

The one thing Shorten cannot abide is a question on the economy. He won't front radio or television programs that ask the tough questions.

But back to the question about energy costs. Presumably Shorten thought he was playing a trump card when he argued that the report on which his climate change policies were based was authored by Australian National University's Warwick McKibbin.

Except Professor McKibbin said he was surprised Labor had not spoken to him despite arguing they were relying on his report.

McKibbin soon smacked Shorten down, being quoted as saying his climate change policy would cost the economy at least \$60bn more than the Coalition by 2030.

Now this is a climate change policy according to Labor, based on carbon dioxide being evil. But when I asked Labor deputy leader Tanya Plibersek how much carbon dioxide was in the atmosphere, she was honest enough to say she did not know. On most policy issues, they do not seem to know.

Expect the voter to say if you don't know, we vote no.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/commentary/expecting-truth-from-shorten-is-a-fools-game/news-story/2bc6cf4b912291029f7465c5606a26b3>