

Morrison at his best taking fight to Shorten

Dennis Shanahan, Political Editor, 11:00PM November 28, 2018

The full tragedy for the Coalition of the “blue on blue” damage being done to Scott Morrison and the government from Liberal infighting was apparent as the Prime Minister fought yesterday to restore authority and political - momentum before flying to Argentina.

In parliament yesterday, Morrison was the clearest he has been on linking together the strong economy, provision of services, distrust of Bill Shorten, Labor’s budget failures, the ALP’s tax plans and contentious carbon emissions targets.

Trying to regain the political momentum offered by a first-in-a-decade budget surplus, which had been negated on Tuesday by the desertion from the Liberal Party of Victorian MP Julia Banks, Morrison pushed back on the economy and the Opposition Leader’s character.

A blissful period of soaring revenues, light-touch regulation and a rocketing stock price looks about to end at Afterpay.

Reflecting more work being done in his office on economic issues and political strategy, Morrison freshened his lines on budgetary success underpinning the delivery of services such as lifesaving medicines, hospitals and schools, and started to come to grips with Labor’s faux adoption of his own national energy guarantee.

Declaring that you “can never believe anything this bloke (Shorten) says”, Morrison recited Labor’s “tricky and shifty” claims to have delivered budget surpluses, introduction of a carbon tax and lack of funding for a log of vital drugs. “He thinks he can just walk into the job of prime minister without explaining to the Australian people why he wants to take a sledge hammer to the Australian economy,” Morrison said.

He was even able to get a handle on Labor’s ploy of adopting the NEG, seizing on the basic contradiction within Labor’s policy of an emissions reduction target of 45 per cent — almost double the Coalition’s target in the NEG.

Labor’s adoption of the NEG was “rank opportunism” since Shorten had described the Coalition policy as a Frankenstein monster, ignored the 45 per

cent target and would use it as a “Trojan horse” to introduce a carbon tax, Morrison declared.

Contrasting with the Coalition’s return to budget surplus, Morrison, supported by Josh Frydenberg, said Labor’s record showed it “can’t manage an economy” and “can’t run a budget”.

Morrison’s clear message was that the Coalition’s economic management was delivering, Labor’s had failed in the past, Shorten couldn’t be trusted, and promises of delivering more services depended on budget success.