

Labour has to create the agenda - not play on the Tory'...

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I was depressed by Ed Miliband on Marr yesterday. He said that every spending commitment will be costed with indication of where the cash would come from.

That's ludicrous: the Tories are borrowing record amounts. Why didn't he say so? And why didn't he say we'll only get out of this mess when we borrow to invest as it's the only possible avenue left to us now?

Balls is as bad: [as the Guardian notes](#):

The shadow chancellor, Ed Balls, will unveil plans on Monday to stimulate the economy by using a £3bn windfall from the sale of the 4G mobile phone spectrum to build 100,000 affordable homes, rather than to reduce debt, should Labour win the next election.

That's just so wholly unnecessary: just say it's being paid for by borrowing. It will be, after all. And be honest about it and say the time has come not to borrow to keep people out of work - which is the Tory plan - but to borrow to put people into work - which should be the Labour plan. And then trust that people can tell the difference. It's not hard, but whilst the Labour Party leadership continues to insist playing on the Tory playing field they're going to carry on making these mistakes.

The country deserves better. As the [Guardian leader](#) says this morning:

On many of the big policy issues — the economy, welfare, education, industry — where large strategic choices need to be clarified well before any election, Labour policy is still at best ambiguous and at worst inadequate. Labour is a highly effective opposition party. It must now prove it can again be an effective government party too. That is why Labour must be judged by high standards this week.

Or as [Larry Elliott says](#):

The party conference is the start of a crucial few months for Labour. Until now it has been able to think and act like an opposition. To win, it now has to start thinking and

acting like a government in waiting.

Or as Neal Lawson [says in the New Statesman](#):

The combination of financialisation and consumerisation destroyed the salience of class politics. Without a homogenous, organised and disciplined working class base Labour has become increasingly lost. It will stay lost until it finds or, better still, creates a new moral politics, new constituencies of interest and finally accepts that it's no longer 1945. The world has moved on and has become more complex and pluralistic. Against the backdrop of the biggest crisis capitalism has ever suffered, Labour just looks tired.

Of course there are those who think otherwise but they're mainly on the neoliberal wing of Labour. No one, including the electorate is in the least impressed by them: they're exactly why people don;t vote any more.

Labour has to move: it has to show it knows what it's for. It has to stop playing to the Tory tune. It has to therefore leave Blair behind. It has to be confident. It has to sell the real economics this country needs.

Or it's useless.