

Washington Times

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The [Center for Freedom and Prosperity](#) are having a lovely time in the US at the moment, so they think at my expense. In fact, they've got so excited they managed to get a whole article dedicated largely to how despicable a person I am in the [Washington Times](#) yesterday.

It's all very mad. I mean that quite literally. Let's deal with some facts first. According to the Washington Times the TJN:

- * *Promotes higher taxes*, but the truth is we never have. We do ask people to pay their taxes. That's only more if you're avoiding or evading. Perhaps the American Right don't like law abiding citizens, but we do.
- * *Is asking low tax governments, who are not corrupt to raise tax levels to those charged by high tax, corrupt governments*. Actually, on this issue the [Transparency International Corruption Perception Index](#) is reliable and it shows an almost inverse correlation. Low tax governments are the most corrupt, high tax governments the least corrupt, so the Center and its friends are simply wrong;
- * *Don't want to allow "people who live under high tax, corrupt and incompetent governments to move their assets to low tax, uncorrupt jurisdictions that will protect them"*. That's right. we don't. Because moving assets in that way usually involves fraud, always undermines the state, and depends for success upon secrecy which is a sure hallmark of corruption. Since this result cannot be achieved without abuse, I presume these organisations do in fact promote or at least defend the right to abuse tax law, something which the UK equivalent Institute of Economic Affairs has certainly done in its publications.
- * *Insist "that people pay taxes on illusory gains caused by government induced inflation"*. No we don't. We do believe in capital gains taxes firstly because an income tax is always ineffective without one, second because most gains are not illusory, they're real and thirdly it's a fact that in either case they provide the means to support a lifestyle which is only differentiated from income subject by tax by not resulting from labour expended, which is no reason to not tax. But, of course the American Right does not want rich people to have to work for a living. That would be too much to ask.

* "demand that people who work longer and harder pay not just more taxes, but also higher tax rates than the lazy and less competent." Which can only be described as the writings of a person who has lost touch with reality, because this claim has no relationship to the truth.

There are other claims:

- * That we're financed by unions;
- * Are supported by Fabian socialists;
- * And that we're backed by "indirectly by unaccountable international organisations that directly benefit from big governments with high tax policies yet oppose personal privacy of private citizens."

So let's unscramble those. We have never had union money. So that's just wrong. Mind you, we would accept it. We have common cause on some issues and are happy about that. It's a simple fact that ordinary people do need protection from capital on occasion. Unions have done (but not always) a good job for ordinary working people whose lives would be immeasurably worse but for them. But the American Right does not care about ordinary people so thinks a union association is an insult. We don't.

And no doubt there are Fabians and socialists who support us. Good. Such people are also to be found in the current UK government, which most think decidedly right-wing. I really can't get worried about this, and nor would most sane people.

As for those organisations that are claimed to back us let me name them since the Center does not and address their roles. Personally I think the existence of the UN a massive benefit to the world, the EU on balance of benefit (but in need of reform) and the OECD is a decidedly pro-market force. Likewise the IMF, for which I believe the the Center also think I act. Now, I leave it to the reader to decide, but in the eyes of most association with such organisations (and I stress, neither the TJN or I have any formal or monetary links with any of them at all, but admit to talking to them all) would be seen as a sign of good standing. So perhaps this says somewhat more about those who work and write for the Center, the [Heritage Foundation](#), the [Cato Institute](#) and all their spin-offs.

In fact, that this story was published in the Washington Times says most that needs to be said. [The Washington Times](#) is owned by the [Unification Church](#), headed by [Sun Myung Moon](#), who has given them their popular name - 'the Moonies'. I'll be unambiguous. These people are generally considered abnormal. There's more to it than that though. [Moon is a tax fraudster](#). He spent 13 months in prison for tax evasion. Despite which he has spent more than \$3 billion supporting the paper which would otherwise be uneconomic.

Now, if Dan Mitchell and all his fellow right wing crackpot economists really believed in the market economics they espouse they'd know that if something loses \$3 billion

dollars over 20 years there is no demand for it, that it is economically non-viable and that the only rational response is to shut it as the opinions it offers are unacceptable to the market. But mysteriously their market credentials fail them when it comes to self-assessment of their favourite (by far) medium for publishing what they call scholarly output (which claim lacks any such credibility since they appear to do no research to support their views, and seemingly know nothing about economic theory).

So, why was it that I refused to debate with Dan Mitchell on his terms? It had nothing to do with cowardice. I'm confident he'd lose, as Alvin Rabushka did when he debated with me last year. No, it's just that I really don't like people who peddle misinformation and whose chosen mechanism to do so is funded by a convicted tax fraudster. That's not the company reputable people like to keep.

But, and as Mitchell and those who wrote this article actually know I have not in any event refused a debate, as I've already explained on [this site](#). I simply challenged Mitchell to find someone reputable to host it. I note that he's not tried but is simply slinging mud instead. I guess he's failed therefore. I won't accuse him of cowardice. But I will accuse him and his colleagues of wilfully misrepresenting the truth, because they have, on this and just about every other issue on which they write. I suspect you can see why I have no desire to afford them the luxury of credible publicity which association which TJN might provide them. They don't deserve it.