

Keep me out of this

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I appeared in unexpected places this weekend: in the [Independent](#) talking about tax returns (yes, I still do some for selected clients — but please don't ask me to help — the list has been closed for a long time) and in the [Sunday Times](#) in a feature in which it claims the BBC is requiring top personalities to provide their services through companies.

I was called about this feature by the Sunday Times and declined to take further part — partly because, as I suspected the feature is being used by the Murdoch press as part of its vendetta against the BBC, of which I wholeheartedly do not approve. There were other reasons. First, in the one case that was detailed to me it sounded as if IR35 requirements were being fully met — payment out of the service company after a level of costs which sounded like agents fees and routine expenses, was being made under PAYE. The service company sounded to me like an arrangement to ensure agent's fees were being paid out of taxed income and little more — certainly tax was not being deferred in this case as a corporation tax loss was recorded and national insurance was being paid. Second, it was not clear from what else I heard that the service companies were all for BBC source income. So I would not comment further.

I am adamant small company tax should not be abused. I have written on this and [presented alternative proposals](#) for taxing small companies in the UK which I think are the most credible alternative yet presented.

But I am also absolutely sure Murdoch is wrong to target the BBC and I am even more sure the Tories are wrong to support him.

So please keep me out of this one.