

Call for inquiry into use of CS gas on UK Uncut protest...

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The [following letter is in the Guardian this morning](#):

At a time when public service cuts are starting to bite, campaigners from [UK Uncut](#) were on Sunday once again taking direct action on our high streets ([Police use CS spray on tax protesters](#), 31 January). They were targeting Boots, which has moved to Switzerland, allowing the company to avoid paying millions in tax. Outside the Oxford Street branch of Boots, a [police](#) officer, without warning, used CS spray against demonstrators, three of whom were taken to hospital. When tax injustice enjoyed by the rich is combined so starkly with cuts in vital public services for the poor, and the government refuses to listen or act, people have the moral and legal right to protest.

The state is the collective democratic vehicle to serve the interests of all people of this country. And when acting through the police force, it has to be incredibly careful about not being perceived to be acting politically — to serve the interests of the rich against the poor.

We deplore the use of such aggressive policing techniques and call for a public inquiry to investigate and report on the use of CS spray against protesters on Sunday. They should also provide guidance on how they plan to police the many, widespread and popular protests that are bound to feature across society in the months and years to come.

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John Christensen *Tax Justice Network*

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