

UK UnCut and Dave Hartnett

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I think it quite appropriate to reproduce the following press release from UK UnCut. The sentiment is widely shared, showing how in touch these people are:

*Campers at Occupy London and activists from direct action group UK Uncut will join forces to descend upon the head office of Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) on the afternoon of **Monday 24th October** to demand the resignation of HMRC boss Dave Hartnett [1].*

Protesters- outraged at Hartnett's role in approving secret sweetheart deals to let mega-rich corporations off billions in tax- will gather at the Occupy LSX camp at St. Paul's Cathedral at 12 noon before marching on HMRC's head office at Whitehall in an attempt to reach Hartnett's office.

Hartnett was, last week, again dragged in front of parliament's Public Accounts Committee to answer questions on dodgy deals with Vodafone and Goldman Sachs that cost the taxpayer up to £6bn and £10m respectively [2]. MPs on the committee accused Hartnett of abusing his position to "cover up his own mistakes".

A survey last year found that Hartnett was Whitehall's most 'wined and dined' civil servant, treated by corporations 107 times in 3 years to top a survey of 172 senior civil servants [3]. Conservative MPs and commentators from across the political spectrum have joined the call for Hartnett to resign [4] [5] [6].

Occupy London supporter Kyshia Davey said: "HMRC has just announced it will be going after 146,000 pensioners to demand hundreds of pounds from them following a tax code cock-up. Meanwhile, its boss is striking secret deals with opulent corporations to let them off billions of pounds in tax. Hartnett is fatally undermining public confidence in the UK's tax system at a time of austerity and he must resign immediately."

UK Uncut activist Sam Gilbert added: "Whilst 25,000 rank-and-file staff at HMRC have been fired, leaving the organisation almost incapable of functioning, Hartnett has been carving out a career as the most 'wined and dined' civil servant in Whitehall. The money from Vodafone's £6bn tax dodge alone could have prevented all of the cuts in public services over the past year."

[1] <http://www.ukuncut.org.uk/blog/time-to-resign>

[2] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/banksandfinance/8832473/Hartnett-pledges-to-answer-questions-on-odd-tax-deals.html>

[3] <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/7833886/Whitehalls-most-wined-and-dined-civil-servant-is-HMRCs-Dave-Hartnett.html>

[4] http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2011/oct/23/tax-avoidance-goldman-dave-hartnett?CMP=tw_t_iph

[5] <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-2051131/The-man-taxes-belief-fair-play.html?ito>

[6] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/oct/23/tax-dodging-goldman-sachs-greece?newsfeed=true>