

A strong tax system is the basis for a strong economy

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The latest tax scandal is part of an ongoing trend. MP's were corrupted by expenses, journalism by hacking, bankers by greed. Now the tax system is being corrupted by politicians and civil servants who have lost faith in the right, and even the duty of the state to tax.

The ramifications are enormous in each case. We've lost faith in politics, the press and finance. If we lose faith in the justice of the tax system the consequences are even bigger though. Once we fail to collect tax - and as my work on the tax gap, often dismissed by those very same politicians now seen to be signing off dodgy tax deals with their civil servants, has shown, we fail to collect at least £95 billion a year - then we undermine government itself and its ability to supply the essential services our society needs.

But it's more than that: failure to collect tax properly undermines trust and creates level playing fields between the honest and dishonest. Then we destroy the basis for honest business and in turn for investment, job creation, growth and prosperity.

A sound economy requires a strong, and enforced, tax system.

The party that embraces that is pro-business, pro-growth and pro-fairness.

Whatever it's past Labour has to embrace this now.