

A fair tax commission?

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From the [Guardian's letters page this morning](#):

The notion that bankers will be shamed by the latest revelations about Barclays' tax avoidance plans is for the birds ([The best medicine for cosy elites? A dose of shame](#), 28 February). "Nudge" theory is no substitute for regulation, and Treasury steps to close certain tax loopholes will have been choreographed with the City.

It's abundantly clear from recent statements made by David Gauke, the exchequer secretary, that the government continues to see the relationship with big business as one based on "trust" and "constructive co-operation". In other words, low-hanging fruit such as small businesses will continue to be targeted by HMRC, so-called benefit scroungers will continue to be unfairly demonised as a distraction, and the rich will continue to pay tax on a largely voluntary basis.

Surely it's time for Labour and others on the left to set up a Fair Tax Commission to examine the legitimacy of a more progressive tax system which shifts the burden to taxation of wealth, land and the grossly overinflated incomes which have become the hallmark of 21st-century capitalism; and which considers serious steps to tackle tax avoidance and evasion which is estimated to cost the exchequer more than £100bn every year.

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If I am honest, I hope to be doing much of the work described this year. I'd warmly welcome Labour, and others, involvement.

If we are to retain, and rebuild, our democratic system of government then such a task is vital. Tax cheating is destroying our freedoms, our markets, our prosperity and our futures right now.

I think others will join in. The big question is, will Labour?

And the Lib Dems?

And if the Tories will not, why not?