I do hope HMRC are called before parliament to explain ...

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HMRC's attack on my work on the tax gap is almost amusing in some ways.

Amongst their claims is one that says total tax avoidance in 2009-10 was just £5 billion.

And yet when the 50p tax rate was introduced they reckoned (page 39) there was more than £6 billion of tax avoidance in 2009-10 as a result of shifting in the timing of dividends for that one reason alone.

So, just to make this clear, in 2009-10, the year for which their latest tax gap estimate for tax avoidance was prepared, they said in September 2011 there was just £5 billion of tax avoidance in all (making up part of the total tax gap in their estimate of £35 billion) and yet by March 2012 they were admitting tax avoidance for just one reason in that year exceeded £6 billion. And yet despite that they are still telling parliament their estimate of the tax gap is better than mine.

Now that's an interesting idea, not least because it would require there to be negative tax avoidance for all other purposes and taxes if their claim was to be true.

Alternatively, and as is glaringly obvious, their claim is wildly inaccurate.

Candidly, how they have the nerve to present such misinformation is hard to determine. I hope they get called in to defend such wilful misrepresentations to Parliament, because they should be.