

# Yesterday in parliament: tax avoidance and evasion

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One of the frustrating things about sitting in the House of Commons watching a debate is you're not allowed a computer in the public gallery. The members are below you, but the public aren't. It's another stupid rule to be overturned in the place, but it meant that I could not comment yesterday on the debate on tax avoidance and evasion that took place in the Commons yesterday as I did sit and watch it.

Let me be honest: there were some exceptionally dull speeches yesterday, a number of them (Nigel Mills standing out in this respect, closely followed by Steve Barker and Stephen Williams) by relatively new members, recently ex the tax and related professions and remarkably uninformed despite that. But there were definite moments of interest and I'm not going to apologise for highlighting them this morning in a number of blogs.

However, I should start with a note of thanks to [Michael Meacher MP](#). He secured this debate. It did, of course, happen the day before he presents the second reading of the [General Anti-Tax Avoidance Principle Bill](#) that I have written for him, which did feature in debate. He also [kindly said of me during the debate](#), referring to that Bill:

*It was prepared and drafted by Richard Murphy, one of the founding members of the Tax Justice Network and, I can say without any exaggeration, one of the country's leading tax accountants.*

It is fair to say that not everyone agrees.