

Who is to say what is fair rate of tax?

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Fiona McTaggart MP said in a debate on Google's tax affairs on Channel 4 on Tuesday that she expected companies to pay their fair share of tax.

[Madsen Pirie](#) of the Adam Smith Institute immediately jumped on her argument.

"Who is to say what's a fair rate of tax?" he demanded (or words to that effect).

Fiona's response was spot on. "Parliament" she replied.

Quite so. It's called democracy Madsen. And it sets the rules, and the law.

I suspect Madsen found this quite shocking. He was there, of course, to defend Google's use of tax havens to undermine the contribution it makes to the UK economy, which in the process is an act of contempt for UK law and so UK democracy. But in doing so all he confirmed was that the far-right of economics in the UK holds democracy in contempt. The fact that it never even occurred to him that parliament sets the rules on tax is sure indication of that. And the whole tax haven world is premised on the same idea, which is that these places can be used to launch an assault on the democracy of the UK and other countries.

Parliament sets fair tax rates in the UK.

Tax havens are used to undermine them. But don't for a minute doubt that those who use them reveal their contempt for democracy by doing so.