

# Funding the Future

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Jesse Drucker from Bloomberg is the man who turned Google's tax affairs into a global issue, with a little help from me. [Now he's at it again, pointing out all the deficiencies](#) in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development - the organisation charged with putting right the problems its rules on international tax have created (a process a bit like asking a horse meat abattoir to sort out the problem of contamination in the meat supply chain). As he puts it:

*Headquartered in a former Rothschild chateau in an affluent Parisian neighborhood, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development is best known for earnest conferences on economic and social policy.*

*With little outside attention, it also plays a pivotal role enabling global corporations such as Google, Hewlett-Packard Co. and Amazon to dodge taxes by shifting profits into offshore subsidiaries, costing the U.S. and Europe more than \$100 billion a year.*

And as he notes:

*OECD officials "have been digging themselves deeper and deeper into a hole by blindly pursuing a mistaken approach that allows multinationals to avoid taxes," said [Sol Picciotto](#), an emeritus professor of law at Lancaster University in the U.K.*

Sol is right, but then we're both senior advisers to the Tax Justice Network.

At the heart of the issue is a simple suggestion that Drucker makes, which is that the OECD is far, far too close to big business, and operates far too many revolving doors, to be objective or even serious about its work. Drucker catalogues some such issues; I am sure there are more. And Drucker rightly points out that the perfect personification of the problem is to be found in the person of the Rev Will Morris, [about whom I have written before](#). Rev Morris is a curate at St Martin's in the Fields, London - noted for its work on poverty. He's also arch tax lobbyist for GE - described by Drucker, quoting the OECD, as "known as being aggressive in tax planning". And he heads the CBI's tax committee as well as promoting tax haven usage and opposing country by country reporting. Despite all of which [last November it was reported](#):

*HMRC has given a gong to the director of global tax policy at General Electric (GE), the*

*US's largest corporation, for helping it run the tax system in Britain - despite the company's prolific tax avoidance record in America.*

Morris is a smooth operator, but then those who want to capture the state are. And those who want to capture the OECD sponsor its conferences, as Drucker notes the corporate world is all too keen to do.

And all the time the rich get richer, abuse continues, and the rest get poorer. And there's no coincidence in that.