

It's time for parliament to get serious about defending...

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:37 pm

As the [Mail notes this morning](#):

The boss of Google has declared himself 'perplexed' by public anger at the internet giant's meagre UK tax contribution.

Eric Schmidt, Google's executive chairman, hit back after politicians criticised the California-based company for generating billions of pounds from its UK arm, but giving precious little back in taxes.

Google paid £10million in UK corporation tax between 2006 and 2011, despite pulling in revenues of £11.9billion.

But Mr Schmidt said the company had done what it was 'legally required' to do and would not pay a penny more than the demanded.

I regard this as disingenuous. Google is saying it pays what is legally due and will pay no more. But as I am quoted saying in the article:

Tax expert Richard Murphy, of the Tax Justice Network, said Mr Schmidt wasn't abiding by the law, but simply side-stepping it by routing UK sales through Ireland, where taxes are lower.

'Let's be clear, he's actually not paying the right amount of tax, he's getting round the law. If we change it, he'll try to get around that law,' said Mr Murphy.

He said Mr Schmidt's comments proved that Britain needs a General Anti Avoidance Rule, which could be applied to any attempt to lower tax bills artificially.

'That would have undoubtedly caught their tax avoidance and then Eric Schmidt would have to comply with UK law,' said Mr Murphy.

That's one solution, and I called, with Margaret Hodge for another:

Mr Murphy agreed that a special committee should be set up to look solely at tax.

'HM Revenue & Customs doesn't have a minister responsible for it or a committee to review it and yet it's at the centre of British politics,' he said.

'It's time parliament took tax seriously and was given the funds to investigate just what's going on.'

Big business abuse has to be taken seriously and parliament has to evidence that, now, before the takeover of our tax authority by big business is complete and democracy is finally at real risk.