

France takes on Amazon. It's time we did too

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As the [FT reports this morning](#):

France's parliament has passed a law preventing internet booksellers from offering free delivery to customers, in an attempt to protect the country's struggling bookshops from the growing dominance of US online retailer [Amazon](#).

On Thursday, Aurélie Filippetti, the culture minister who originally proposed the move, [denounced Amazon for its alleged "strategy of dumping"](#), claiming that the company used offers of free delivery to get around French laws controlling the price of books.

Speaking during a debate in the National Assembly, she said: "Once they are in a dominant position and have wiped out our network of bookshops, it is a strong bet that they will raise their delivery charges."

She has this right, of course. Amazon is not acting in the interests of the market. Nor is it acting in the interests of the consumer. It is a monopolist using its capital to crush its competitors to then create the opportunity for exploitation.

I get intensely annoyed (you may have noticed) at those who support companies like Amazon because 'profit maximisation pays' and 'free markets must be allowed to operate'.

Such claims are deliberate distortions of the truth. They're [part of the feudal myth](#). They're about ensuring exploitation can continue.

It's the French who are standing up for free markets here. And as I've argued, often, tax justice is in fact one of the strongest pro-market campaigns there is on this basis. It's the anti-marketeers on the neo-feudal right who deny this. It's a paradox that needs to be noted, often.