

Funding the Future

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I [posted an audio blog this morning](#) explaining why and how Amazon, amongst other companies, avoid tax, making quite clear what the processes involved are and that despite avoiding they might still on occasion pay tax, which is blatantly obviously true.

In response Tim Worstall [has published a blog on Forbes under the title](#)

Britain's Leading Tax Expert Insists That Amazon Is Not Avoiding UK Tax

In it he says:

After many years of insisting exactly the opposite Britain's leading tax expert, Richard Murphy, today announced that Amazon does not in fact avoid (and most certainly does not evade) UK corporation tax. He now actually agrees with me, that in the most recent year we have the numbers for Amazon overpaid UK corporation tax.

Now I have never said Amazon has evaded tax, so that is not news. As for the rest, it's just straightforwardly untrue and a total misrepresentation of anything I have said both today and previously, all of which I stand by. Forbes really should take care when publishing blatant misrepresentations of the truth, including (but not limited to) the suggestion that I am the UK's leading tax expert, which I simply do not and never would remotely agree with.

I can assure you that Tim Worstall will never appear anywhere on this blog again. Not only is he a lousy economist he simply cannot tell the truth. In combination that is enough to resolve the issue for good.

Addition at 7am on 15 July:

The following exchange in the comments section may elaborate this issue:

Andrew Jackson:

In your audio blog, you did indeed say that they are paying the right amount of tax at the moment — indeed, more than one might expect. The issue you mentioned there was that you consider that they have set up structures such that they will pay too little

in the future.

I can see how you get to that conclusion, but to say that a company is a tax avoider when it is not actually avoiding tax as yet — in essence, conflating “in my view there will be” with “there is now” — does seem to be a little bit premature.

My response:

Oh come on — that is a comment taken wholly out of context.

I suggested that because of what might be considered the fixed margin tax planning arrangement they are using for the long run they might, because of their current decision to reduce profit in a race for global domination in which tax avoidance plays a key part, have temporarily paid more pro rata tax in the UK than might be expected but that this did not in any way mean that they were not a tax avoider.

They have underpaid in the past.

It is likely they will again.

Saying they’re not now is as absurd as claiming that a person engaged in another form of abuse is not guilty of it because by chance they did not do it today.

For heaven’s sake; if your analytical abilities are as weak as this then you really are in trouble, desperate or just hopelessly inept.

The comment does not just apply to Andrew but all others who have apparently made similar comments elsewhere on the net.