

A new space for debating tax

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Jolyon Maugham, a tax barrister whose work I have given occasional mention to on this blog, [is seeking to open up his blog for a wider debate of tax policy](#) by bringing in a range of writers to add to the opinions he can offer.

As he has said on this decision in a blog [he published today](#):

I started writing my Waiting for Godot blog with the objective of enhancing public understanding of, and improving the quality of public and political debate around, tax. Hence, the Blog's title. I try to write thoughtful pieces, typically touching upon some tax issue in the public eye.

Jolyon's spot on with regard to the need for such informed debate and I welcome it, a fact he acknowledges by saying:

The tax community as a whole has been very supportive. With its assistance, this blog is frequently able to break stories across the tax technical and legal press. I am particularly grateful for the support of Richard Murphy, whose public position in the field is without parallel, and who has frequently directed his considerable following to blog posts featured here. Richard knows — for his support comes despite the fact that much of the analysis here he would disagree with — the value of the project and of high quality debate.

Jolyon's right: he and I disagree on many things for whilst he is a member of the Labour Party we are very clearly in different places on the left. But, and this is the key point, if this gives rise to serious, policy based discussion rather than crass analysis in support of the status quo or based on myth and not fact (all seen far too often in comments from supposed professionals who should know better on this blog, including today) then I'm very willing to take part, be shot down, take the bruises and then come back for more. That's how issues are resolved and matters properly taken forward.

My own first contribution is, I think, out tomorrow and made me think during the course of its writing. That's no bad thing. So, I'd like this policy Jolyon is promoting to work -

but it does rely very heavily on his ability to edit appropriately and to keep commentary to the straight and narrow, which by necessity means keeping the trolls at a distance.