

Reflections on yesterday

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Yesterday was fairly busy. As a result of Labour's non-dom announcement I don't think I have ever done more press interviews, and still it was quotes lifted from the blog that got in much of the media. The interviews were not all UK based either: the furthest away was in Hong Kong. Qatar featured as well.

The Guardian [got the message right](#):

For tax campaigner Richard Murphy, reforming the non-dom laws would be the single biggest contribution to tax justice in the UK.

"The significance of this cannot be overstated. For over a hundred years the UK has run a two-tier tax system."

For campaigners like Murphy, the non-dom laws are a pure tax haven device. By luring the world's super rich away from home, campaigners say the UK effectively has done for income tax what Luxembourg has done for corporation tax — deprived other countries of revenues in exchange for a small percentage of the profits.

Fundamentally, the desired change is about principle, not money.

It's shocking that so much of the media and so many politicians have no understanding of this. Principles don't matter, it seems.

Then there was Mark Littlewood of the Institute of Economic Affairs, with whom I debated on television, who claimed that the domicile law was legal and had been since 1799 so what was I worried about? I pointed out slavery was also legal in 1799 and that the law was a poor arbiter of morality. The time for reform has come, as it has on so many issues over the last decades where values now repugnant in modern society are swept away.

Money has no morals though. As the [Telegraph reported](#), there was a 'City backlash at Ed Miliband's non-dom pledge'. Tax havens always squeal when under threat.

But the [FT got the argument for the City right](#), if only they would follow its advice:

On the grounds of principle there is nothing for the City to defend here. [The Guardian might have reported that:](#)

This time though I am willing to believe it is different. And I also happen to believe that Labour committing to this might help it happen.

Principle's matter - and people respect them. The City may not like this but up and down the country the 99% will. And in a democracy they count. The time for change on this one has arrived.

It was a good day's work and I am pleased to support Labour on this issue because I think it's got it right.