

If George Osborne is committed to country-by-country re...

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There [was a debate in the Commons yesterday](#) on Google's tax affairs and what can be done to improve tax collection from multinational corporations.

I've read it. I have exchanged opinion on Twitter with Christopher Philps MP who seriously misrepresented what I said at the Treasury Committee on Tuesday. I'm grateful to others who quoted me appropriately.

But what really interested me about the debate was that Labour unambiguously supported the case for country-by-country reporting. And despite the claim made only days ago that [George Osborne was in favour of public country-by-country reporting](#) not a single Conservative said that, and nor did the government amendment to labour's motion, which was passed. On this issue that amendment said:

[T]he Government recognises the case for publishing country-by-country reports on a multilateral basis

So that, then, is a commitment to country-by-country reporting if everyone who objects to it agrees to change their mind. That's no commitment at all in other words: that's just noise that is meant to suggest one thing (support) whilst actually doing the opposite (standing on the side lines waiting for nothing to happen).

If this government is committed to holding multinational corporations to account it should say so.

Right now its actions speak loudest and they make clear that it really has no intention of making multinational corporations account on a country-by-country reporting basis.

That's a sorry day for us all. I look forward to a change of heart.