

Funding the Future

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The BBC seem to have decided that I am the person to argue for all tax returns being placed on public record as a consequence of my having very strongly supported this measure for MPs and members of the House of Lords. I did several broadcast interviews on the issue yesterday.

I note [the BBC report](#) on the comments made by Sir Alan Duncan on this issue in the House of Commons in which they noted that:

He warned that if the PM's critics were not careful, "we risk seeing a House of Commons which is stuffed full of low achievers, who hate enterprise, hate people who look after their own family and who know absolutely nothing about the outside world".

And

Mr Cameron said he was "grateful" for Sir Alan's support, before saying MPs should not be forced to publish their tax returns as it could discourage people from seeking election to Parliament.

As I said in a television interview for the BBC last evening, I think this suggestion is absurd. Politicians choose to put themselves in the public eye. They choose the resulting publicity. And they should accept the resulting obligation to be accountable. If they do not, then it is my very simple and straightforward suggestion that they are not the appropriate people to be making decisions on our behalf.

We do expect to be governed by people who accept responsibility for their actions. And we do expect them to tell us the truth. What is more, we do believe they should act without conflicts of interest. We have this expectation in business. We have it even when it comes down to the level of being a school governor. So why should we not expect our politicians to be accountable for the risks that their private financial affairs might create in the exercise of their judgement?

Alan Duncan is just wrong: he is revealing his commitment to the politics of jealousy. Those who are making this demand are revealing their commitment to the politics of accountability. The two are based upon very different sentiments, and deliver very

different outcomes, and we have a right to know who is committed to each.