

Philip Hammond's not a beacon of common sense except wh

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Philip Hammond appears to have ruled out the UK becoming a tax haven after Brexit [in an interview with Le Monde](#) today. As I have just commented to one journalist:

"What we are seeing is Philip Hammond setting himself apart from the more extreme Brexit thinking for the second time in a week.

It was not so long ago that Hammond was in Germany and was amongst those suggesting that the UK might use tax competition as a mechanism to challenge an uncooperative EU. It is now apparent that he has appreciated that all the Brexit odds are stacked in the EU's favour, that if the UK is to stay within the OECD framework of taxation there is very little it can do to effectively compete on tax, and that in a post-Brexit impoverished Britain he will need very penny of tax that he can get as Chancellor and is now singing a very different tune.

Brexit reality is hitting home to some at least in the Conservative Party. For Hammond at least it seems that taking back control is all about retaining any semblance of good order that he might still be able to muster."

I could have added:

"And there that good order will, despite that, be in desperately short supply."

It's a sign of the insanity in modern Tory politics that Hammond seems like a beacon of common sense when that's really not true except in comparison with all the rest.