

The Tories are still on the side of the tax cheats

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There was a debate in the Commons on the tax gap yesterday. Labour initiated it. John McDonnell led the attack for them. You [can read it all here](#).

The usual pattern followed. Labour stood up against tax cheating.

Labour and the SNP made it clear that the government underestimates the tax gap. My work was quoted.

Labour and others quoted extensively the work of the Tax Justice Network, Tax Justice UK (to whom I am an adviser) and Tax Watch as well.

The government claimed credit for the moves it had taken on automatic information exchange and country-by-country reporting, failing to note that those measures began in my work and that of the Tax Justice Network.

Steve Barclay, the Tory minister rolled out for the day, did his utmost to discredit the Tax Justice Network, without any referencing facts.

A Tory MP tried to do the same for me.

And what did the whole thing prove? Only one thing, I think, And that is that we can still rely on the Tories to always be on the side of the tax cheats, both philosophically and by denying the true scale of the problem that exists.

It's deeply depressing to have to note this, but despite all the evidence, and the fact that no progress on this issue would have been made without the work of those the Tories like to attack, they still fail to uphold decent tax systems.

No wonder many remain concerned that we are heading for being Singapore-on-Thames. The rhetoric used suggests that the fear is justified.