

People should think before promoting tax reforms

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The former Labour leader, Neil Kinnock, has suggested that Labour should follow up its imposition of VAT on private schools by now charging VAT on private medicine.

Kinnock proves by doing so just why those who do not know very much about tax sometimes make complete fools of themselves by making suggestions on tax reform.

It would be virtually impossible to reform VAT so that there was a charge on what Kinnock describes as private medicine without at the same time charging VAT on dentistry, or on glasses, or on things like chiropody, which I am aware that many older people rely upon, or osteopathy and some forms of physiotherapy, all of which are of importance to some people, and which the NHS rarely supplies.

At a time when Labour is very obviously intent on privatising the NHS, as it obviously is, to then suggest that VAT should be charged on healthcare really does not make sense, and it's almost certainly regressive in taxation terms.

Kinnock has recently supported a wealth tax, without having thought about what that really means, and he is now proposing another tax reform without again engaging his brain first. I am all in favour of tax reform to ensure that those with wealth make a proper contribution to our society, but I do seriously suggest that those doing so think about the consequences for others first. Kinnock is putting forward a plan to make life harder for many and to increase inequality. Is that what he really wants?