

The Labour Party has climbed onto the bandwagon of concern about tax avoidance by issuing what it calls a "[Challenge Paper](#)" which tells us that "*Labour believes addressing tax avoidance at both an individual and corporate level must be a priority. At home, this means making it plain to the Crown Dependencies that we will expect them to observe the letter and the spirit of the law and being prepared to legislate if necessary. Abroad it means leading on international action to crack down on practices that cause Britain to lose out.*

There is nothing there about the possibility of changing the system so that it was not vulnerable to avoidance in the first place. The paper is available for consultation until 28 February 2013, with submissions going to the "Stability and Prosperity Policy Commission" as they prepare a detailed policy document on the issue for publication in March 2013. But since Labour is, or should be, well aware of the possibilities that exist for reconstructing the tax system rather than tinkering with it, this gets things off to a rotten start.

I tried to register on line to contribute my bit but never succeeded in getting past the registration hurdles, as the website was programmed to accept only UK postcodes. That does not inspire confidence either, but if you can be bothered, [here is the link](#).