

## [Archbishop right to call out tax avoidance – Peter Dowd](#)

**Peter Dowd MP, Labour's Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury**, responding to comments from The Archbishop of Canterbury on tax avoidance:

“The Archbishop of Canterbury is right to call out shocking levels of tax avoidance by large multinationals based here in the UK. While this behaviour may not be illegal, it is certainly questionable that companies should choose to act in this way. It is the duty of our Government to ensure that our tax system is robust enough to resist such abuses by closing loopholes and holding companies to account.

“We are still waiting for the Tories to deliver any decisive action on making sure everyone pays their fair share. A Labour Government would act to close the UK's tax gap through our Tax Transparency and Enforcement Programme. The UK is strong enough to attract multinational businesses without tolerating convoluted avoidance schemes designed to avoid tax.”

Ends

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## [Comment on gender pay gap for special advisors – Jon Trickett](#)

**Jon Trickett MP, Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office**, commenting on the gender pay gap for special advisors, said:

“Theresa May promised a country that works for everyone, but is worsening gender inequality in her own backyard. Spads are personal political appointments made by or on behalf of the Prime Minister herself, so she cannot shake that her fingerprints are all over this injustice.

“These figures will be hard reading for women across the country who, at current rates, will have to wait for more than 100 years for the pay gap to close.”

Ends

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## [Theresa May breaks her promise on special advisers' pay](#)

**Theresa May breaks her promise on special advisers' pay as Downing Street continues David Cameron's legacy of lavish salaries for top aides**

- Theresa May has broken her own promise to introduce a salary cap of £72,000 on salaries for special advisers, as new figures reveal the Government employs 25 special advisers with salaries above £72,000.
- The combined salaries of all special advisers above the threshold set by May amounts to over £2.3m.
- The number of Special Advisers employed by the Government is up, with 88 employed as of December 2017, compared to the 83 listed in the December 2016 release.
- The new figures also reveal that seven Cabinet Ministers employ more special advisers than the maximum set out by the Ministerial Code.

**Jon Trickett MP, Labour's Shadow Minister for the Cabinet Office, said:**

"Theresa May's hypocrisy is galling. She promised a salary cap for special advisers but has instead rewarded political appointees with bumper pay deals. The public is paying for more special advisers and to make matters worse has had to pick up the tab for Theresa May's election failure, with a huge severance bill for outgoing advisers.

"These figures will be hard to take for millions of taxpayers who are struggling to make ends meet under this Tory Government. It's yet more proof that the Tories always put their own interests before those of the many."

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## [Barry Gardiner responds to failure to reach agreement at the WTO Ministerial Conference](#)

**Barry**

**Gardiner MP, Shadow Secretary of State for International Trade, commenting on the failure to come to an agreement at the 11th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, said:**

"We deeply regret that the Buenos Aires ministerial conference ended without a substantial agreement.

"Some countries are less willing to play by the rules based system than

others. The Trump administration has shown its true colours. They are taking an America first stance in trade, as we saw with the Bombardier case.

"Liam Fox needs to reassess his hopes for a transatlantic trade deal with the US. The USA is only interested in bilateral deals in which they can dictate the terms. He must show leadership in the multilateral rules based system in addressing unresolved issues such as food stock piling and fisheries subsidies."

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## **End of an era for Murdochs who after decades of aggressive empire expansion are now in retreat – Watson**

**Tom Watson MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport**, commenting on the news that Disney are to buy most of 21st Century Fox, said:

"This is the end of an era for the Murdochs who after decades of aggressive empire expansion are now in retreat.

"The decision to sell off key assets follows their UK business being engulfed in a phone hacking scandal, and ongoing revelations about sexual harassment at Fox News in the USA – scandals which have been in sharp focus recently thanks to the Murdochs' attempted takeover of Sky.

"It's important for Disney, a highly respected global media brand, that they do not allow the toxic corporate culture we have seen in the Murdoch empire to contaminate their business and tarnish their reputation.

"We hope that the company will ensure that no one who still has questions to answer over criminal conduct or corporate governance failure in the Murdochs' businesses is allowed into the new entity.

"We wait to see what impact this proposed merger will have on the attempt by 21st Century Fox to buy Sky, but the Competition and Markets Authority needs to continue its investigation and ensure that the proposed deal does not threaten media plurality or broadcasting standards."