



LABOUR LAND CAMPAIGN PRESS RELEASE – 7 MARCH 2024

### **Opportunity for a fair and efficient taxation system lost again**

Yesterday’s speech was full of talk about the benefits of growth, productivity, investment and “our precious public services” on the one hand, and the evils of taxing working families on the other. Yet, he went on to turn his back on any solution to all these issues as well as tax avoidance, poverty, regional inequality and the catastrophic underfunding of both the National Health Service and local government. He—along with every Chancellor for the last 80-odd years—ignored the relevance of land and other natural resource wealth in the economy at a time of polycrisis when the cost of securing shelter to rent or buy continues its inexorable rise, idle development sites and empty buildings are denying local people affordable homes or business premises, and “our precious public services” continue to be chronically underfunded. Meanwhile, landowners and speculators continue to prosper (and donate to the Conservative party) ... (and vote in Parliament).

“Unearned income from land and other natural resources derives from society’s demand for them with little effort on the part of the ‘owner’ yet we allow this wealth to be extracted from the real economy without any compensation of the public purse” says Murad Qureshi, Chair of the Labour Land Campaign. “Most current taxes distort the economy, are regressive and are systematically avoided but if we shifted taxes off the earned incomes of workers and onto the unearned incomes that the owners of land and natural resources extract, we would have a fairer tax system in which all citizens and businesses in all parts of the country would benefit economically, socially and environmentally.” A tax on the value of land is economically efficient, fair, progressive, impossible to dodge, easy to administer (valuation and collection) and covers the asset that accounts for 60% of UK net worth; a land value tax misses the 40% of UK wealth that resides in buildings, pension pots, bank deposits and stocks and shares (plus a few other speculative vehicles like racehorses, paintings and wine), but taxing any of these would be far more complicated and 60% is a good start.

Because land is fixed in supply, its value rises as an economy grows. It is generations of public investment in transport systems, health care, education, law and order, utilities, air and sea ports, social housing and parks together with private investment in the productive economy that have made our land so valuable. And it is too valuable to society to allow it to be used for speculative “investment” purposes that create artificial shortage in order to push its price up while citizens are denied jobs and homes.

Murad wonders why someone with the priorities he makes so much of would ignore our most valuable asset. “Is it because so many people in power own land or is it that they don’t understand how the economy works?” ENDS

***The Labour Land Campaign is a voluntary organisation working for land reform.  
It advocates a fairer distribution of land wealth through a Land Value Tax.***

For more information see [www.labourland.org](http://www.labourland.org)

**Contact details**

Press Officer: Anthony Molloy

Email: [anthony1molloy@gmail.com](mailto:anthony1molloy@gmail.com)

Telephone: +44 (0)7704 116 238

URL for posting on Twitter: