

## [Can we elect a new people?](#) [1]

Written by [Tim Worstall](#) [2] | Monday 25 August 2008



I've made clear my views on this terribly silly idea of a windfall tax on the energy companies [before here](#) [3]. Taking the money from those who would find more oil and gas and giving it to those who will consume more oil and gas is an absurdity. We want to do precisely the opposite of course: increase supply and reduce demand so as to bring prices down.

Unfortunately it appears that a majority of my fellow Britons don't agree [with me](#) [4].

The YouGov poll, commissioned by centre-left pressure group Compass and The Observer, shows that 67 per cent of Britons 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that a one-off tax should be levied on oil and gas companies. Even among Tory voters 57 per cent backed it, suggesting that anger at the soaring profits made during tough times for consumers has become widespread. The poll found a slight preference for the money to be spent on offsetting fuel bills this winter.

Compass, who have been running this campaign, are of course [overjoyed](#) [5].

As a growing sign of New Labour's terminal decline and electoral unrest with the government's current direction, the same Compass/YouGov poll put Labour on just 26% in the polls with the Tories well ahead on 48% - a windfall tax is viewed by many as exactly the kind of policy needed to kick-start a Labour revival, sending out a clear message that the government is firmly on the side of the people.

The clear message will be that the government is willing to pander to the ignorance of the populace in order to garner votes. *Quelle surprise* one might add.

It's all rather [Bryan Caplan](#) [6], isn't it? That we'll vote for things which are entirely counter productive when egged on by populist nonsense.

Perhaps time to revive a saying from one of the good socialists (ie, one of the dead ones), Bertold Brecht. Time to elect a new people possibly.

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