

Wolsingham
Bishop Auckland

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Committee on Standards in Public Life
35, Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BQ

12th May 2009

Dear Sir Christopher,

Along with the majority of the population, I am angered by the seeming self-serving priorities our members of Parliament present. I am quite prepared to accept that the expenses fiasco has broken no rules and that "the system" is faulty. As such I would suggest that it is scrapped and we start again.

My proposals are:

1. A block of serviced 1 bedroom flats are provided for all MPs who live more than a 1 hour commute from Westminster, with a flat rate meal allowance Monday to Thursday (Friday they should be in their constituency). Any alternative accommodation to be at the MPs own expense.
2. Each constituency funds a large home that is redecorated every 4 to 5 years to a modest standard and is large enough to accommodate a family and a guest with an office. This belongs to the constituency, and not the MP and as such is vacated when the seat changes incumbent much in the same manner as the Church of England operates their system of vicarages and rectories. If the MP already has their own home s/he can either rent it out or just visit the constituency residence to work and live at home.
3. The number of MPs should be reduced by about 50% and constituencies merged. The rest of industry has had to make efficiency savings and knows the feeling of job insecurity. The remaining MPs should be paid a reasonable salary to reflect their responsibilities, say £150,000, but that is it, no expense accounts, allowances, attendance rates and they should work full time 12 months of the year with 6 weeks paid annual leave and no other jobs. This may put them on a more professional footing and as such we, the public, may have more faith in them representing our needs and priorities rather than their own ego-stroking nest-feathering image.

I realise that MPs will veto this as it is in the public's interest rather than theirs but I would respectfully suggest that if these people are so talented and sought after by industry and the city then that is where they should go and work and leave the running of the country to the paid civil servants who do all the work anyway.

Yours faithfully

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