

M.P. allowance

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Dear Sir Christopher,

I am pleased that you have resisted the pressure to come to a speedy conclusion on this difficult subject. May I make some highly unoriginal observations.

- 1) The H.P. is the 2<sup>nd</sup>
- 2) Many newly elected H.P.s have not entered Parliament from an occupation or profession and have little experience beyond limited parliamentary research or P.A. work.
  - a) the pressure to fulfil quotas may not yield the best candidate.
  - b) many H.P.s are career politicians with little knowledge of the outside world.
- 2) Outside work
  - a) many argue that it is necessary to keep in touch by continuing their former profession or busi.
  - b) some utilise their oratorical talents by public speaking engagements.
  - c) some make use of their parliamentary specialism by an select committees by taking paid advisory roles.
  - d) some consider the work in the House and for their constituents as a full time job, others do not.
- 3) Duplications for pay.
  - a) the quality of the H.P. A party with a large majority may well contain H.P.s who have had an easier access to Parliament.
  - b) the contribution of H.P.s vary in terms of

attendance, participation in debates & on Committees! Some are simply lobby fodder.

c) The work of the House is less as much legislative originally from the E.U.

d) The parliamentary sessions are shorter, as is the parliamentary day.

Thus for M.P.s to claim a salary commensurate with a top civil servant is specious. Not all M.P.s are full time or highly qualified.

#### 4) Allowances

a) Should not be seen as a right to supplement what many regard as an inadequate salary.

b) Some M.P.s live a distance from London & this must be taken into account so that those over distance constituencies will not be penalized.

c) Travel allowances should mainly be by public transport and subject to rules similar to civil servants.

#### 5) Second homes and allowances

a) <sup>or first</sup> second home allowances should not be payable to any M.P. living within a set distance from London.

b) Those who can justify the need for a second home should have mortgage assistance and council tax paid but any profit made on a subsequent sale should be repaid.

c) No contribution should be made towards food. They would have to eat somewhere. Dining out on official business should be reimbursed under strict limits.

d) An alternative to b) might be the provision of accommodation provided by the House for those distant from London during the Parliamentary session. Family flats could also be made available.

e) Ministers in process and favour homes should not be able to make any claim on their family home.

- 2) outside work should adhere to strict guidelines, similar to those in the Civil Service.
- g) on leaving Parliament an M.P. should be able to make any use of his specialist knowledge for a minimum of 5 years. — in both memoirs and paid directorships.
- h) those who do not adhere to "wholly and exclusively" the covering "Business" in making claims, and go beyond the unwritten moral code, should be suspended, and if it happens again should be debarred from serving as an M.P.
- i) similarly, those in breach of tax laws & over capital gain should be similarly dealt with.
- j) in future their willingness to pay back will be demanded, but will not excuse the offender from any punishment.
- k) both pay, pensions and allowances should be determined by an outside body and not by the M.P. themselves.
- l) sufficient material should be made available to the electorate in terms of attendance, participation as well as allowances claimed, to enable a full picture to emerge. This way have serious implications for future elections based on proportional representation where voters are presented with a list & not an individual M.P.

Yours sincerely,

