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

For the attention of Sir Christopher Kelly.

Dear Sir,

I have no doubt that you are inundated with extra workload brought about by the long overdue expose of the collective misconduct (or unlawful activities) of our elected representatives.

These events have, as I am sure you are aware, galvanised the public. There is so much anger amongst "the masses". People who pay taxes; who have to purchase household items from their very heavily taxed income; people who are subject to the full weight of the laws of this country and have no recourse to "it was an oversight" or "I incorrectly filled out my forms" or "the system is at fault."

The excuses trotted out by members caught with their hands in the till are nothing more than unacceptable justifications for disgraceful, demeaning, dishonest and immoral actions.

Some principles outlined in the Green Book. "Claims should be above reproach..." "...only made for expenditure that it was necessary for a Member to incur...(so that they) ...could properly perform his or her parliamentary duties." "...not give rise to, or give the appearance of giving rise to, an improper personal financial benefit to themselves or anyone else."

Have these principles been adhered to in any shape or fashion? It seems not and that fact is bitterly disappointing.

Our MP's, collectively, have let us down, and this situation has been brought about entirely by the very people who demand our trust, respect and honesty.

It is time to make a major change in how the people's elected representatives are remunerated and expenses dealt with. Nothing less than a root and branch reform will suffice (and a number of prosecutions) if trust is to be rebuilt in our Parliamentary system.

On a more positive note I have attached a few ideas of my own that might be the basis of a fairer system.

Your thoughts on this matter would be gratefully received.

Yours Sincerely,

A Wilson

Some suggestions on Expenses.

- I accept that accommodation is needed when a constituency is outside a reasonable commute. No flipping should be allowed. Once a second home is nominated it stays nominated. Any second home needs to be close to the House.
- No MP should be able to make a financial gain from a second property that has been paid for by taxpayers. Property should either be rented or if purchased then all profit should be returned to the state's coffers.
- This could mean that Parliament builds up a portfolio of apartments for MP's use. The MP's, when they lose their seats, will allow the incoming MP to take over their property.
- A small sum to be made available to revamp the property on change of occupant.
- Primary home must be inside an MP's constituency or within a few miles at most.
- It pains me to say it, but MP's probably need a pay increase. Perhaps to the pay levels of a Secondary School Head or thereabouts, this to be offset by a reduction in the number of MP's.
- MP's are frequently heard to tell the electorate how hard the job is and the incredible hours they all work. I have no doubt it is a particularly demanding role. To that end it should be deemed improper conduct to earn money outside of that role. No more outside jobs. We are looking for people who want to represent US not this or that company. At a sweep it removes the potential for conflicts of interest.
- **All** outside interests to be made public...the only way to start rebuilding trust is **TOTAL** transparency.
- **All** expenses are to be receipted and available for scrutiny by a truly independent body. Perhaps with a couple of journalists and lay people on the board? Also receipts to be published on the websites of the MP.
- Staff appointments and suitability for roles to be checked and made public knowledge. Salaries for staff dealt with by a dedicated pay office, so no expenses to be submitted on that count.
- Travel warrants for MP and One member of staff, for use on Public transport only. All other forms of travel to be fully receipted.

In conclusion, the ultimate aim of your committee should be to identify how a system can be implemented that is totally transparent and heavily regulated so that the people who elect and pay for these people can see that there is absolutely **NO** room for abuse.

The electorate hold the system in contempt at the moment and this will only change if sweeping and wide-ranging changes are made, and made incredibly quickly.