



Sir Christopher Kelly KCB
The Committee on Standards in Public Life
35 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BQ

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

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10 June 2009

Dear Sir Christ Kelly,

You have asked for submissions in respect of outside interests.

I attach a list of my own outside interests from the Register. As you will see they relate principally to my involvement with Lazard – a firm with which I have been associated for more than 30 years (except for the period from 1992-1997 when I was a government minister). I am in the process of resigning from Lazard in view of the proximity of the General Election and my Shadow Cabinet role – a decision I took some months ago.

I believe outside interests – properly declared and registered in an accessible and transparent way are important for the future of Parliament. It seems to me highly desirable – and arguably essential – that Members of Parliament should keep a foot in the outside world, whether spending time as a member of the military reserve forces, doing voluntary and charitable work, or in commerce, journalism, banking or the law etc. In my experience of over 18 years in the House of Commons, there is no correlation between the output of an MP with outside interests – and those without – on behalf of their constituents.

I would argue that Parliament is enriched and deepened by those who keep a foot outside Parliament. Increasing pressure on all MPs to divest themselves of these activities will damage and in future limit the pool from which those willing to serve in the House of Commons is drawn.

Most recently the House of Commons has decided that there should be a requirement to register the hours and remuneration of all commercial interests, regardless of whether they have anything to do with our Parliamentary roles. I believe this was proposed by the Prime Minister for narrow party political reasons; that it is impractical, and that it wrongly pre-empted the work of your committee. Such activities do not relate directly to the role of a Member of Parliament. If your committee believes there is a

case for such registration, I would urge you in the interest of intellectual consistency to go for complete transparency of the financial affairs of Members of Parliaments and support the publication of all our tax returns. I am personally in favour of this reform.

I hope your committee will accept that further restrictions on properly registered outside interests would adversely affect the nature and effectiveness of Parliament. They would certainly narrow the range of people willing to serve in the House of Commons and pose the real risk of returning to a bygone age when wealth was a key determinant for entering the House of Commons. Such an approach would not be attractive to the wide range of talented people which parliamentary democracy must be able to secure to serve in non-ministerial positions (ministers themselves having two separately remunerated roles – first as members of parliament, second as ministers).

I hope my comments are helpful to your committee.

*With kind regards,
Jon evs*

Andrew Mitchell MP

9 June 2009

MITCHELL, Andrew (Sutton Coldfield)

1. **Remunerated directorships**
 - Lazard & Co., Holdings Limited.
 - Lazard & Co., Limited.
 - Lazard & Co., Services Limited.
 - Lazard Asia Limited.
 - Lazard Asia Hong Kong.
 - Lazard India (Private) Limited.
 - Supervisory Board member of The Foundation (small specialised management consultancy).
2. **Remunerated employment, office, profession etc**
 - Senior Strategy Adviser to Accenture. (*£35,001-£40,000*)