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Dorchester  
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14 June 2009

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

ES98

Dear Sir Christopher

### TERMS OF SERVICE FOR MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Your website indicates that you are still seeking views from members of the public as part of your ongoing review of MPs' expenses. May I therefore put forward the following thoughts?

I have no specific axe to grind, but am dismayed by the recent revelations about MPs' abuse of their expenses and allowances.

1. Far from raising MPs' salaries in lieu of allowances, they should be cut immediately after the next general election. Thenceforth they should be set at twice the national average wage (which is currently about £24,000, I believe). This would act as punishment for their greed; give an indication of their real worth; show solidarity with their constituents; and encourage them to improve the lot of others.
2. Pension arrangements should be brought into line with other public servants, ie silver- rather than gold-plated!
3. It is vital that MPs understand work in the real world, so they should be encouraged to seek an additional job. Working hours at the Commons might need to revert to pre-1997 timing to facilitate this.
4. Parliament should acquire a suitable building within walking distance of Westminster, to be equipped with modest sleeping facilities for MPs who live outside London. This would be used for the few months that Parliament sits each year.
5. Once point 4 is activated, all second home allowances should cease. MPs who live within 50 miles would be expected to commute to the Commons daily, at their own expense (like ordinary mortals).

6. It is understood that MPs who lose their seat at an election are paid a fair chunk of their annual salary as a "resettlement allowance". This reward for failure should be terminated forthwith.

7.

8. MPs' offices, including staff, supplies and mail, should be funded centrally. Family members might be employed, but only if suitably qualified, and subject to external monitoring.

9. Travel should be by warrant exchangeable for tickets (as in the Armed Forces), and reasonable costs for food and taxis, for example, repayable on production of receipts.

10. All financial and staffing arrangements should be subject to regular audit by a commercial firm, rather than by yet another Quango hand-picked by the Government!

Finally, and this is no doubt outside the terms of reference of your review, major further changes are merited. These would provide the remainder with worthwhile employment in the longer term:

- a. The number of MPs should be cut by at least 100;
- b. If suitable arrangements cannot be made for Parliament to properly scrutinise, amend and reject, if necessary, the torrent of regulation which originates in Brussels, Britain should seriously consider leaving the European Union.

It is hoped that these points may be of interest to you and your team.

Yours sincerely

P N Drummond