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Atk**- Independent Offices -**

From:
Sent: 09 July 2009 12:28
To: public@standards.x.gsi.gov.uk
Subject: For the attention of Sir Christopher Kelly re: Members Expenses

Dear Sir

I recently contacted the Speaker Mr John Bercow MP regarding MP's excessive and, in my opinion in many cases illegal, expenses claims and sent my thoughts to him as the man now charged with clearing up this sad, sorry mess. He has written to me and asked me to send these details direct to you as you are looking into this matter and producing a report due in the Autumn of 2009 which I would welcome.

Below is the full report I sent him and which he has asked I now send to you.

Here are my thoughts on this matter which are, I assume, very easy to implement, very easy to understand and then very easy to follow and very easily ensuring that no further fraudulent claims are made for taxpayers money to fund illegal purchasing, for that is what it is and any ordinary member of the public would have been charged, found guilty and locked up for attempting to do so....

- 1) An MP's primary residence should be within the area they are elected to represent and if they do not live there why should they be allowed to stand for election?*
- 2) An MP's second home should ALWAYS and without exception be located within short travelling distance of their place of work - The House of Commons and not, as in one case, Southampton - the family home which is further away than the primary home address nowhere near the capital as well.*
- 3) This second home should ONLY contain items necessary for short stay periods whilst on "duty" in the House and should only contain enough fittings to prepare and eat food, sleep and perform their duties when not actually attending the House but needing to be within that travelling distance.*
- 4) MP's pay levels are such that paying for a second home expenses is not even a problem (I have to run my home on approx 1/10 th that of an MP and I have to pay my FULL electric bills even though I am disabled) and should not be allowed any claims at all unless it can be proven to an independent committee that these claims are completely LEGAL and MORALLY acceptable to the committee as well as the public and as such the committee should include a number of members of the public.*
- 5) Travel expenses will ONLY be paid IF the MP claiming can prove his/her attendance in the House or acting on behalf of the House or constituency members*

and these MUST be based solely on the cheapest form of public transport available, either by train or bus or indeed if really necessary by car and any overnight expenses again should be based on what is reasonable at the time as decided by committee.

6) Any and ALL other expenses claims should ONLY be paid if they are deemed completely necessary as part of their duties for and on behalf of those they represent including the House and ONLY when approved by committee and no other claims will or indeed should be entertained.

7) If at all possible - why not find an appropriate place of residence, large enough to place every single MP, with each apartment furnished with what is cleared by committee ONLY and then ONLY travel expenses should ever be entertained and approved by committee and no other claims would be deemed necessary. This would allow for a newly elected MP to take over from an outgoing MP without any problems and would allow such a move within 24 hours possible without any problems.

R A McNeil

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Tel:

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