



The Leader of the House has come a fair way to meet the worries which were expressed about abuse of the new rules. Context, subject to colleagues' views?

PRIME MINISTER

1. In the debate in the House of Commons on 4 March on Parliamentary pay and allowances, a number of amendments to the Government's resolutions were passed. At Cabinet on 6 March (CC(80) 9th) we agreed to accept in principle the amended motions and I was invited to consider detailed proposals for their implementation.

MS
2215

2. This consideration, including consultations with both back-benches, has taken longer than I would have wished but I hope that the proposals I now put forward will prove acceptable to both sides of the House.

Secretarial/Research Allowance

3. The motion passed raises the allowances for secretaries and research assistance and general office expenses to £6,750 pa, and allows for a further sum of £675 to be made available to provide pensions for Members' employees.

4. The Fees Office have been accepting claims against the new maximum of the secretarial allowance since my announcement on 27 March 1980. They have now drawn up a revised certificate of claim for these allowances (copy attached). The new claim form provides for the names of the secretary and research assistant and the amounts paid to each, together with a break-down of general office expenses by items and cost, to be entered for the first time. This additional information will enable the Fees Office to monitor claims more closely. It would be open to a Member to decline to provide the additional information, on the grounds that the break-down requested is not reflected in the resolution of the House which does not state that a form should be completed at all. But I believe that Members will accept the point made in TSRB Report No 13 that "Parliament should be seen to apply to itself the standards of accountability it would expect to see elsewhere", and that they will be willing to complete the new form.

5. Members can arrange for their employees to be paid through the Fees Office. Since the debate on 4 March nearly 100 more secretaries and research assistants are being paid directly in this manner. This in itself goes quite a long way towards the greater accountability we are seeking.

Contd...

6. The £675 for secretaries' pensions (which I propose should be introduced with effect from 1 April 1980) would either be paid by the Fees Office directly into an approved pension scheme or to the MP, on production of a receipted renewal notice for an approved insurance scheme. In Cabinet it was suggested that only one pension allowance should be paid for each secretary even though some secretaries worked for two or more MPs. I have thought further about this and, as pensions are usually related to salary levels, in my view it would be quite proper and in the interests of accountability for each Member to be limited to the payment of premium in proportion to the amount of salary (10%) he pays to his secretary.

Travel

7. The House passed an amendment that all travel in the UK on Parliamentary business should be reimbursed or qualify for payment of the car mileage allowance, and I propose that this facility should be introduced from the date of my announcement. I favour a strict approach to the new arrangements and Members will be asked always to notify the Fees Office of journeys outside the Westminster/constituency/home triangle before the event. You will remember that this accords with a specific Cabinet suggestion. There will, of course, be occasions - emergencies - where this is not possible, and the Fees Office will be asked to use their discretion in such cases.

8. The Fees Office will amend their documentation covering all forms of travel in order to emphasise to Members what the regulations are, and in particular to make it explicit that the journeys must be "on Parliamentary business". All claims and rail warrants are examined by the Fees Office and in future a record will be maintained of journeys outside the Westminster/constituency/home triangle. Where examination shows that a claim has been incorrectly made or a warrant incorrectly used, the Fees Office will expect reimbursement.

Severance Payments

9. The motion passed increased severance pay to 6 months salary for those under age 50 and up to 1 year's salary for older, longer serving Members. Cabinet asked for clarification of the position on change of Parliamentary boundary. At present, severance payments are only made if a Member loses his seat following a general election or if he is displaced as a result of boundary changes. I suggest that the present rules remain unchanged.

10. If you and Cabinet colleagues, to whom I am copying this letter, are content with these proposals, I will announce these arrangements by PQ at the earliest opportunity.

NHS.

N St J S

22 May 1980

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRETARIAL RESEARCH AND GENERAL OFFICE EXPENSES

I wish to claim reimbursement of the following amounts in respect of secretarial and general office expenses and cost of research assistance which have been wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred by me on Parliamentary duties during the period from to

made up as follows:

A. Secretarial etc. salary of fees in respect of	£
(Please insert name of person(s) employed)	£
.....	£
.....	£
.....	£
.....	£
General office expenses (please specify)	£
.....	£
.....	£

TOTAL	£ _____

B. Additional Costs Allowance

I also wish to claim reimbursement of the sum of £..... in respect of additional costs which I have necessarily incurred for overnight stays away from my main home (as notified to the Fees Office) on Parliamentary duties during the period from to

Signed M.P.

Date Constituency

22 MAY 1960



Dear Sir: I am writing to you in regard to the following matters which have been referred to me by the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel.

1. The following matters have been referred to me by the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel:

- 1. The salary of the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel.
- 2. The salary of the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel.
- 3. The salary of the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel.
- 4. The salary of the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel.
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- 9. The salary of the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel.
- 10. The salary of the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel.

2. The following matters have been referred to me by the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel:

3. The following matters have been referred to me by the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel:

4. Additional Matters

I also wish to call your attention to the fact that the salary of the General Counsel and the General Office of the Attorney General and General Counsel is subject to the provisions of the Civil Service Act, which provides that the salary of such officials shall be fixed by the Civil Service Commission.