

77

Expenditure on the Flat

Last Wednesday Mr. Finsberg answered a written question from Mr. William Hamilton (Flag A) about the cost of refurbishing Ministerial accommodation since the Election. When we saw it on Thursday we sent an angry letter to the Department of the Environment, since no-one here had been consulted about the terms of the reply. For the time being the matter is being dealt with personally by the Head of Property Services Agency, Sir Robert Cox; and I do not think that information of this sort will be published without consultation for the next few months at least.

However, Mr. Hamilton has now tabled some more questions, asking for detailed breakdowns of each of the larger figures. I therefore asked the PSA to let me have a list of the individual items alleged to have been involved in refurbishment at No.10. Their answer is attached at Flag B. I can imagine your reaction to it.

I am afraid that the damage is done in terms of the publication of the total figure. We will seek to limit it by keeping the answer to Mr. Hamilton's second question as short as possible. Would you like me also to pass on to the officials concerned your wish that all expenditure on the flat should be as economical as possible and notified to us in advance?

Continuing
Correspondence
about
detailed
expenditure
in flat is
in
Appointments
Section.

25 June 1979

Yes - I should
at least like to be given the estimated cost of
the proposed change. I have Mrs
an excellent ironing board which is
not in use at home. No.
I will pay for the new one.