

REPORT  
FROM THE  
SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON  
MEMBERS' EXPENSES  
TOGETHER WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE COMMITTEE AND APPENDICES

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*Thursday, 15th November, 1945.*

Members' Expenses.—Select Committee appointed to consider the expenses incurred in connection with their parliamentary and official duties by Members of this House, including Ministers whose salary is less than £5,000 per annum; their remuneration; and their conditions of work.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*Thursday, 29th November, 1945.*

Members' Expenses.—Select Committee to consist of Seventeen Members:—Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite, Mr. Callaghan, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Haydn Davies, Colonel Dodds-Parker, Professor Gruffydd, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam, Mr. Joynson-Hicks, Mr. Lang, Mr. Leslie, Mr. Lipson, Mr. McKinlay, Captain Charles Smith, Mr. Tom Smith, Major Symonds, Mrs. Wills and Earl Winterton:—Committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records; to sit notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House; and to report from time to time:—Five to be the quorum.—(*Mr. Robert Taylor.*)

*Wednesday, 5th December, 1945.*

Members' Expenses.—Mr. Callaghan and Professor Gruffydd discharged from the Select Committee; Mr. Daggar and Mr. Horabin added.—(*Mr. Mathers.*)

*Monday, 4th February, 1946.*

Members' Expenses.—Mr. Joynson-Hicks discharged from the Select Committee on Members' Expenses; Major Ramsay added.—(*Mr. Mathers.*)

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## REPORT

The Select Committee appointed to consider the expenses incurred in connection with their parliamentary and official duties by Members of this House, including Ministers whose salary is less than £5,000 per annum, their remuneration and their conditions of work, have agreed to the following Report:—

1. Your Committee held 13 meetings and examined 26 witnesses. In accordance with the precedent of the Select Committee on Members' Expenses appointed in the Session of 1920, a circular letter from the Chairman was addressed to all Members of the House, quoting the terms of reference and asking whether there were any points on the incidence of their expenses as Members which they wished to bring to notice. Your Committee are grateful for the memoranda and the numerous replies received from Members which enabled them to gauge the limits of their inquiry and materially helped them to decide the course of their proceedings. At the Chairman's invitation the following Members of the House attended to give evidence: the Rt. Hon. William Whiteley, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, and Captain the Rt. Hon. James Stuart, M.V.O., M.C., Chief Opposition Whip, on Ministerial salaries; Mr. Glenvil Hall, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, on the position of the Treasury in the interpretation of Resolutions of the House affecting payments to Members; Mr. George Hicks, Mr. Rogers and Mrs. Corbet, Mr. Martin Lindsay and Mr. John Maude, Captain Geoffrey Bing, Mr. Viant and Mr. Binns, on memoranda submitted on behalf of groups of Members; Mr. Quintin Hogg on his memorandum; Mr. Robert Boothby, Mr. W. J. Brown, Sir William Darling, C.B.E., M.C., Mr. A. E. Davies, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Gammans, Viscount Hinchinbrooke, Mr. Asterley Jones and Sir Basil Neven-Spence, on expenses in general. In addition, Sir Gilbert Campion, K.C.B., the Clerk of the House, and Mr. A. J. Moyes, O.B.E., the Accountant, gave evidence on points of procedure and administration; and Sir Cornelius Gregg, K.C.B., K.B.E., Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, and Mr. R. A. Little, Director of Postal Services and Mr. P. R. Mellors, the General Post Office, on matters affecting their Departments. The Dominions Office furnished information on the emoluments granted to Members of the Central Legislatures of the Dominions, for which Your Committee are grateful and which they have noted with interest. Your Committee have added as appendices to their Report the Chairman's circular letter to Members of the House, the information on the emoluments of Members of the Central Legislatures of the Dominions, a short Historical Retrospect of the changes since 1911 in the payments and concessions for travel to Members of the House, and statistical information furnished by the Board of Inland Revenue on the incidence of claims for expenses by Members.

### PRESENT SITUATION

2. At present the payment to Members is at the rate of £600 a year. Of this, by a Treasury Minute of 1913, £100 free of income tax is allowed for expenses, but a Member, if he can show that his expenses exceed this figure, can claim expenses up to the full amount of the £600 under ordinary income tax procedure. There is also nothing to prevent the Treasury raising the figure of £100 up to the full amount of £600, if it were thought fit. Members now also receive the concession of free first-class travel by rail for the journeys between Westminster and their constituencies, between Westminster and their homes and between their homes and their constituencies. The cost of first-class sleeping berths and of the charge for travel by an all-Pullman train are allowed. Travel by air is allowed from convenient aerodromes

to cover the same three classes of journeys as for rail. The war-time concessions for Members serving in the Forces for free travel from their war stations to Westminster and to the constituency are still in force

### CONSIDERATION OF THE EVIDENCE

3. Practically all the evidence and the written replies agreed in recommending some material increase in the present remuneration of Members. Some were in favour simply of an increased annual payment, some only claimed an increased allowance for expenses or additional free services, and others were for combining these two methods in varying degrees. In general, however, Your Committee find that the claims for an improvement in existing conditions resolve themselves into two main categories, (a) for financial measures calculated to provide any Member, after the deduction of legitimate expenses, with a sum that will enable him to carry out his duties efficiently and without embarrassment, and (b) for extensions of free travel (including allowances for cars) and for free postage, for free telephone calls, and for additional accommodation.

4. *Expenses.* From the evidence presented, and from their own experience, Your Committee are in no doubt that expenses incurred by Members in the course of their parliamentary duties, both at Westminster and in their constituencies, are at present very high and that, in consequence, many Members are finding themselves in a position in which they cannot perform those duties without financial anxiety. These expenses fall under four heads: the additional cost of living away from home when engaged in parliamentary duties at Westminster; the additional cost of living when engaged in parliamentary duties in the constituency when the Member does not live there; the cost of secretarial and clerical assistance; and the cost of such items as stationery, postage, telegrams and telephone calls. The incidence of these expenses varies in the case of each Member according to the geographical situation of his constituency and of his residence, the amount of his correspondence and his individual methods of work. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the sum claimed to cover these expenses varies within the wide limits of the figures given in the table furnished by the Inland Revenue, from £100 to £600. (See Appendix IV).

Members coming from a distance who have to engage accommodation in London may find that they will have to spend £200 or more a year for expenses in London, while attending at Westminster. Members resident in London, on the other hand, do not incur this expense, but are faced with the continual high cost of living in London. The expenses incurred for work in a constituency depend upon its nature, whether urban or rural, its extent and the size of the electorate, and it is impossible to give an average figure.

Witnesses were of the opinion—which is borne out by the experience of the Members of Your Committee—that a Member must have a personal secretary, even though he does not employ one full time. His work is individual, and cannot suitably be done in a typists' pool. The salary of the type of secretary required is now about £5 to £6 a week, so that a Member must expect to pay some £150 to £200 for part time services. It is again difficult to assess the cost of stationery, postage, telegrams and telephone calls. This may vary from £25 to £100 per annum, though some Members have found that it is higher. There is no doubt that, at the present moment, the number of personal problems upon which constituents seek help from their Members is very large. This was the case at the end of the 1914–18 war and is, it may be hoped, a passing phase. On these grounds, arguments were adduced for the grant to Members of free postage, telegrams and toll or trunk telephone calls.

The difficulties of finding hotel or other living accommodation in London at the present moment have led to suggestions that living accommodation should be provided near the House for Members who require it. Your Committee see many administrative objections to such a scheme, and are of the opinion that it is not desirable to herd Members into anything of the nature of a Members' Hostel. They do not consider that the idea should be pursued.

Your Committee were happy to find that the provision of a set luncheon at 1s. 6d. and dinner at 2s. in the Members' Dining Room was welcomed by Members as a relief of their daily expenses in London. This and the other amenities provided in the House, such as the smoking and reading rooms and the library, with its valuable collection of books of reference, were borne in mind by Your Committee in coming to their conclusions. In this connection, Your Committee note that a room has been arranged in the House for the use of Members' secretaries, and some rooms made available in No. 5, Old Palace Yard, where Members may transact business. The plans for the new Chamber include twenty-one secretarial rooms, two conference rooms and ten interviewing rooms for Members\* and, when the rebuilding is complete, Members should no longer have grounds for complaint in this respect.

5. *Travel.* The extension of free travel for Members to include journeys between Westminster and their place of residence was made last November. Those Members, not a few, who live in or near London and make this journey daily, have naturally availed themselves of the concession. A voucher has to be made out for every journey, and the great increase in the number of vouchers has resulted in a corresponding increase of paper work in the Travel Office in the House of Commons, in the railway clearing house and the Fees Office, where the vouchers are finally checked. While this system of vouchers is working smoothly for Members who live some distance from London and do not travel every day, Members living on the system of the London Passenger Transport Board find it particularly irksome to present a voucher daily at their local booking office, and also complain that vouchers do not cover travel by the other services provided by the Board.

Wider suggestions were put before Your Committee to extend free travel by rail or sea for Members to cover the whole of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It was argued that Members have to deal with matters affecting the whole country and should not be prevented from studying conditions for themselves by the cost of the journey. Your Committee do not feel that a strong case was made out for such an extension at the present time.

A still more ambitious suggestion was that Members should be granted free travel to the Colonies and the Dependencies for reviewing the administration of which the House has direct responsibility. While appreciating the high value of such visits by Members, either as individuals or in a parliamentary delegation, Your Committee are of the opinion that this proposal is outside their terms of reference and can be considered in the first place only by the House itself.

Under the same heading comes a proposal to grant an allowance for the use of a motor car on journeys for which free travel by rail is now given, either against the fare for the corresponding journey by rail or on a mileage basis. It is undoubtedly a convenience for Members to have their cars at the House so that they can go home after a late sitting, or to make the journey either from London or their place of residence to the constituency by road, in order to have the car available for work there, but Your Committee consider that such use of a car is a convenience rather than a necessity, and that the cost should be met out of a Member's allowance for expenses.

\* See the Report from the Select Committee on House of Commons (Rebuilding) (H.C. 109, Session 1943-44).

## CONCLUSIONS

## REMUNERATION OF MEMBERS AND CONCESSIONS FOR TRAVEL

6. After considering the evidence and in framing their recommendations, Your Committee agreed upon three principles which they hope will commend themselves to the House and to the country: that a Member should be allowed his reasonable expenses, wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred in the performance of his duties as a Member; that he should then receive a sum which will enable him to maintain himself comfortably and honourably, but not luxuriously, during the time he is a Member of the House; and that the methods for dealing with expenses and with travelling concessions should be simple to administer.

7. So far as remuneration is concerned, Your Committee consider that these principles can be best applied by recommending the payment to a Member of a fixed annual sum, to include a sum free of tax to cover all reasonable expenses, but one larger than the sum of £100 at present so allowed. The figures furnished by the Board of Inland Revenue\* show that 369 out of 534 Members are estimating their expenses at over £450, and, of these, 309 at over £500 for the current financial year. These figures indicate that the sum which should be allowed for expenses lies between £450 and £600. It is impossible to arrive at any figure without appearing to give some too much and others too little. Your Committee are of the opinion that £500 is the fair sum that should be allowed to all Members for expenses instead of the £100 as at present. Members would then have to claim relief from income tax only for expenses above £500.

In assessing the sum which should be paid to a Member in addition to his expenses, Your Committee have not regarded it as a professional salary. Though a Member may be called upon to devote a great deal of time to the business of the House, he has complete freedom to allot his time between his parliamentary duties, either at Westminster or in his constituency, and his personal affairs. It would be most unwise to take this freedom from him by paying such a figure as would unequivocally demand his full time in return. The sum must, however, suffice to enable him "to maintain himself comfortably and honourably, but not luxuriously" while a Member of the House. These are the words used by the late Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor when he introduced payment of Members in 1911, and Your Committee feel that they still express the wishes of the House. Your Committee are agreed that this sum should be £500.

Your Committee therefore recommend that the salaries of Members should be increased to £1,000 a year, of which £500 should be allowed to all Members as an expense allowance free of income tax.

8. In view of this recommendation, Your Committee do not consider that any general extension of free rail and air travel or for the grant of car allowance for Members is necessary. They agree, however, that Members who live in or near London and come up daily to Westminster while the House is sitting should be relieved of the burden of presenting vouchers for the tickets. They therefore recommend that arrangements should be made without delay with the railway companies concerned and the London Passenger Transport Board, for the issue of season tickets of suitable duration to Members who wish to have them for daily journeys on which they are entitled to free travel.

9. For the same reason, Your Committee do not recommend that free postage, free telegrams and free telephone calls should be granted to Members. They inquired into the possibilities of the issue of franked envelopes, or of

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\* See Appendix IV.

postage stamps to a certain value, but found that any such system, even if restricted to correspondence posted in the House itself, would be complicated to administer and would not be satisfactory. Members now have free telephone facilities for the London area from the telephone boxes in the House, and Your Committee found that an extension to include toll and trunk calls was neither practicable nor desirable.

10. When Members travel on the business of the House, as, for instance, when they make visits of inspection as Members of a Select Committee, they receive subsistence allowance at the rate of 23s. 6d. a night. The rate was fixed in agreement with the Treasury and corresponds to that allowed to senior officers of the Fighting Services and of the Civil Service. Members with experience of such visits have found that their expenses are seldom covered by the allowance. Your Committee are fully satisfied that there is a strong case for an immediate review of the rate and are agreed that it is not sufficiently high. They therefore recommend that the rate of subsistence allowance be increased.

#### MINISTERIAL SALARIES

11. By their terms of reference Your Committee were instructed to inquire into the salaries and expenses of Ministers with salaries under £5,000 a year. Ministers who draw the salary attached to their office cease to draw their salaries as Members of the House, and are thus precluded from claiming expenses as Members. In the knowledge of Your Committee some junior Ministers have found it more advantageous to forgo their ministerial salary and to retain their salaries as Members. All have found that they have undertaken heavy responsibilities to the House and to their Departments without a commensurate increase in actual emoluments and, in some cases, with a considerable reduction in their personal income. Your Committee consider that some relief should be given in the way of expenses, and that the simplest method would be for Ministers with salaries under £5,000 a year to continue to draw £500 a year for expenses as Members of the House in addition to their salary. This would require legislation to amend the Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937, and other material Acts. The Chairman of Ways and Means and the Deputy Chairman should also receive this allowance in addition to their salaries.

Your Committee therefore recommend that Ministers with salaries of less than £5,000 a year, the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Deputy Chairman should be granted an expense allowance at the rate of £500 a year free of income tax as Members of the House in addition to their present salaries; and that the legislation necessary to amend the Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937, and other material Acts should be introduced. They further recommend that the salaries of these Ministers and of the Chairman of Ways and Means and of the Deputy Chairman should be reviewed by the Government.

#### COMMITTEE TO ADVISE MR. SPEAKER

12. From the evidence given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury and by the Clerk of the House, Your Committee find that the position of the Treasury in the interpretation of Resolutions of the House affecting payments and concessions for free travel to Members is indeterminate. If a Member is in dispute with the Treasury on any such points, or if the Treasury decline to give a ruling, the final decision rests with Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker may thus be called on to give his ruling in small matters, the details of which would be, in the opinion of Your Committee, beneath the dignity of his office. Further, it would not be decorous for a Member, if he felt dissatisfied, to challenge Mr. Speaker's ruling in the House. Your Committee consider that it would assist Mr. Speaker if a small informal committee, nominated by him

in the same way as is the Library Committee, were set up to advise him on such matters, whose recommendations would be accepted both by the Treasury and by the Member concerned. They therefore recommend that consideration should be given to setting up a small informal committee, nominated by Mr. Speaker, to assist him in matters affecting the payments and concessions for free travel to Members, the recommendations of which would be accepted by Members and by the Treasury.

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

13. Your Committee's recommendations and conclusions can be summarised as follows :—

- (a) The salaries of Members should be increased to £1,000 a year, of which £500 should be allowed to all Members as an expense allowance free of income tax (paragraph 7).
- (b) Ministers with salaries of less than £5,000 a year, the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Deputy Chairman should be granted an expense allowance at the rate of £500 a year free of income tax as Members of the House in addition to their present salaries; and the legislation necessary to amend the Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937, and other material Acts should be introduced (paragraph 11).
- (c) The salaries of these Ministers and of the Chairman of Ways and Means and of the Deputy Chairman should be reviewed by the Government (paragraph 11).
- (d) The rate of subsistence allowance granted to Members when travelling on the business of the House should be increased (paragraph 10).
- (e) Arrangements should be made without delay with the railway companies concerned and the London Passenger Transport Board for the issue of season tickets of suitable duration to Members living in or near London, who wish to have them for daily journeys for which they are entitled to free travel (paragraph 8).
- (f) Consideration should be given to setting up a small committee, nominated by Mr. Speaker, to assist him in matters affecting the payments and concessions for free travel to Members, the recommendations of which would be accepted by Members and by the Treasury (paragraph 12).
- (g) In view of their recommendation in (a) above, Your Committee consider unnecessary any extension of free travel (paragraph 9), any allowance for the use of a motor car (paragraph 8), or the grant of free postage, telegrams and telephone calls (paragraph 9).



## LIST OF APPENDICES

*(Further Appendices will be published with the Minutes of Evidence.)*

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## APPENDIX I

*Circular letter from the Chairman to all Members of the House*

HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
S.W.1.

14th December, 1945.

DEAR SIR,  
MADAM,

As you are aware, the House has appointed a Select Committee "To consider the expenses incurred in connection with their parliamentary and official duties by Members of this House, including Ministers whose salary is less than £5,000 per annum; their remuneration; and their conditions of work".

The principal items of expenses which are allowable for Income Tax purposes are:—

- (a) the additional cost of living away from home when engaged in Parliamentary duties *either* at Westminster *or* in the constituency (one place only);
- (b) secretarial and clerical assistance; and
- (c) such items as stationery, postage, telegrams, etc.

The sum of £100 is allowed to all Members of Parliament in respect of the allowable expenses, but if any Member can show that his expenditure exceeds that figure the actual amount is allowed up to a maximum of £600. These allowances do not apply to those receiving salaries as Ministers.

Should there be any points under the above headings which you wish to bring to the notice of the Committee, I should be obliged if you would be good enough to let me have them in writing. Would you please address your reply to the Clerk of the Committee?

I should also be glad to know if you would be willing to give evidence before the Committee if invited to do so.

Yours faithfully,  
(Sgd.) TOM SMITH,  
Chairman.

## APPENDIX II

EMOLUMENTS GRANTED TO MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL  
LEGISLATURES OF THE DOMINIONS

*Compiled from information obtained by the Dominions Office*

## CANADA

**Salary**

Senate: Sessional Allowance: \$6,000 for Session of 65 days or over.

House of Commons: Sessional Allowance: \$6,000 for Session of 65 days or over.

For Sessions under 65 days, \$25 a day is paid for each day's attendance. A deduction from the allowance of \$25 a day is made for every day over fifteen on which a Member is absent from a sitting of the House, unless he is away sick but in Ottawa.

A Member elected during a Session draws the full allowance for the Session less \$25 for each day of the Session before his election, and can be away for fifteen days without being penalised.

**Travel**

Transportation and reasonable living expenses are paid for the journey between a Member's residence and Ottawa, once each way for each Session. A free pass on the railways is provided for a Member and his immediate family.

**Residence in Capital**

There is no allowance for the cost of residence in the Capital.

**Expenses in constituency**

There is no allowance for expenses in the constituency.

**Secretarial expenses**

A secretary is provided. Local telephone calls and postage are free.

## II

## NEW ZEALAND

**Salary**

Member of Legislative Council : £375 per annum.

Member of House of Representatives : £500 per annum.

Deductions for absence for more than fourteen sitting days in a Session are 25s. for each sitting day in the case of a Member of the Council, and £2 in the case of a Member of the House of Representatives. No deduction is made if absence is caused by illness, or by a cause stated by the Speaker of the Council or of the House to be unavoidable.

If a Member of the Council obtains, and avails himself of, leave of absence from the Governor General for a whole Session, he does not receive payment from the date of the Proclamation convening the General Assembly for that Session until the date of the Proclamation convening the Assembly for the next Session.

**Travel**

A Member is given a railway medallion which entitles him to free first class travel on railways and railway omnibuses, including sleepers and free reservations. He receives steamer passages at any time between the port most convenient to his home and any other port in New Zealand for the purpose of travel to or from Wellington. He may travel by service motor car on any part of a route not served by railway or steamer. He also has a first class steamer pass for travel between Wellington and Picton, or Wellington and Lyttleton.

He receives travelling allowance at the rate of £1 a day.

For concessions for travel to families see Note 1 below.

**Residence in Capital**

An allowance of £250 a year is given to cover expenses in connection with a Member's parliamentary duties.

**Expenses in constituency**

See above.

**Secretarial Expenses**

There is no specific allowance for a secretary.

During a Session, correspondence may be franked at the House. Members receive vouchers for official stamps to the value of £3 a month, available for the payment of postage, toll calls, telegrams and telephone rental. Half the cost of a telephone at a Member's residence and half the cost of toll calls are borne by the Legislative Department. Members' telegrams are sent at a special rate of 36 words for 6d.

Members may nominate 75 persons for a Hansard Free List.

**Note 1**

Members' wives (or daughter, sister, etc., where a widower) receive a free first-class railway pass available rail or railway bus, with free reservations, also sleeper berth orders as required. South Island wives (except Nelson district) receive twelve single first-class passages (including deck accommodation) Wellington-Lyttelton or Wellington-Picton. North Island wives receive six such passages. Wives of Members in Nelson district receive twelve orders Wellington-Nelson only.

## AUSTRALIA

**Salary**

Senate : Senators £1,000 per annum.

House of Representatives : Members £1,000 per annum.

There is no deduction of salary for absence, but a Senator vacates his place if he fails to attend the Senate for two consecutive months in any Session without permission.

**Travel**

A Member is issued with a gold railway pass for Government railways in the various States, the cost of which is £160 per annum. Travel over the Commonwealth railways and over any privately owned railways is paid for in addition.

Life gold passes are issued to Members after three years as a Minister, President of the Senate or Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to private Member after twenty-five years' service in the aggregate.

Members may have free air travel between their homes and Canberra at the beginning and end of a Session. Tasmanian Members are granted air travel between Tasmania and the mainland on parliamentary or urgent public duties within the constituencies; Members representing Kalgoorlie, Grey and Bass are allowed a limited number of air journeys, while the Member for the Northern Territory is granted special privileges for air travel.

Travel by steamer from Adelaide to Albany, or *vice versa* is allowed once a year but in one direction only; and from Brisbane to places in North Australia not accessible by rail.

Certain motor coach facilities are allowed.

For the concessions to families see Note 2 below.

### **Residence in Capital**

There is no allowance for the cost of residence in the Capital.

### **Expenses in Constituency**

There is no allowance for expenses in the constituency.

### **Secretarial Expenses**

No allowance is made for a Secretary.

Stamps to the value of £26 per annum are issued to Senators, and to Members of the House of Representatives. These can be used for official correspondence, telegrams, trunk telephone calls and telephone rental.

#### **Note 2**

*Wives of Members.* Where a Member's home is not in Canberra and he does not remove his family to Canberra for Sessions, orders for return passes may be issued in favour of his wife:

- (a) from her home to Canberra four times per year,
- (b) from her home to some place in the same State twice yearly,
- (c) as an alternative to (b), once per year from her home to some other place in the State and once per year from her home to the capital city in one other State,
- (d) if her home is not in the Member's electorate, from her home to any part of his electorate twice per calendar year,
- (e) from her home to any place in the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending any official Federal Government function to which she has been invited.

Where a Member's home is not in Canberra and he moves his family to Canberra for the Session, an order for a return pass may be issued in favour of his wife.

Where a Member's wife is travelling and is in such a state of health as to require the help of an attendant, a pass may be issued for such an attendant:

- (a) from her home in Canberra once each year or once per Session if there is more than one Session in the year,
- (b) From Canberra, or her home, to the capital city in any other State once per year,
- (c) from her home, or from Canberra, to any part of his electorate twice per year where her home is outside Member's electorate,
- (d) from her home, or from Canberra, to any place in the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending any official Federal Government function to which she has been invited.

Where a Member's home is in Canberra, an order for return pass may be issued in favour of his wife:

- (a) from her home to some other place in New South Wales twice yearly, or as an alternative, once from her home to the capital city in any State other than New South Wales,
- (b) from Canberra to any part of his electorate twice a year,
- (c) from Canberra to any place in the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending any official Federal Government function to which she has been invited.

*Children of Members.*—Where a Member's home is not in Canberra, an order for a return pass will be issued in favour of the children of a Member who usually reside at home and are not earning their own living:

- (a) from his home to Canberra once per year or per Session if there be more than one Session in the year,
- (b) from his home to his electorate once a year.

Where a Member's home is in Canberra, a return pass will be issued in favour of children who usually reside at home and are not earning their own living.

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Allowance

Senate : Members, £700 per annum.

House of Assembly : Members, £700 per annum.

Members of both Houses are also at present in receipt of a cost of living allowance of £84 per annum.

A deduction of £6 is made for each day of absence from a meeting of the House, except where the absence is due to attendance at a Select Committee ; to illness ; to summons or subpoena of a competent Court (unless the summons is on a criminal charge upon which the Member is convicted) ; to the death or serious illness of his wife and the absence is condoned by the Committee on Standing Rules and Orders ; to service with Forces while the Union is at war ; in respect of a further period not exceeding 25 days during a Session at which estimates of expenditure of the financial year are considered.

### Travel

A Member is entitled to a free pass over lines controlled by the South African Railways. He is allowed to rail his motor car to Cape Town and return once during a Session.

Air Travel was suspended early in the war.

For concessions to families see Note 3 below.

### Residence in Capital

There is no allowance for the cost of residence in the Capital.

### Expenses in Constituency

There is no allowance for expenses in the constituency.

### Secretarial expenses

One shorthand typist, paid from the Vote of the Clerk of the Senate, is the only clerical assistance for all Senators.

For Members of the House of Assembly, expenditure is reimbursed at a rate fixed by the Committee on Standing Rules and Orders and allotted to the political parties in proportion to their membership. During Sessions franked envelopes are provided for Members' correspondence on Parliamentary and public business. A Member is allowed free local telephone calls, and one trunk call of six minutes (or two of three minutes) once a week home or to a place in his constituency.

### Note 3

Members of his household residing with and dependent upon him are entitled to free transport by rail from place of residence to seat of Legislature and return once in respect of every Session. A Member's wife is normally entitled to a second return journey by rail during a Session between a Member's place of residence and Cape Town.

## APPENDIX III

### HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

#### *Changes in the payments to Members and concessions for travel since 1911*

1. Payment to Members, at the rate of £400 a year, was first introduced in the Session of 1911 by a Resolution of the House of 10th August, and a Supplementary Estimate to defray the cost was passed on 14th August. Since that year the requisite amount has appeared in the Annual Estimates, and the Vote of the Amount is the Paymaster General's authority for issue. By Section 3 of the Finance Act, 1913, the Treasury was empowered to fix an annual average sum

for expenses incurred by Members in the performance of their Parliamentary duties which would be free of income tax, and, by a Minute of 23rd October, 1913, fixed this sum at £100, a sum which had in fact been allowed in the previous year.

2. In the Session of 1920, a Select Committee was appointed to consider the Salary allotted to Members of the House, the travelling and other expenses incurred by them in connection with their Parliamentary duties. This Committee refrained from making a specific recommendation for an increase of salary though satisfied that the matter should be given further consideration, but recommended that free first class travel between the London terminus and a Member's constituency should be granted, and that facilities for free postage of Members' letters should be provided. The House never approved the recommendation for free postage, and, as will be seen below, did not approve the travelling concession until 1924.

3. During the financial stringency of 1931, the payment to Members was reduced to £360 a year from 1st October 1931; it was raised again to £380 from 1st July 1934, and to the full £400 from 1st July 1935.

4. On 1st July 1937 payment to Members was increased to £600. In moving the increase, the Prime Minister, the late Mr. Neville Chamberlain, asked the House to take into consideration the difficulties in which many Members found themselves, and pointed out that not only had there been a fifty per cent. rise in the cost of living, but that demands on Members had risen due to the extension of the electorate and the increase of Parliamentary business.

5. The House did not approve the Estimate in 1921 which allowed for the cost of the travelling concessions recommended by the Select Committee of 1920, and it was not until 1924 that free 1st class travel between London and a station within the constituency was granted to Members. In 1926, this concession was extended to cover a convenient station short of the constituency. In 1931, during the financial stringency, the railway vouchers were made available for 3rd class fares. In 1932, a Member was allowed the cost of a 3rd class sleeping berth, provided that the cost of the 3rd class fare and the berth did not exceed the 1st class fare. In 1936, Members were granted the cost of 1st class sleeping berths, and of the additional charge on special trains such as the "Coronation Scot". In 1939 Members serving in the Forces were granted free travel between their war stations in the United Kingdom and London, and, in 1942, between their war stations in the United Kingdom and the constituency. These two concessions are still in force. In 1935, travel by air between London and the constituency was authorised, any excess over the 1st class fare for the corresponding journey by rail or sea being borne by the Member.

6. On 15th November 1945, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, free travel by rail or sea for a Member was extended to cover journeys between his ordinary residence and London, and between his ordinary residence and the constituency; and free travel by air was authorised for these journeys and for the journey between London and the constituency.

#### APPENDIX IV

##### STATISTICAL TABLE OF THE INCIDENCE OF THE CLAIMS FOR EXPENSES BY MEMBERS

*Memorandum by Board of Inland Revenue showing the Expenses as allowed against the Income Tax assessments on Members' Salaries*

*(Handed in by Sir Cornelius Gregg, K.C.B., K.B.E.)*

The following Table gives a statistical classification of the annual rate of expenses allowances made for Income Tax purposes for the current year 1945-46 ending 5th April, 1946, against the Income Tax assessments upon Members' Salaries. The Table covers all Members of the present House of Commons from whom claims

for allowance had been received by 31st December, 1945; in the case of new Members the allowance made is provisional. The Table covers 534 Members and as to the balance of 106 Members it should be borne in mind that Ministers and others in receipt of payment in respect of office are not eligible for payment as Members and accordingly do not come under review for allowance for expenses.

---

*Analysis of Expenses Claims allowed up to  
31st December, 1945*

<i>Expenses allowed</i>	<i>Number of Members</i>
At £100 per annum ... ..	22
„ £101 — £150 „ „ ... ..	10
„ £151 — £200 „ „ ... ..	11
„ £201 — £250 „ „ ... ..	9
„ £251 — £300 „ „ ... ..	18
„ £301 — £350 „ „ ... ..	23
„ £351 — £400 „ „ ... ..	37
„ £401 — £450 „ „ ... ..	35
„ £451 — £500 „ „ ... ..	60
„ £501 — £550 „ „ ... ..	40
„ £551 — £599 „ „ ... ..	41
„ £600 „ „ ... ..	228
Total claims received ... ..	534

Board of Inland Revenue,  
Somerset House.

2nd January, 1946.

## PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 1945.

## Members present :

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Mr. Tom Smith.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Joynson-Hicks.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Mr. Tom Smith was called to the Chair.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday next at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 12TH DECEMBER, 1945.

## Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Horabin.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. Lipson.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	Major Symonds.
	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Sir Cornelius Gregg, K.C.B., K.B.E., Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, was examined.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday next at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 1945.

## Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Horabin.	Mrs. Wills.
Mr. Joynson-Hicks.	Earl Winterton.

Mr. R. A. Little, Director of Postal Services, the General Post Office, and Mr. P. R. Mellors, the General Post Office; and Mr. A. J. Moyes, O.B.E., the Accountant, House of Commons, were examined.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday, 23rd January, 1946, at Eleven o'clock.



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WEDNESDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Horabin.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Sir Gilbert Campion, K.C.B., the Clerk of the House, was examined, and Mr. A. J. Moyes, O.B.E., the Accountant, was further examined.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.

TUESDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Horabin.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. Lipson.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Mr. McKinlay.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	Captain Charles Smith.
	Major Symonds.
	Mrs. Wills.

Mr. Glenvil Hall, a Member of the House and Financial Secretary to the Treasury ; Mr. W. J. Brown, Mr. A. E. Davies, and Mr. Robert Boothby, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till to-morrow at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 30th JANUARY, 1946

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Captain Charles Smith.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Mr. Gammans, Mr. Asterley Jones and Viscount Hinchinbrooke, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.

TUESDAY, 5th FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Daggar.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Captain Charles Smith.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Horabin.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Mr. George Hicks, Mr. Rogers, Mrs. Corbet and Mr. Quintin Hogg, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till tomorrow at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 6th FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Major Ramsay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Lang.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Mr. Martin Lindsay, Mr. John Maude, K.C., and Sir Basil Neven-Spence, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.

TUESDAY, 12th FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Lang.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

The Right Honourable William Whiteley, a Member of the House and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury; and Captain the Right Honourable James Stuart, M.V.O., M.C., a Member of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till tomorrow at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Major Ramsay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Lang.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Captain Geoffrey Bing, Mr. S. P. Viant, Mr. J. Binns, Mr. W. S. Duffie and Sir William Darling, C.B.E., M.C., Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.

TUESDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Daggar.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Captain Charles Smith.
Mr. Lang.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Leslie.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till tomorrow at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Cobb.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Daggar.	Captain Charles Smith.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Leslie.	Mrs. Wills.
Mr. Lipson.	Earl Winterton.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday, 6th March, at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander	Mr. Lang.
Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Captain Charles Smith.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Lieutenant-Colonel	Mrs. Wills.
Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	Earl Winterton.
Mr. Horabin.	

Draft Report, proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read the first time.

*Ordered*, That the Draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 4 agreed to.

Paragraph 5 amended, and agreed to.

Paragraph 6 agreed to.

Paragraph 7, amended, and agreed to.

Paragraphs 8 and 9 agreed to.

Paragraphs 10 to 13 amended, and agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Draft Report, as amended, be the Report of the Committee to the House.

REPORT  
FROM THE  
SELECT COMMITTEE  
ON  
MEMBERS' EXPENSES

TOGETHER WITH THE PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE COMMITTEE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE  
AND APPENDICES

---

*Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed  
6th March 1946*

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93—1

*Thursday, 15th November, 1945.*

Members' Expenses.—Select Committee appointed to consider the expenses incurred in connection with their parliamentary and official duties by Members of this House, including Ministers whose salary is less than £5,000 per annum; their remuneration; and their conditions of work.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

*Thursday, 29th November, 1945.*

Members' Expenses.—Select Committee to consist of Seventeen Members:—Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite, Mr. Callaghan, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Haydn Davies, Colonel Dodds-Parker, Professor Gruffydd, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam, Mr. Joynson-Hicks, Mr. Lang, Mr. Leslie, Mr. Lipson, Mr. McKinlay, Captain Charles Smith, Mr. Tom Smith, Major Symonds, Mrs. Wills and Earl Winterton:—Committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records; to sit notwithstanding any Adjournment of the House; and to report from time to time:—Five to be the quorum.—(*Mr. Robert Taylor.*)

*Wednesday, 5th December, 1945.*

Members' Expenses.—Mr. Callaghan and Professor Gruffydd discharged from the Select Committee; Mr. Daggar and Mr. Horabin added.—(*Mr. Mathers.*)

*Monday, 4th February, 1946.*

Members' Expenses.—Mr. Joynson-Hicks discharged from the Select Committee on Members' Expenses; Major Ramsay added.—(*Mr. Mathers.*)

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The cost of preparing for publication the Shorthand Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee was £89 6s. od.

The cost of printing and publishing this Report is estimated by H.M. Stationery Office at £242 10s. od.

## REPORT

The Select Committee appointed to consider the expenses incurred in connection with their parliamentary and official duties by Members of this House, including Ministers whose salary is less than £5,000 per annum, their remuneration and their conditions of work, have agreed to the following Report :—

1. Your Committee held 13 meetings and examined 26 witnesses. In accordance with the precedent of the Select Committee on Members' Expenses appointed in the Session of 1920, a circular letter from the Chairman was addressed to all Members of the House, quoting the terms of reference and asking whether there were any points on the incidence of their expenses as Members which they wished to bring to notice. Your Committee are grateful for the memoranda and the numerous replies received from Members which enabled them to gauge the limits of their inquiry and materially helped them to decide the course of their proceedings. At the Chairman's invitation the following Members of the House attended to give evidence: the Rt. Hon. William Whiteley, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, and Captain the Rt. Hon. James Stuart, M.V.O., M.C., Chief Opposition Whip, on Ministerial salaries; Mr. Glenvil Hall, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, on the position of the Treasury in the interpretation of Resolutions of the House affecting payments to Members; Mr. George Hicks, Mr. Rogers and Mrs. Corbet, Mr. Martin Lindsay and Mr. John Maude, Captain Geoffrey Bing, Mr. Viant and Mr. Binns, on memoranda submitted on behalf of groups of Members; Mr. Quintin Hogg on his memorandum; Mr. Robert Boothby, Mr. W. J. Brown, Sir William Darling, C.B.E., M.C., Mr. A. E. Davies, Mr. Duthie Mr. Gammans, Viscount Hinchingsbrooke, Mr. Asterley Jones and Sir Basil Neven-Spence, on expenses in general. In addition, Sir Gilbert Campion, K.C.B., the Clerk of the House, and Mr. A. J. Moyes, O.B.E., the Accountant, gave evidence on points of procedure and administration; and Sir Cornelius Gregg, K.C.B., K.B.E., Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, and Mr. R. A. Little, Director of Postal Services and Mr. P. R. Mellors, the General Post Office, on matters affecting their Departments. The Dominions Office furnished information on the emoluments granted to Members of the Central Legislatures of the Dominions, for which Your Committee are grateful and which they have noted with interest. Your Committee have added as appendices to their Report the Chairman's circular letter to Members of the House, the information on the emoluments of Members of the Central Legislatures of the Dominions, a short Historical Retrospect of the changes since 1911 in the payments and concessions for travel to Members of the House, and statistical information furnished by the Board of Inland Revenue on the incidence of claims for expenses by Members.

### PRESENT SITUATION

2. At present the payment to Members is at the rate of £600 a year. Of this, by a Treasury Minute of 1913, £100 free of income tax is allowed for expenses, but a Member, if he can show that his expenses exceed this figure, can claim expenses up to the full amount of the £600 under ordinary income tax procedure. There is also nothing to prevent the Treasury raising the figure of £100 up to the full amount of £600, if it were thought fit. Members now also receive the concession of free first-class travel by rail for the journeys between Westminster and their constituencies, between Westminster and their homes and between their homes and their constituencies. The cost of first-class sleeping berths and of the charge for travel by an all-Pullman train are allowed. Travel by air is allowed from convenient aerodromes

to cover the same three classes of journeys as for rail. The war-time concessions for Members serving in the Forces for free travel from their war stations to Westminster and to the constituency are still in force.

### CONSIDERATION OF THE EVIDENCE

3. Practically all the evidence and the written replies agreed in recommending some material increase in the present remuneration of Members. Some were in favour simply of an increased annual payment, some only claimed an increased allowance for expenses or additional free services, and others were for combining these two methods in varying degrees. In general, however, Your Committee find that the claims for an improvement in existing conditions resolve themselves into two main categories, (a) for financial measures calculated to provide any Member, after the deduction of legitimate expenses, with a sum that will enable him to carry out his duties efficiently and without embarrassment, and (b) for extensions of free travel (including allowances for cars) and for free postage, for free telephone calls, and for additional accommodation.

4. *Expenses.* From the evidence presented, and from their own experience, Your Committee are in no doubt that expenses incurred by Members in the course of their parliamentary duties, both at Westminster and in their constituencies, are at present very high and that, in consequence, many Members are finding themselves in a position in which they cannot perform those duties without financial anxiety. These expenses fall under four heads: the additional cost of living away from home when engaged in parliamentary duties at Westminster; the additional cost of living when engaged in parliamentary duties in the constituency when the Member does not live there; the cost of secretarial and clerical assistance; and the cost of such items as stationery, postage, telegrams and telephone calls. The incidence of these expenses varies in the case of each Member according to the geographical situation of his constituency and of his residence, the amount of his correspondence and his individual methods of work. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that the sum claimed to cover these expenses varies within the wide limits of the figures given in the table furnished by the Inland Revenue, from £100 to £600. (See Appendix IV).

Members coming from a distance who have to engage accommodation in London may find that they will have to spend £200 or more a year for expenses in London, while attending at Westminster. Members resident in London, on the other hand, do not incur this expense, but are faced with the continual high cost of living in London. The expenses incurred for work in a constituency depend upon its nature, whether urban or rural, its extent and the size of the electorate, and it is impossible to give an average figure.

Witnesses were of the opinion—which is borne out by the experience of the Members of Your Committee—that a Member must have a personal secretary, even though he does not employ one full time. His work is individual, and cannot suitably be done in a typists' pool. The salary of the type of secretary required is now about £5 to £6 a week, so that a Member must expect to pay some £150 to £200 for part time services. It is again difficult to assess the cost of stationery, postage, telegrams and telephone calls. This may vary from £25 to £100 per annum, though some Members have found that it is higher. There is no doubt that, at the present moment, the number of personal problems upon which constituents seek help from their Members is very large. This was the case at the end of the 1914–18 war and is, it may be hoped, a passing phase. On these grounds, arguments were adduced for the grant to Members of free postage, telegrams and toll or trunk telephone calls.



The difficulties of finding hotel or other living accommodation in London at the present moment have led to suggestions that living accommodation should be provided near the House for Members who require it. Your Committee see many administrative objections to such a scheme, and are of the opinion that it is not desirable to herd Members into anything of the nature of a Members' Hostel. They do not consider that the idea should be pursued.

Your Committee were happy to find that the provision of a set luncheon at 1s. 6d. and dinner at 2s. in the Members' Dining Room was welcomed by Members as a relief of their daily expenses in London. This and the other amenities provided in the House, such as the smoking and reading rooms and the library, with its valuable collection of books of reference, were borne in mind by Your Committee in coming to their conclusions. In this connection, Your Committee note that a room has been arranged in the House for the use of Members' secretaries, and some rooms made available in No. 5, Old Palace Yard, where Members may transact business. The plans for the new Chamber include twenty-one secretarial rooms, two conference rooms and ten interviewing rooms for Members\* and, when the rebuilding is complete, Members should no longer have grounds for complaint in this respect.

5. *Travel.* The extension of free travel for Members to include journeys between Westminster and their place of residence was made last November. Those Members, not a few, who live in or near London and make this journey daily, have naturally availed themselves of the concession. A voucher has to be made out for every journey, and the great increase in the number of vouchers has resulted in a corresponding increase of paper work in the Travel Office in the House of Commons, in the railway clearing house and the Fees Office, where the vouchers are finally checked. While this system of vouchers is working smoothly for Members who live some distance from London and do not travel every day, Members living on the system of the London Passenger Transport Board find it particularly irksome to present a voucher daily at their local booking office, and also complain that vouchers do not cover travel by the other services provided by the Board.

Wider suggestions were put before Your Committee to extend free travel by rail or sea for Members to cover the whole of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It was argued that Members have to deal with matters affecting the whole country and should not be prevented from studying conditions for themselves by the cost of the journey. Your Committee do not feel that a strong case was made out for such an extension at the present time.

A still more ambitious suggestion was that Members should be granted free travel to the Colonies and the Dependencies for reviewing the administration of which the House has direct responsibility. While appreciating the high value of such visits by Members, either as individuals or in a parliamentary delegation, Your Committee are of the opinion that this proposal is outside their terms of reference and can be considered in the first place only by the House itself.

Under the same heading comes a proposal to grant an allowance for the use of a motor car on journeys for which free travel by rail is now given, either against the fare for the corresponding journey by rail or on a mileage basis. It is undoubtedly a convenience for Members to have their cars at the House so that they can go home after a late sitting, or to make the journey either from London or their place of residence to the constituency by road, in order to have the car available for work there, but Your Committee consider that such use of a car is a convenience rather than a necessity, and that the cost should be met out of a Member's allowance for expenses.

\* See the Report from the Select Committee on House of Commons (Rebuilding) (H.C. 109, Session 1943-44).

## CONCLUSIONS

## REMUNERATION OF MEMBERS AND CONCESSIONS FOR TRAVEL

6. After considering the evidence and in framing their recommendations, Your Committee agreed upon three principles which they hope will commend themselves to the House and to the country: that a Member should be allowed his reasonable expenses, wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred in the performance of his duties as a Member; that he should then receive a sum which will enable him to maintain himself comfortably and honourably, but not luxuriously, during the time he is a Member of the House; and that the methods for dealing with expenses and with travelling concessions should be simple to administer.

7. So far as remuneration is concerned, Your Committee consider that these principles can be best applied by recommending the payment to a Member of a fixed annual sum, to include a sum free of tax to cover all reasonable expenses, but one larger than the sum of £100 at present so allowed. The figures furnished by the Board of Inland Revenue\* show that 369 out of 534 Members are estimating their expenses at over £450, and, of these, 309 at over £500 for the current financial year. These figures indicate that the sum which should be allowed for expenses lies between £450 and £600. It is impossible to arrive at any figure without appearing to give some too much and others too little. Your Committee are of the opinion that £500 is the fair sum that should be allowed to all Members for expenses instead of the £100 as at present. Members would then have to claim relief from income tax only for expenses above £500.

In assessing the sum which should be paid to a Member in addition to his expenses, Your Committee have not regarded it as a professional salary. Though a Member may be called upon to devote a great deal of time to the business of the House, he has complete freedom to allot his time between his parliamentary duties, either at Westminster or in his constituency, and his personal affairs. It would be most unwise to take this freedom from him by paying such a figure as would unequivocally demand his full time in return. The sum must, however, suffice to enable him "to maintain himself comfortably and honourably, but not luxuriously" while a Member of the House. These are the words used by the late Earl Lloyd-George of Dwyfor when he introduced payment of Members in 1911, and Your Committee feel that they still express the wishes of the House. Your Committee are agreed that this sum should be £500.

Your Committee therefore recommend that the salaries of Members should be increased to £1,000 a year, of which £500 should be allowed to all Members as an expense allowance free of income tax.

8. In view of this recommendation, Your Committee do not consider that any general extension of free rail and air travel or for the grant of car allowance for Members is necessary. They agree, however, that Members who live in or near London and come up daily to Westminster while the House is sitting should be relieved of the burden of presenting vouchers for the tickets. They therefore recommend that arrangements should be made without delay with the railway companies concerned and the London Passenger Transport Board, for the issue of season tickets of suitable duration to Members who wish to have them for daily journeys on which they are entitled to free travel.

9. For the same reason, Your Committee do not recommend that free postage, free telegrams and free telephone calls should be granted to Members. They inquired into the possibilities of the issue of franked envelopes, or of

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\* See Appendix IV.

postage stamps to a certain value, but found that any such system, even if restricted to correspondence posted in the House itself, would be complicated to administer and would not be satisfactory. Members now have free telephone facilities for the London area from the telephone boxes in the House, and Your Committee found that an extension to include toll and trunk calls was neither practicable nor desirable.

10. When Members travel on the business of the House, as, for instance, when they make visits of inspection as Members of a Select Committee, they receive subsistence allowance at the rate of 23s. 6d. a night. The rate was fixed in agreement with the Treasury and corresponds to that allowed to senior officers of the Fighting Services and of the Civil Service. Members with experience of such visits have found that their expenses are seldom covered by the allowance. Your Committee are fully satisfied that there is a strong case for an immediate review of the rate and are agreed that it is not sufficiently high. They therefore recommend that the rate of subsistence allowance be increased.

#### MINISTERIAL SALARIES

11. By their terms of reference Your Committee were instructed to inquire into the salaries and expenses of Ministers with salaries under £5,000 a year. Ministers who draw the salary attached to their office cease to draw their salaries as Members of the House, and are thus precluded from claiming expenses as Members. In the knowledge of Your Committee some junior Ministers have found it more advantageous to forgo their ministerial salary and to retain their salaries as Members. All have found that they have undertaken heavy responsibilities to the House and to their Departments without a commensurate increase in actual emoluments and, in some cases, with a considerable reduction in their personal income. Your Committee consider that some relief should be given in the way of expenses, and that the simplest method would be for Ministers with salaries under £5,000 a year to continue to draw £500 a year for expenses as Members of the House in addition to their salary. This would require legislation to amend the Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937, and other material Acts. The Chairman of Ways and Means and the Deputy Chairman should also receive this allowance in addition to their salaries.

Your Committee therefore recommend that Ministers with salaries of less than £5,000 a year, the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Deputy Chairman should be granted an expense allowance at the rate of £500 a year free of income tax as Members of the House in addition to their present salaries; and that the legislation necessary to amend the Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937, and other material Acts should be introduced. They further recommend that the salaries of these Ministers and of the Chairman of Ways and Means and of the Deputy Chairman should be reviewed by the Government.

#### COMMITTEE TO ADVISE MR. SPEAKER

12. From the evidence given by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury and by the Clerk of the House, Your Committee find that the position of the Treasury in the interpretation of Resolutions of the House affecting payments and concessions for free travel to Members is indeterminate. If a Member is in dispute with the Treasury on any such points, or if the Treasury decline to give a ruling, the final decision rests with Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker may thus be called on to give his ruling in small matters, the details of which would be, in the opinion of Your Committee, beneath the dignity of his office. Further, it would not be decorous for a Member, if he felt dissatisfied, to challenge Mr. Speaker's ruling in the House. Your Committee consider that

it would assist Mr. Speaker if a small informal committee, nominated by him in the same way as is the Library Committee, were set up to advise him on such matters, whose recommendations would be accepted both by the Treasury and by the Member concerned. They therefore recommend that consideration should be given to setting up a small informal committee, nominated by Mr. Speaker, to assist him in matters affecting the payments and concessions for free travel to Members, the recommendations of which would be accepted by Members and by the Treasury.

### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

13. Your Committee's recommendations and conclusions can be summarised as follows :—

- (a) The salaries of Members should be increased to £1,000 a year, of which £500 should be allowed to all Members as an expense allowance free of income tax (paragraph 7).
- (b) Ministers with salaries of less than £5,000 a year, the Chairman of Ways and Means and the Deputy Chairman should be granted an expense allowance at the rate of £500 a year free of income tax as Members of the House in addition to their present salaries; and the legislation necessary to amend the Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937, and other material Acts should be introduced (paragraph 11).
- (c) The salaries of these Ministers and of the Chairman of Ways and Means and of the Deputy Chairman should be reviewed by the Government (paragraph 11).
- (d) The rate of subsistence allowance granted to Members when travelling on the business of the House should be increased (paragraph 10).
- (e) Arrangements should be made without delay with the railway companies concerned and the London Passenger Transport Board for the issue of season tickets of suitable duration to Members living in or near London, who wish to have them for daily journeys for which they are entitled to free travel (paragraph 8).
- (f) Consideration should be given to setting up a small committee, nominated by Mr. Speaker, to assist him in matters affecting the payments and concessions for free travel to Members, the recommendations of which would be accepted by Members and by the Treasury (paragraph 12).
- (g) In view of their recommendation in (a) above, Your Committee consider unnecessary any extension of free travel (paragraph 9), any allowance for the use of a motor car (paragraph 8), or the grant of free postage, telegrams and telephone calls (paragraph 9).

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 PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE
 

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 THURSDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 1945.
 

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Members present :

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Mr. Tom Smith.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Joynson-Hicks.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Mr. Tom Smith was called to the Chair.

The Committee deliberated.

 [Adjourned till Wednesday next at Eleven o'clock.]
 

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 WEDNESDAY, 12TH DECEMBER, 1945.
 

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Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Horabin.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. Lipson.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	Major Symonds.
	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Sir Cornelius Gregg, K.C.B., K.B.E., Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, was examined.

The Committee deliberated.

 [Adjourned till Wednesday next at Eleven o'clock.]
 

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 WEDNESDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 1945.
 

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Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Horabin.	Mrs. Wills.
Mr. Joynson-Hicks.	Earl Winterton.

Mr. R. A. Little, Director of Postal Services, the General Post Office, and Mr. P. R. Mellors, the General Post Office; and Mr. A. J. Moyes, O.B.E., the Accountant, House of Commons, were examined.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday, 23rd January, 1946, at Eleven o'clock.]

REPORT FROM THE

WEDNESDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang. Mr. Leslie. Mr. Lipson. Mr. McKinlay. Captain Charles Smith. Major Symonds. Mrs. Wills. Earl Winterton.
Mr. Cobb. Mr. Daggar. Mr. Haydn Davies. Colonel Dodds-Parker. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam. Mr. Horabin.	

Sir Gilbert Campion, K.C.B., the Clerk of the House, was examined, and Mr. A. J. Moyes, O.B.E., the Accountant, was further examined.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.

TUESDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Horabin. Mr. Lang. Mr. Leslie. Mr. Lipson. Mr. McKinlay. Captain Charles Smith. Major Symonds. Mrs. Wills.
Mr. Cobb. Mr. Daggar. Mr. Haydn Davies. Colonel Dodds-Parker. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	

Mr. Glenvil Hall, a Member of the House and Financial Secretary to the Treasury ; Mr. W. J. Brown, Mr. A. E. Davies, and Mr. Robert Boothby, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till to-morrow at Eleven o'clock.

WEDNESDAY, 30th JANUARY, 1946

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang. Mr. Leslie. Mr. McKinlay. Captain Charles Smith. Major Symonds. Mrs. Wills. Earl Winterton.
Mr. Cobb. Mr. Daggar. Mr. Haydn Davies. Colonel Dodds-Parker. Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	

Mr. Gammans, Mr. Asterley Jones and Viscount Hinchingsbrooke, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.

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TUESDAY, 5th FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Daggar.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Captain Charles Smith.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Horabin.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Mr. George Hicks, Mr. Rogers, Mrs. Corbet and Mr. Quintin Hogg, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till tomorrow at Eleven o'clock.]

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WEDNESDAY, 6th FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Major Ramsay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Lang.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Mr. Martin Lindsay, Mr. John Maude, K.C., and Sir Basil Neven-Spence, Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.]

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TUESDAY, 12th FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Lang.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

The Right Honourable William Whiteley, a Member of the House and Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury; and Captain the Right Honourable James Stuart, M.V.O., M.C., a Member of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till tomorrow at Eleven o'clock.]

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WEDNESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

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Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Major Ramsay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Mr. Horabin.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Lang.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Captain Geoffrey Bing, Mr. S. P. Viant, Mr. J. Binns, Mr. W. S. Duthie and Sir William Darling, C.B.E., M.C., Members of the House, were examined.

[Adjourned till Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock.]

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TUESDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

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Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Daggar.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Captain Charles Smith.
Mr. Lang.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Leslie.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till tomorrow at Eleven o'clock.]

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WEDNESDAY, 20TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

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Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. McKinlay.
Mr. Cobb.	Major Ramsay.
Mr. Daggar.	Captain Charles Smith.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Leslie.	Mrs. Wills.
Mr. Lipson.	Earl Winterton.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday, 6th March, at Eleven o'clock.]



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WEDNESDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1946.

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Members present :

Mr. TOM SMITH in the Chair.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Cobb.	Mr. Leslie.
Mr. Daggar.	Mr. Lipson.
Mr. Haydn Davies.	Mr. McKinlay.
Colonel Dodds-Parker.	Captain Charles Smith.
Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.	Major Symonds.
Mr. Horabin.	Mrs. Wills.
	Earl Winterton.

Draft Report, proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read the first time.

*Ordered*, That the Draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 4 agreed to.

Paragraph 5 amended, and agreed to.

Paragraph 6 agreed to.

Paragraph 7, amended, and agreed to.

Paragraphs 8 and 9 agreed to.

Paragraphs 10 to 13 amended, and agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Draft Report, as amended, be the Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee, with Appendices, be reported to the House.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

**SELECT COMMITTEE ON MEMBERS' EXPENSES**  
(HOUSE OF COMMONS)

WEDNESDAY, 12TH DECEMBER, 1945.

Members present:

MR. TOM SMITH (*Chairman*).

<p>Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite. Mr. Cobb. Mr Daggar. Mr. Haydn Davies. Colonel Dodds-Parker. Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam. Mr. Horabin.</p>		<p>Mr. Lang. Mr. Leslie. Mr. Lipson. Captain Charles Smith. Major Symonds. Mrs. Wills. Earl Winterton.</p>
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Sir CORNELIUS GREGG, K.C.B., K.B.E. (Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue),  
called in and examined.

*Chairman.*

1. I think, Sir Cornelius, you know the terms of reference of this Select Committee?—Yes.

2. The Members are desirous of getting to know just one or two things in order to lead them in their conclusions, and I think the first thing that they want to know is the exact position with regard to, say, the allowances of Members of Parliament and junior Ministers. There is a difference, as you know, between those two sets of allowances. Then I believe for provincial Members the allowance is different from that for London Members. If the Committee were apprised of those things they would know exactly what the present position is. Perhaps you have some statistical information to give them?—Yes. Shall I give it now, Sir?

3. Either now or as you proceed?—Colonel Yule informed me that you wanted any information we could give you as to the amounts of expenses that were in fact allowed. I have drawn up a note here giving such statistics, which I will hand in.\*

4. Thank you.

I touch on the law in the first two paragraphs before I come to the figures. The law, of course, is just the general law of Schedule E which applies to all employments and all offices, of which membership of the House of Commons is one. Members are entitled to a deduction for Income Tax purposes of all expenses wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of the office. Then there is a further provision that in regard to any class of persons paid out of public funds the Treasury where satisfied that the office does involve

\* See Appendix V.

such expenses can prescribe a fair annual average, as the section says, to be allowed. It is under that provision that the Treasury made an Order years ago allowing £100 for expenses. Coming back to the main point, that the expenses are wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred, in the ordinary case of an office holder or a holder of employment of any kind the expenses of cost of living and expenses of getting to your office and so on are not a deduction; an ordinary employee gets no deduction from his salary or wage in respect of the cost of getting to his place of employment or the cost of living or anything else of that kind in respect of his place of employment. In the case of a Member of the House of Commons, he is in a peculiar position with an office in two places. He holds an office which is both in his constituency and in the House. Therefore we allow the additional cost of living in London, because his office is in his constituency; he has a kind of travelling office, and travels from his constituency to London. The additional expenses incurred thereby are incurred in the performance of his duties. That is a fundamental proposition, and we will come to that later on, when we come to deal with the question of Ministers. Before touching on the position of Ministers, would you prefer that I should go ahead on the figures?

5. Yes, I think we had better have the figures first?—Taking those as stated in paragraph 2, Members will be familiar with the nature of the expenses, because every Member has to complete an expense claim form, and he is asked to say what he claims as his expenses, and to divide them up under specific headings. There are the headings which I have mentioned in paragraph 2: "the additional cost of living away from home when engaged

12 December, 1945.]

Sir CORNELIUS GREGG, K.C.B., K.B.E.

[Continued.]

in Parliamentary duties either at Westminster or in the constituency (at one place only), secretarial and clerical assistance," and such items as "stationery, postage, telegrams, etc." The two main items are the additional cost of living and secretarial assistance; they are the two big items in all the claims. Now, the Table given in paragraph 3 is based on the actual allowances made for the year 1941-42. We had that already worked out in another connection, and I thought I had better give you the figures we had rather than to attempt any fresh compilation. It covers 493 Members; the balance of Members would be mainly Ministers, and Ministers not being paid as Members they do not appear in the picture. They are subdivided there. Fifty-five at £100 are the people who get a flat £100 whatever their expenses are; even though their expenses were nil they get the £100. If, on the other hand, you can show more, you are given more. The £100 is rather an odd average; if anyone shows expenses above the average he gets the excess. If under the average, he gets the average. Then in addition to that, Sir, in paragraph 4 you have figures relating to the new House of Commons, new Members. We took stock at the end of September of the claims as then allowed. Of course, all are provisional, because you had no year's experience to go on when the new Members filled up this claim form and estimated their expenses, and upon that basis we have made a provisional allowance. If at the end of the year the figure proves to be different it will be adjusted. Table No. 4 covers the cases of 277 new Members. You will see in both Tables that you have statistics showing the dispersion of the allowances. You have a small number beginning at £100, going up to a large number claiming the whole £600; and the tendency has been for claims to rise to £600. As you know, the original allowance or payment to Members goes back to 1911. It was in 1913 that the law was amended to give a flat £100 allowance, and for many years after that it was practically the only allowance given. It was not, I think, until the then Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1921 pointed out in the House that any Member who could show that his expenses were more than £100 could claim the allowance that you had the tendency for the expenses allowable to exceed £100. The value of these two sets of figures is merely to illustrate to you from our experience what the average run of expenses is.

5A. I do not mind saying that these figures will be interesting to Members, the samples you have got out, Sir Cornelius, because there appears to be a kind of general impression that all Members of Parliament get the £600 excluded. The Table which you have presented to us shows that there is quite a difference between the £100 point and the others?—Yes.

6. It has been customary, at least since I became a Member in 1922, to get allowances under four headings, cost of living in London, clerical assistance, postage, and expenses within one's constituency, not from here to King's Cross, for instance, but within the constituency itself?—On constituency business, not merely on political business.

7. Yes, naturally; and the tendency has been to increase the amount of the allowance because there has been an increase in the costs?—Yes.

8. In regard to clerical assistance, it used to be, before this Parliament, that we got somewhere about £75 a year without actually employing a secretary—a man went and had his stuff dictated and paid the bill in the ordinary way. That has been increased because the costs have gone up. What actually happens in the case of a Member who employs a full-time secretary?—If he employs a full-time secretary on his business as a Member, we allow that cost, and there are cases here where practically the whole £600 is spent in that fashion.

9. That would be part of the £600 allowed?—Yes. You find it, of course, with the Member who has not got time to spare because of other commitments.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.

10. I should like to put one question on this matter of clerical assistance. Did I understand the Witness to say that there is really no ceiling at all in this matter? If, for instance, one employs a secretary for London purposes and another secretary in one's constituency, paying each of them £6 a week, which is about the minimum one has to pay now for a girl with experience, I was wondering whether the whole of that would be allowed; is there no ceiling at all?—There is no ceiling if the expense is wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred. It is an allowable expense. There are cases where the payment made for secretaries and clerical assistance practically mops up the whole £600 allowance.

11. And is there a ceiling for postage, or what is a reasonable claim?—No, there is no ceiling. It is a question of dealing with each case on its merits. There is no ceiling of any kind.

*Chairman*.

12. Except, I presume, that it would be disallowed if one put an exaggerated sum in?—That is what the Revenue, Sir, is constantly engaged in, in looking at claims from all taxpayers and seeing whether they are reasonable. If we think they are reasonable we accept them without inquiry; if we do not think they are reasonable we make some inquiries.

12 December, 1945.] Sir CORNELIUS GREGG, K.C.B., K.B.E.

[Continued.]

Mr. Cobb.

13. You then have to prove that the claim is too high?—In theory it would be so, but the question practically never arises for Members.

Earl Winterton.

14. I should like to ask a question arising out of the question asked by my honourable Friend on my left. Are there many cases where Members have disputed the ruling of the Treasury in the matter of expenses?—I do not think so, Sir.

15. Is it the fact that the Treasury accept any statement of a Member? Would they treat him differently from any ordinary member of the public?—No. There are cases in which Members have claimed expenses which we disallowed on the ground that they were not allowable. That does happen.

16. There have been such cases?—Yes.

Mr. Lipson.

17. Is that because it does not come within the categories of allowable expenses or because the amount is considered excessive?—Generally because of the category.

18. What percentage of the actual amounts within the allowable categories do you find that you have to query, or is it most unusual for a query to arise?—I could not tell you that. That would need analysis of individual cases.

Earl Winterton.

19. Would not it be possible to get some sort of idea, because it seems to me to be rather an important question, or some statistical information, in relation to the number of cases where there has been a dispute between the Treasury and a Member, where either the Member has claimed more than the Treasury think he is entitled to or the Treasury have allowed him, and then would not it be possible to give us some indication of the percentage?—All I can tell you is that I cannot remember, in recent years, a single case coming before the Board where there was any real dispute. My general experience has been that our branch which deals with the claim settles it with the Member concerned without the matter coming to dispute. I do know that in many cases, certain items claimed as expenses—the expense of books, for instance, is one small thing—have been disallowed. There might be a question about large sums down for a secretary, and the question would be, Was this secretary wholly employed on the Member's business and not employed on any other? If the Member assures us it is so, the matter is ended, unless we have any reason to doubt it; because we generally, not merely in relation to Members of Parliament but in relation to the whole community, accept the taxpayer's word to be true unless we have evidence to the contrary.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.

20. Do you mean to say it must be a whole-time secretary? Supposing I claim for a secretary at a salary of, say, £4 a week or whatever it is, £5 a week, does that mean that she works for nobody else?—No, it does not necessarily mean that. It means £4 is paid to her for work which is wholly Member's work.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.] I see.

Chairman.

21. There is one thing that I think ought to be made clear in replying to the honourable Member about a ceiling figure. Is not it clear that the expenses would not be allowed above a ceiling figure?—That is so; you cannot get an allowance for expenses greater than the emoluments from the office.

22. Yes. I remember a Question on the Order Paper some time ago on that very point, as to whether there was any expense above the £600 coming off a Member's own private income, and the reply was "No"?—Yes; we will come to that when we come to the question of Members and Ministers. You cannot charge the expense of office A against the emoluments of office B or against trading profits of a business or anything else; you can only charge the expenses of a particular office against the emoluments that have arisen from that office. Consequently, if a Member spends £700 on his duties as a Member, that extra £100 would not be allowed against his private income, his investment income, salary or anything else.

Earl Winterton.

23. Might I ask this: Supposing, because there are Members who do not take their salaries, that a particular Member made out a claim for allowances on the ground that the cost of his business of being a Member of Parliament was £1,000, how would that be treated?—He would get no allowance for that.

24. None at all?—You are putting the case where he does not draw emoluments as a Member?

25. Yes?—He could only get allowances on the expenses of Membership against the assessment on the emoluments as a Member.

26. Even if he did not draw it?—Precisely.

27. He would then get no expenses at all?—No expense allowance.

28. Supposing he said: "Well, I do not want to take the salary, but I consider I am entitled to charge expenses at the rate of £400 a year," would he be allowed that?—No; you can only claim the expenses of any office—that is a general rule, not peculiar to Members of Parliament—against the emoluments arising from that office. If there are no emoluments—and there are

12 December, 1945.]

Sir CORNELIUS GREGG, K.C.B., K.B.E.

[Continued.]

many such cases of unpaid offices—then expenses cannot be allowed. Take a Justice of the Peace or take the Chairman of a Local Authority who is holding an unpaid office. That man incurs expenses in carrying out his duties, but he cannot claim those expenses as a relief against his other income, be it investment income or salary or business profits or whatever it is.

29. My point is this: Assuming a Member drew no salary and he made an expenses claim of £300, that would not be allowed despite the fact that by drawing no salary, assuming the expenses claim was allowed, he would be saving the Exchequer £300?—True; but there is no Income Tax assessments upon that Member because he is not drawing any emoluments from the office.

30. No. My point is that if the Member does not receive his salary it does not mean he has got no living expenses, and if he were living in London and claiming £300 for secretarial assistance, although he was not drawing his salary from the Treasury, assuming that the claim was allowed on the salary he would be saving the Treasury £300, yet he is not allowed it?—No; he is treated the same as if he were holding an unpaid office. There is no Income Tax assessment upon him, as he draws no emoluments. There is nothing against which to allow expenses incurred.

31. Is it then the law that an unpaid office which is really an unpaid office, such as a Justiceship of the Peace, is in the same position as an office such as that of a man who is a Member of Parliament but in which he does not choose to draw his salary?—There is no assessment upon the Member who does not draw his salary; he is not assessed to tax at all. Where you have the case of a Member electing not to draw the payment of salary as a Member there is no Income Tax assessment upon him.

32. Therefore, for that reason, he cannot claim any expenses?—If he drew the emoluments there would be an expense allowance.

Mr. Cobb.

33. Could I amplify the point originally raised by the noble Lord? If you pursue this into the realms of business, a man with, say, £1,000 a year and two Directorships, would only be able to charge the expenses in connection with one Directorship against the salary of £1,000 a year; he could not charge, say, £1,200; he could not charge £1,000 against one and £200 against the other?—No.

34. So that it goes right the way through the community?—It is a general rule.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

35. How do you define additional cost of living away from home—if you spend a night away—or would it apply equally to

the man who was travelling from his home to the House? There are cases in this House; for example, a Member living as far away as Cambridge and doing the journey daily. Would that man be regarded as living away from home for the purpose of Income Tax relief from the moment he leaves home until he arrives back home from his duties in this House?—I want to be quite clear as to the case you are putting. You are putting the case of a man living in Cambridge and not having any habitat in London at all?

36. Yes?—Simply travelling up and down every day?

37. Yes?—There is no additional cost of living in London on the facts you are putting, because the travelling would be provided for, I presume, otherwise. It is the additional cost of living in London for the Member in Cambridge which is allowable.

38. Yes?—If he chooses to live all the time in Cambridge and to fly up and down, he is not incurring any additional cost of living in London.

39. I am glad to hear that, because surely your definition of living for Inland Revenue purposes means habitation. You do not regard, for example, having to eat as having any relation at all to the cost of living?—I should not like to go quite as far as that.

40. That is because this Member of Parliament with whom I am concerned would not be eating meals in this House but would be eating them in Cambridge, but because he is a Member of Parliament, arising wholly out of his duties he is forced to eat here?—A common case of that sort is the case of a London Member. London Members are living perhaps away from London, but their constituency is here in Westminster, and here they are living for most of the time. We give them practically no allowance under this first heading, additional cost of living. I know it has been suggested that a Member by reason of being in the House is not at home, and he has additional costs by way of meals by living in the House, but we have no allowance for that, though I can see you could argue that the cost of meals in the House is something additional to his ordinary household expenses. I can see that point. But in general I think that the London Member receives no allowance under that heading. The allowance for the London Member is mainly granted under the heading of secretarial expenses.

41. Yes. If I might pursue this point, because I led that deputation of London Members to the Treasury arising out of their original ruling that London Members cannot charge anything for cost of living, even though they do not live in London,—Yes.

42. —that ruling stands?—Yes.

43. It cuts both ways?—Yes. It is a rule, you appreciate, that applies to all employees of the Crown, servants of the Crown

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[Continued.]

in particular; it applies to Civil Servants. Civil Servants may be living anywhere near London, but they get no allowance for the cost of coming into London; they get no allowance for the additional cost of meals from home.

44. But you have this peculiar case in the House, where you have provincial Members who live in or near London and London Members who live out in the wilds of Surrey. You have one man who can claim an allowance and the other man who cannot. That is so, is it not?—This is the triangular case, as it is called.

45. No. You have a Member for a Yorkshire constituency whose permanent home is in London, and you have a London Member of Parliament whose permanent home is, say, in Surrey or Sussex. The London Member of Parliament lives further away from the Palace of Westminster than the Yorkshire Member, only he gets no allowance and the Yorkshire man can claim an allowance?—I am not sure of the case you are putting, and I would not like to agree offhand. You are putting to me the case where a Yorkshire Member is permanently living in London. In those circumstances he could not claim that the cost of living in London was wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred.

Mr. Lipson

46. But he would only get it if he had two homes. You can only claim it if you have two homes, one in London and one somewhere else?—Yes, that is it.

Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.

47. You do give a very wide interpretation to this. With regard to the provincial Member, his word with regard to hotel accommodation is generally accepted by the Inland Revenue?—Yes.

48. And by the same token the Yorkshire Member with his home in London is, subject to correction, allowed the expense of similar accommodation in his constituency?—Yes. If his permanent home is here there is no doubt about that. If his permanent home were in London, then we would treat Yorkshire as the other end of the office and we would allow the expense arising there.

Mr. Leslie.

49. That means that the provincial Member who resides in London would only get the expense allowed when he went to his constituency. For instance, I live in London and my constituency is in Durham, and I am only allowed it when I go to my constituency?—That is if your permanent residence is in London.

50. Yes?—I should say so, but I cannot answer now about your individual case, of course.

51. That has always been allowed?—Yes; you would be allowed the cost of going to your constituency, because, you see, your cost of living in London is not wholly, necessarily and exclusively incurred by reason of

your tasks at Westminster, for you are anchored here, but the cost of going to Durham is.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

52. In view of the pressure at which the House is now working, with late sittings and the impossibility of getting home, if a provincial Member spends the night in London after a late sitting, or is staying here anywhere, he is allowed the allowance for cost of living for that; but there must be several hundred Members who are unable to get home that night, and if a London Member stays in a hotel that night in the same way that a provincial Member does, can he make that charge a claim for Income Tax Relief?—I should not like to answer that. I have never heard of such a case. I am afraid I cannot deal with all these cases in the concrete.

Chairman.

53. It is a point that arose some time ago in the old Parliament, and I do not know what happened about Income Tax, but in the days when we used to have frequent all-night sittings Members who lived, say, twenty miles outside London could not return home, and had to go to their Club or a hotel, and I remember that there was some discussion between Members on that point. I do not know whether they were allowed anything or not in addition to their £100 for Income Tax purposes, but I remember it frequently coming up?—If you like, Sir, I will look into that point, and I can probably let you know about it, but I would not like to answer you offhand.

Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.

54. I think the Inland Revenue are extremely broad-minded in the way they allow these claims; they do not ask you to produce your hotel bill for every night you have to stay in London. If you make a claim it is accepted?—Yes.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.] I think the Inland Revenue is most generous in regard to these things. We are honourable men and women and we are not here to cheat, and I think they take that line. I do not honestly think it is worth going into all these small matters, because they do not arise.

Chairman.] Yes. Could we leave that particular point and get on to another phase of the subject?

Mr. Lang.

55. Before we do that, may I put one question, Mr. Chairman, which is important to a number of us, and that is where Members have, shall I say, two Income Tax accounts. For instance, if I may put my personal case, after I was elected here this time I was asked a question by the Gloucester Area, from which a part of my private income is derived, whether I would still continue to officiate at week-ends on salary.

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[Continued.]

I thought I should, and so I said so. Then when I came here, of course, I had to complete the necessary forms for assessment here; and I find, as many other Members find, that there is a very wide divergence in the allowances to Members who incur the same expenses; that is to say, Members who, like myself, represent a Division in the North who have their home in the South and have to live here. While there can be no real difference in the amount of expenditure, there is somehow or other a considerable difference in the amount of the allowance. I was concerned about that, and this is the point I should like to put to you. I understand that where a Member has two incomes the personal allowance, that is my personal allowance, the allowance that we all have, is not credited to me at all, and I receive no personal allowance on my Parliamentary salary. On inquiry I was informed that that would be debited against my income. Now, the question I wish to ask arising out of that is this: Supposing, as is the position in my case, that it is quite impossible for me to fulfil anything like the number of engagements I expected to do at week-ends, owing to pressure of work which is weighing me down, up to the moment certainly the separate income since my election has proved to be far short of the total allowances, the personal allowances, that should be given, what would happen in that case? Would there be an adjustment?—Yes, there would be an adjustment, and relief from Income Tax. That relief from taxation which is due to any taxpayer by reason of his personal allowance will be given to him, and if it so happens that the particular income, if I understood you properly, against which the allowances are at present rated is not sufficient to carry them, the balance will be brought over to the other income and credited there. There is no question about that at all.

56. One other question with regard to constituency allowances. I did not know they were claimable when I was here before—I know quite well I never did it—but does that include travelling in the constituency? For instance, I have a constituency with three boroughs in it and a considerable country area. Does that include travelling in the constituency and, where it is necessary, hotel expenses? They are not often necessary, because I find people are ready and willing to accommodate their Member, but there are serious travelling expenses which can be involved in a very large area like that?—Travelling expenses, in so far as they are expenses incurred as a Member are allowed, but I doubt whether it would extend to all travelling expenses of what I might call a purely political character, travelling to political meetings and that sort of thing; but there are cases in which claims are made and allowed for travelling expenses in the constituency, taxi fares and so on.

57. There are no purely political meetings now. If one goes to a meeting nowadays one has a queue of people waiting for information, and aspirants for posts and so on, to deal with. I find that my work after a meeting of that kind is much more onerous, dealing with people who want various things, than anything at the meeting?—Yes.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite.*] But there again the Inland Revenue have always taken a very broad view if one makes a special claim for transport within one's constituency. I have never been asked to show any proof that these taxis and so on have been used for constituency business. I think it all comes back to the point that Sir Cuthbert made that we are honourable people and these claims are not put in frivolously.

Mr. *Lipson.*

58. One is not allowed the cost of a taxi from one's hotel in London, if one has a second habitation in London, and the House?—No, I do not think so.

*Chairman.*

59. I think that has been made perfectly clear before?—As has been said, these questions do not arise in practice, because we accept the declaration of expenses signed by the Member as a proof to the best of his judgment that those are the expenses incurred, and we accept that, as we do from anyone else. We never hold an inquest in regard to every claim that is made by any taxpayer unless there is reason to doubt it, taxpayer unless there is reason to doubt it, in the case of Members, because you have the general experience of a number of claims coming in.

Lieut.-Colonel *Sir Cuthbert Headlam.*

60. Assuming you have seen some claim is greater than usual, you might possibly ask the Member why it was, or something of that kind; that is the most that it would come to?—Yes; and sometimes there is need to do that. One Member may be claiming more for secretarial assistance than another, but you know what that Member's circumstances are.

61. I know it happened to myself. I started with a secretary, when I came back to the House, at a certain figure, and you wrote to me and you asked for the name of this secretary, for the purpose, no doubt, of assessing her to Income Tax?—Yes, we have to charge her.

62. I sent it to you and that was an end of it. Then the next year I changed my plans and I did not have a secretary at all—I had what is called clerical assistance?—Yes.

Lieut.-Colonel *Sir Cuthbert Headlam.*] And you did not query that at all. There was nothing to query.



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[Continued.]

Mr. Lipson.

63. On what principle is one not allowed to charge a taxi from one's hotel in London to the House, because it is purely part of one's Parliamentary duties? I cannot understand on what principle that is refused; for instance, after a midnight sitting?—If we refused such a claim it would be refused on the ground that it is the cost of travelling to your office or to your place of employment. A Civil Servant gets no allowance for his taxi or Tube or anything else like that.

64. Upon that principle?—Yes, that would be the principle.

Mr. Lipson.] I only asked what the principle was.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

65. Is this based on the case of *Ricketts v. Colquhoun*?—Yes.

66. Any time this question arises the answer is always *Ricketts v. Colquhoun*, and not being a lawyer I do not always understand what that means?—That was a case which established that the cost of getting to your place of employment or your office was not a cost incurred in carrying out the duties of that office. Your Member of Parliament has his office in two places. We give the cost of the one on the ground that he is rooted in the other and comes in the course of his exercise of the office here.

Mr. Cobb.

67. In regard to Items 3 and 4, you did not definitely say it but I think you inferred it, that the statistics shown under Item 3 were proved, whereas the statistics shown under Item 4 were on a budgeted basis and subject to proof. Did you infer that?—No. The point is this. Item 3 refers to claims allowed, where the Members claiming had, of course, the actual experience of previous years to go on. The claims for new Members are claims made in the first month of membership, without anything like a year's experience to guide you, and therefore to that extent they are provisional.

68. So that you might expect the figures under Item 4 to alter to some extent when Members have had that experience?—They may; certain items will be constant; if the salary is included here it will be constant unless of course the rate of wage or salary moves up.

Mrs. Wills.

69. Would you say this is a fair sample of the House, or was it just based on those who came in in time?—It is only the new Members; Table 4 is based on new Members.

70. It is not a sample really?—It covers 277 new Members whose claims were in by the end of September; it is a large sample of the new Members.

71. So that the final figures may differ a lot from those as to the numbers claiming certain amounts?—I should not expect them to differ a lot, because the number is so big. It is a very big sample even, and expenses do not alter very much.

Major Symonds.

72. Have you any evidence at all as to how the claims of this half of the House, because it is roughly half, were arrived at, or how your estimates of expenses as shown here compare with the estimates of the older Members, say the other half of the House?—That is rather in Item 3, because Item 3 gives you the figure for practically the whole House.

73. But there is a four or five years' difference in time between them?—Yes, true.

74. I am wondering how for this year, 1945-1946, your estimate of old Members compares with new ones and compares with the estimate of old Members in 1941-1942?—All I can do—I do not know how long the Committee is sitting—is to strike a balance at the end of December, and I can make up Table No. 3 with the whole present House of Commons, except that while it will include new Members those new Members will be on a provisional basis. As far as the old Member of the House of Commons is concerned, we are allowing him his ordinary figure which he was allowed up to the Dissolution.

75. Could we have the figures given separately for new Members and for old Members?—You have it here simply for the new Members. If I were giving you a fresh Table I would give it to you for all Members.

Chairman.

76. You could not possibly get a clear statement until the end of the financial year?—True; but we would have to take stock at the end of December if you wanted it quickly.

77. I will tell you what I find. When new Members came into the House a good many of them were not aware of the allowances that they could claim, and I know that some of them were pretty late in putting their claims in, purely on the ground of ignorance as to what was allowed?—That would mean, if we take stock at the end of December, that there are  $x$  claims to come in but  $x$  would be a small number, and you would still have several hundreds in. I can get my people to do it and let you have it in January.

78. Thank you. I think it would be helpful?—To make it quite clear, you want me to give you a return for the whole House at present of whatever has been allowed, provisionally or otherwise does not matter, in regard to costs.\*

\* See Appendix IV.

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[Continued.]

79. Yes. Now I think we ought to leave this particular point; I think we have had a very good go at what Members of Parliament are allowed. The next question we come to is the question of Ministers, Sir Cornelius. As I understand it, the moment a Member of Parliament accepts Ministerial office, whether it is in a junior sense or in a major sense, he gets the usual Income Tax cut at source in the ordinary way and he gets nothing at all allowed him for expenses incurred either as a Member of Parliament or as a Minister. That is the effect of it. When I became a Parliamentary Secretary three and a half years ago my salary more or less doubled. Actually it was not doubled to me at the end of the financial year, because whereas as a Member of Parliament I could claim under the four headings which we have just been discussing, as a Minister I could not claim a single penny piece, and in addition to that the cut took place the moment the monthly salary came along, when one was in a position of not only having the current Income Tax deducted but having also deducted a further amount of Income Tax one was paying for the previous year. I think the Committee would be pleased if you would explain how that comes about, whether it is a question of 'Statute or whether it has grown up by custom, as to how it comes about that no expenses are allowed at all to people who accept Ministerial posts?—The first point to bring out is that the resolution governing the payment of Members expressly excludes Ministers, and consequently a Member who is a Minister is not paid as Member and no doubt you know the Income Tax effect of that. You have two offices, a Member of the House of Commons and a Minister holding a Ministerial post under the Crown, for which he receives a salary. The office of Member of the House of Commons is an unpaid office, and the expenses of that unpaid office cannot be charged against his salary as Minister. That is the point I mentioned originally. Therefore, if you take the extreme case of the Member who had, say, £600 wholly allowed as expenses, he would have in effect £600 tax-free *qua* Member. When he becomes a Minister, at say, £1,500 a year, or whatever else it may be, he is liable to tax on the full amount. There were cases during the war of Whips and other junior Ministers at £1,000 a year, and that meant they received £1,000 a year less tax. If there were no other income that would always be more than £600. It was then, is now and will be so next year; but, of course, if the Minister had a considerable private income, then the tax charged on the £1,000 might be such as to reduce the net amount to below £600, and if he had been in the position where he had £600 expenses allowed his translation to the £1,000 a year post would result in an actual fall in his income. That only happened, I must emphasise, where a Minister

had other income bringing him into liability to Sur-tax and driving up his peak rate, because you judge the effect of taxation always on a particular item of income by deeming it to be the 'top slice of income. Coming back to the general question, you cannot charge against a Minister's salary anything for expenses as Member. Now it has been more than once suggested in Parliament, and otherwise, that he should be paid as a Member and paid as a Minister with, if you like, an adjustment to his salary. That is not a matter with which I am concerned. But if he were paid as a Member it does not follow from that that he would get the same taxation allowances for expenses against the payment as Member as he might have enjoyed when he was only a Member. We are again up against this doctrine of wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred. Supposing a Member continued to be paid as a Member when he became a Minister, he could only get allowance from the Member's payment in respect of payments wholly necessarily and exclusively incurred. The expenses of living in London could not be claimed under the law, when he becomes a Minister, because now he is required by his Ministerial office to live in London, and consequently he could not show that the expense of living in London is wholly, necessarily and exclusively due to being a Member. He will continue to enjoy an expenses allowance if he engages a secretary for constituency business—of course, as a Minister he has a secretary provided for official business—so that against the Member's salary there would be put that allowance. He would not get the same allowance for the expenses of a Member because the circumstances have changed, and he can no longer, it seems to me, hold that the expense of living in London is exclusively incurred in consequence of his Membership when as a matter of fact his Ministerial duties anchor him here the whole year round.

Mr. Lipson.

80. And all Ministers get free secretarial assistance in fact?—The general rule of the Crown is that the Crown supplies all its servants, Ministers, Civil Servants and everyone else, with all the staff and everything else they require for the performance of their official duties. No Minister of the Crown gets any allowances for expenses from his salary.

Chairman.

81. Upon that point, you ought to make this clear, Sir Cornelius, that so far as the secretarial assistance needed for his work as a Minister goes, that is provided by the State; but it has been known in some cases that a Minister will have a secretary for his purely personal or con-

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[Continued.]

stituency correspondence, which is separate from his official work, and even though he gets all his Departmental correspondence naturally franked in the ordinary way it is not unknown for a Minister to have to pay each month a postage bill to meet the cost of his own constituency and personal correspondence?—That would be constituency expenditure which would be allowable if he were paid as a Member.

Mr. *Lipson*.] But my point is that he does get in effect a secretary for his constituency work free of charge.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

82. No. He gets a secretary as Minister. That secretary is a Civil Servant, and he cannot really, strictly speaking, say that he is employing that secretary to do his work in his constituency or work in connection with his private affairs, and what the Chairman says is perfectly true. I know that when I held a Ministerial appointment—and no doubt when you did, too—I did not think it right or proper, nor should I have thought it consistent at all with my duty, to ask my official private secretary to do my private correspondence?—That is my own experience. I was at one time private secretary to a Minister, and I know that happened.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.] The allegation was made in the House that all Ministers' correspondence, constituency and otherwise, was franked, that it was post-free.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.] That again is not the case.

*Chairman*.] I think, speaking from my own experience, it is hardly true to say that, but there does come a time when it is difficult to define. I know that I, as Parliamentary Secretary, received letters from Members of Parliament relating to Departmental work, and they were all franked, whereas scores of people would write possibly to my own constituency about minor matters to me as Parliamentary Secretary, not as a Member of Parliament, and all those letters had to be handled Departmentally. Now, in this case they would be franked in the ordinary way.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.] Yes.

*Chairman*.] I think Sir Cornelius knows that on the question of a man getting his private correspondence done inside a Department, whilst it is true that on occasion he does get secretarial assistance in the sense that his own Departmental Secretary will handle some of it, he is not unknown to have to pay a postage bill at the end of the month for his own private correspondence. I have a certain experience in my own mind about that.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.] Yes.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

83. Assuming that this Committee should decide—and it is purely an assumption—that instead of paying a junior Minister £1,500, you would allow him to have £600 as a Member of Parliament and £900 as a Minister, he could then claim on his £600 purely for his own Parliamentary work. Would he have to pay full Income Tax on the £900?—Yes. But the point I should like to make on that is that the expense that would be allowable against that £600 would not necessarily be the same expenses as were allowable before.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.] Yes, quite.

Mr. *Cobb*.

84. May I ask this? A Minister, you say, is really tied to London because of his job; but then he can surely charge the expense of living in London if his own home is in the provinces?—No.

85. Because that is an expense of doing the job?—No, that is the point of *Ricketts v. Colquhoun*, because the expense of a man getting to his place of employment is not a deduction for taxation purposes against the income arising from that employment. If I choose to go and live in Oxford to-morrow instead of living here in London, I will not get a deduction against my salary because of travelling up and down from Oxford.

86. Is not it the case that with the ordinary member of the community there is a small allowance made for Income Tax if he is moved from one place to another in order to take up a job?—That was purely a wartime allowance and only related to the class of case where, during the war, a man was required to change his place of employment; he is allowed for that additional travelling expenditure arising from it up to £10. That was brought in merely to deal with cases where a man was directed from one job to another and in consequence had to face a higher travelling bill.

87. So that you treat a Minister as a man who takes on a job of his own free will, and it means that he has to stop living, say, in Aberdeen and has to live in London?—This rule applies to all, and a Minister is treated the same as everyone else.

*Chairman*.

88. Irrespective of the size of salary?—Yes, it applies to anyone.

Mr. *Cobb*.

89. Can he charge against that salary his personal allowances?—Yes; they are not expenses, they are allowances.

90. You do not exclude those?—The expense of getting to your office and living in London is not deducted—and the same applies to anyone with an office or employment in London, including Crown

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[Continued.]

Servants. In short, the cost of getting to your job is not a deduction in the computation of your income.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

91. The Ministers of the Crown Act, 1937, would require amendment to give back to Ministers their right to draw £600 as Members of Parliament?—Yes. That expressly excludes Ministers. Of course, it is not a matter for me. The House of Commons would have to amend its own Resolution. I am not concerned with payment as such; I am only concerned with taxation consequences.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.] Yes.

*Chairman*.

92. May I express our thanks to you, Sir Cornelius, for the help you have given us?—Thank you, Sir. I will let you have a return, in January, up to the end of December.

93. If we need any other data when we have finished our deliberations, I know you will be willing to supply us with them?—Yes, certainly.

*Chairman*.] Thank you very much.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

(*The Committee deliberated.*)

WEDNESDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 1945.

Members present:

MR. TOM SMITH (*Chairman*).

Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggar.  
Mr. Haydn Davies.  
Colonel Dodds-Parker.  
Mr. Horabin.  
Mr. Joynton-Hicks.

Mr. Lang.  
Mr. Leslie.  
Mr. Lipson.  
Mr. McKinlay.  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.  
Earl Winterton.

Mr. R. A. LITTLE (Director of Postal Services, General Post Office) and  
Mr. P. R. MELLORS, called in and examined.

*Chairman*.

94. Members will remember last week we talked about having someone from the postal side to give us some information about the volume of letters and so on that come through our hands. I think in 1920 there was some similar information got out. Now, we have with us this morning Mr. Little, Director of Postal Services in the General Post Office, and also Mr. Mellors, and perhaps they would be good enough to tell us whether they have any information about the volume of correspondence that has been coming through the House, say, since the General Election, and how that compares with previous periods. I think that information would be helpful to honourable Members in properly assessing the cost?—(Mr. *Little*.) The Clerk to the Committee asked us to assess the amount and number of letters that are posted at the Post Office in the House.

94A. Yes?—And he also said that the Committee were asking whether we would be able to provide figures from 1920 until

the present time, and particularly some figures relating to the increase in the postage from 1½d. to 2½d. in 1940.

95. Yes?—I have brought along such figures as we have got, but they are imperfect, and I will give them to you for what they are worth. First of all, perhaps I should give you the figures which we have showing the monthly sales of postage stamps in the House of Commons, and I ought to preface these figures by saying that these stamps sales are, of course, stamps sold to anybody who does business there, Members of the House of Commons, Members of the House of Lords, the staff of both Houses, and anybody else who does business there. It may interest the Committee to have these figures both in summary form and in detailed form. They start in 1940 and I have got them up to 1945. In 1940 the average figure was £244 a month; 1941, £210 a month; 1942, £220 a month; 1943, £265 a month; 1944, £316 a month; and 1945, £376 a month. Now, the change over from 1½d. to 2½d. took place at the beginning of May, 1940, so that it may interest the Committee to have

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[Continued.]

the detailed figures for the months before and the months just after. Taking January, 1940, it was £148; February, £302; March, £443; April, £270. That is pre-change. Then post-change: May, £243; June, £257; July, £385; August, £441. I do not think there is anything of any great significance to be derived from that. The most significant figure on my Table is this: stamp sales in November, 1945, were £754, and the figures running up to that are as follows. You might like to have the months in 1945 to get the background against that figure of £754. We begin in January with £342, £373, £368, £385, £393, £298; then July, £112; August, £427; September, £341; October, £344; and November, £754.

Colonel *Dodds-Parker*.

96. Does that include franked envelopes?—No, these are sales of stamps only, sales of stamps used for all business purposes and sold in the Branch Office.

97. There are a lot of people who use those envelopes with the 2½d. stamps already upon them?—Yes; I have some figures about that.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

98. During the month of July the House was up. That would explain that low figure?—Yes. That gives the stamp sales, for what it is worth. Now, as soon as we got word from the Clerk, we took a return, as was taken in 1920, but we had rather more notice then, so that my return is shorter. Now, I will give you the return which we took for Friday, the 14th (I have missed out Saturday, which is not at all representative); Monday, the 17th, and Tuesday, the 18th; and we have got them under three headings: Letters posted in the House, stamped by anybody; those letters which have been marked O.H.M.S. and are franked by us, or rather stamped "Official Paid" by us by the Branch Office; and, thirdly, those that are posted in the special Official Paid covers which have been provided. Friday, the 14th, stamped, 2,044; Monday, the 17th, 3,286; Tuesday, the 18th, 3,924; giving a total for the three days of 9,254, which I have multiplied into a five-day week, which gives 15,420. As regards the hand stamped letters in the second category, I have only got them for Monday and Tuesday: Monday, 142; Tuesday, 51; total, 193; and for a five-day week, 485. O.P. envelopes: Friday, 372; Monday, 246; Tuesday, 416; totalling for three days 1,044; and for a five-day week 1,740. I have been driven to manipulate the figures in that way because I have only had the three days' figures. That gives a total for a five-day week of 17,645, which I compute at roughly, 1,000,000 a year.

Mr. *Lipson*.

99. I think the figures are for the last few days?—Yes.

Mr. *Lipson*.] I do not know what other Members' expenses have been, but, as one Member said to me yesterday: "Christmas seems to be having a good effect." My correspondence seems to have fallen off very considerably during this last week.

Mr. *Leslie*.] Yes, so has mine.

*Chairman*.] Yes, I think that is fairly general.

Mr. *Daggar*.

100. Mr. Little observed, in submitting these figures, that they were imperfect. I want to be sure what he means. Does he mean they are incomplete?—They are incomplete for the purpose in view. The purpose in view I take to be an estimate of the number of letters posted by Members of the House of Commons here. That is really what I set myself to do, and the nearest I could get to that was, as I explained, to give you the number of letters posted by anybody using the House of Commons Branch Office.

101. So that they are not imperfect in that sense?—No.

Mr. *Joynson-Hicks*.

102. I wonder if Mr. Little could give us any guidance—I am not asking for absolute figures—as to approximately the proportion of letters which are posted by Members of Parliament as against letters which are posted by officials and others in the House who are not Members of Parliament?—I am sorry I cannot discriminate between them. Naturally, private letters posted by officials are not many, and official letters posted by officials, of course, come under the franking system and are not in these figures at all.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

103. Is that July figure some guide, because that is when the House was up?—Yes.

104. That is some indication, is it not—it may be a rough indication, I agree—of the kind of postages apart from those of Members themselves?—Yes.

Earl *Winterton*.

105. May I ask the Witness one question? As there is no censorship by the Post Office, it is utterly impossible to say how many of these letters relate to Members' private affairs, for example, or their business interests or political interests?—Quite impossible.

106. In fact, in practice, the man who had a large business might post a thousand letters here, and that would be no ground for supposing that those were letters relating to his political duties?—We have no means of distinguishing between the two.

*Chairman*.

107. In this connection there is a small interesting comparison, Mr. Little, because in 1920, when Sir George Murray was

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[Continued.]

giving evidence before the Select Committee set up for a similar purpose to this, he said: "A census of mail passing through the Post Office in the House of Commons during the week ended 11th December, 1920, gave the number of letters posted as 15,223. This week could be taken as an average week for a Session." You have also got to keep this in mind, that 1920 was two years after the Armistice, and Members who were in that Parliament—and a few of us who came here in 1922—I think were inundated for a period with letters from people in the Forces with regard to demobilisation, pensions and so on?—Yes.

108. There is a comparable situation today?—Yes.

109. Immediately after the General Election every Member got an avalanche of letters from men and women in the Forces, which gradually died down as the demobilisation plans of the Government became more widely known?—I have got some figures of incoming letters which might interest the Committee.

*Chairman.*] Yes, I think they would.

*Mr. Joynton-Hicks.*

110. One further question. I should like to ask Mr. Little whether he can tell us if in fact there are any appreciable number of letters posted in the precincts which are not posted in House of Commons envelopes? Is there any clue at all as to whether Members do bring down their private correspondence and post it here?—You mean by House of Commons envelopes whether they are stamped or not?

111. Yes?—Simply House of Commons stationery?

112. Yes?—No, I have no method of distinguishing them at all.

*Earl Winterton.*

113. One more question. Is not it a fact that there is a later post here, at 6.30?—Yes, it is a little later.

114. Would it be fair to assume that someone with a number of business interests, like myself, frequently would post his letters here in order to catch the late post, rather than post them outside?—Yes, if you are aware of that; but that is a passing phase, I may say.

115. Yes; but it exists at the moment?—Yes, it is a factor at the moment.

*Chairman.*

116. On the other hand, the number of letters that are posted in this House does not give a true reflex of the amount of correspondence each individual Member gets?—I think in 1920 it was estimated that the figures related to some 300 Members. I think one of the Members of the Committee suggested that.

117. Because a number of Members get a tremendous amount of correspondence daily which they answer at the week-end?—Yes.

*Mr. Lang.*] I have more letters on Saturday than on any day.

*Mr. Leslie.*

118. A great many of my letters come straight from the constituency. They know my private address. I spend the week-end replying to them?—Yes. We do not know anything about correspondence outside the House. We can only give you figures relating to correspondence passing through the House.

*Chairman.*

119. Now can you tell us anything about the incoming mail?—I have got some figures for arbitrary weeks really, and perhaps I could go backwards. For the week ending 15th December, 1945, 60,000; week ending 17th February, 1945, 27,000 (these are round figures); 1944, 21st October, 27,000; 24th June, 1944, 20,000. Is that enough, Sir?

*Chairman.*] Would Members like comparisons further back than that?

*Colonel Dodds-Parker.*

120. What about 1939 or even 1938?—1941 is my first figure, 20,000. Those are letters delivered to the House of Commons, and delivered, of course, to everybody who receives letters in the House of Commons. For the week ending the 15th December we split it up, and it works out that five-sixths of those 60,000 letters were addressed to Members of the House of Commons.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.*] That is 50,000.

*Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.*

121. That is really all persons in the Palace of Westminster, including their Lordships?—That is the total, but that five-sixths is for Members of the House of Commons.

*Chairman.*

122. I assumed the figure you gave was a figure relating to Members of the House of Commons and not to Members of the House of Lords?—No, the first set of figures are undifferentiated, and it is only with regard to the last week that I have been able to analyse them.

*Mr. Cobb.*

123. Could Mr. Little hazard a guess as to how far this figure of 60,000 represents the volume over the last month or so?—I am afraid I have only got that figure, and I cannot say. I could perhaps get an expression of opinion upon that, but I have not got the information with me at the moment.

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[Continued.]

Mrs. Wills.

124. Has the increase in correspondence been reflected in any increase in staff or anything of that sort to deal with it?—We have had to increase the House of Commons staff by three.

125. What proportion would that be?—The total staff is 14. I cannot give you the maximum staff on at any one time.

126. Would those three represent about a 25 per cent. increase?—Yes, I should say so.

Mr. Cobb.

127. That was an increase of from three to 14?—No, three, making 14.

Colonel Dodds-Parker.

128. Can Mr. Little tell us anything about telephones and telegrams?—No, Sir, I am afraid I am not conversant with that side; it is not my province.

Chairman.

129. Telephones would not come under you?—No.

Colonel Dodds-Parker.

130. Nor telegrams?—No.

Mr. Joynson-Hicks.

131. Mr. Little has given us particulars of the outgoing letters in comparison with the number of incoming letters, together with a computation of the postings. Can he give us any information as to whether there are more incoming letters than outgoing letters?—I have only got the figures themselves to go on, Sir; I am afraid we have only got the figures themselves. We have to put one set of figures against the other set. We cannot give you stamp sales for incoming letters.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

132. Would it be possible to obtain figures for telephone and telegrams business?—I do not see why not, Sir, but I would rather not be pressed to give a definite answer upon that.

(The Witnesses withdrew.)

Mr. A. J. MOYES, O.B.E. (Accountant, Fees Office, House of Commons), called in and examined.

Chairman.

136. Mr. Moyes, you are aware, I think, that Parliament recently agreed that Members should use vouchers for travelling facilities a little differently from what was the old custom; that is to say, a Member living away from the House was allowed travelling facilities to and from the House; but some little annoyance has been created, according to some Members using the vouchers, by the fact that they have had to put one in every time they wanted a ticket, and we thought you might help us with regard to the present position, so

Mr. Cobb.

133. One point simply on this question of incoming mail. Would not it be advisable to ask Mr. Little if he could say whether this increase from a level of somewhere round about 30,000 a week up to 60,000 a week is merely a flash in the pan, or whether it has been sustained over a period of, say, the last two or three months? I realise it might be difficult for him, but could he please give an intelligent opinion upon it if he were given time to investigate the position?—The officers who deal with the mail might be able to give me an opinion for what it is worth, but it would not be difficult to take out further returns if the Committee would like them.

Chairman.

134. I think what Mr. Cobb has in mind is that if you had, say, figures for four weeks after the new Parliament began to sit they would be very useful from the point of view of comparison with earlier figures?—Those are the only figures in existence, and any expression of opinion would be an opinion only.

Mr. Cobb.] I wanted to know whether that 60,000 was merely a flash in the pan or whether it continued for any lengthy period.

Chairman.

135. Yes, I think that could be done? If the Committee will state their wishes as to the matter of time, a return can easily be taken.

Chairman.] I think the Clerk will let you know whether we need anything further upon that. Thank you, Mr. Little and Mr. Mellors.

Earl Winterton.] Would it be appropriate, through you, Sir, to thank Mr. Little for his very clear and comprehensive evidence?

Chairman.] Yes, certainly. Thank you very much.

that we may be able to suggest some improvement. Perhaps you will be good enough to give us an indication as to how the thing works as far as you know. It has not been in operation very long, and perhaps some of the Members who are affected by it may be able to put specific questions to you, when you have made the statement you have in mind?—Yes. Of course, at the moment we do not know exactly how many warrants are being used for the purpose of journeys from the home to London. It is usually some two or three months after a warrant is used before it

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[Continued.]

reaches us. We can at the moment only estimate the number of warrants that are used by the fact that Members come in and ask for new books of warrants. It appears to us that the greater number of warrants would be used by Members who live in the London area, and according to the information that we have gathered I think there are only some 81 Members who live in the London area. I am not absolutely sure about that, but that is the number of addresses which have been given to us, and the fact that certain Members have not responded to our circular has to be taken into account, and I have added a certain number. I would say that there are approximately 81 that I am certain about—there may be more—who live in the London area. Of course, some Members have a house in the country as well as a house in London, but they may not make use of the facilities which have been granted, as they may decline to use them. The new concession in regard to travel which was given as far as Members' home stations were concerned was not accompanied by any further concession as regards season tickets, which in the case of very frequent journeys seems to be the easiest method of dealing with it; but in view of previous investigations which were made, which all pointed to the fact that season tickets would be much more expensive, it was held that at the moment the position had better be examined more fully before the concession was made.

137. Yes, I know. You say you have no information, because there is a time lag in it?—Yes.

138. But I think if a return could be obtained from the Railway Companies, including the London Passenger Transport Board, as to how many vouchers have been presented, so as to give us some idea of the extent to which the concession was being used, it would be helpful?—Yes. Of course, with regard to the use of these tickets in the London area, season tickets are obviously more expensive in certain cases, that is to say, in the case of very short journeys; I think the general rule is that the daily fare should be at least 1s. for there to be any saving on a season ticket. These tickets are being used, I believe, for even 1½d. journeys by some Members, and consequently if you do not have a return ticket on the one voucher, that means two vouchers a day for 3d.

Mrs. Wills.

139. The cost of printing must account for more than that?—Yes; but those are the facts.

Chairman.

140. Yes, you are stating the facts as you know them?—Yes. There are quite a number of Members who travel up daily from places just outside London at fares

at 3s. or something like that, and it is quite a normal journey for them. In those cases obviously a season ticket would save money, but we have the great trouble that as soon as you grant the facility of a season ticket to one Member that privilege must be open to all the rest of the Members, and when we consider that the last real examination took place in 1929 at the request of the Public Accounts Committee, when I think the answer was that if they were made available during the Session only and were supplemented by the use of vouchers during Recesses there would be an increased cost of 34 per cent., we begin to realise what is entailed. Again, you have the case where a Member can travel from his constituency to London and from his home to London, and when those figures were taken out it was only for travel between the constituency and London. Now, a man in that case has two places to which he may travel, and he may say, "Well, I want a season ticket to both of them," which would obviously put the cost very much higher, because in neither case could he make full use of the two ticket.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

141. Do you think for one moment, Mr. Moyes, that a Member living, shall we say, in the North of Scotland, who goes down, say, once a week only, would really ask for a season ticket?—Not in the case of the North of Scotland. We do know of certain points nearer to London, though they may be long journeys, 100 miles or 200 miles, where there is a good train service, and a man will say, "I am going to use this particular warrant three times a week," or even four times a week.

Mr. Leslie.

142. Let us take those residing in the London area. It seems a terrible waste of paper for us to present a voucher each day. In my particular case, after waiting a long time, I was handed one of those paper slips they give to soldiers. Now, surely it could be arranged for a weekly ticket to be issued?—It could be arranged, but a weekly ticket would be more expensive. I think the approximate cost of a weekly ticket is at least five times the daily rate, and as the House only sits on five days a week that would result in a loss.

Chairman.

143. Could you help us upon this point, Mr. Moyes: Is it clear that vouchers used by Members are charged at the full rate?—Yes.

144. Not the contract rate for Services; they are charged at the full rate?—They are charged at the full rate. I think it was held when that agreement was first made that should special prices be obtained Members might have thought that they



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[Continued.]

were put under an obligation to the Railway Companies when Private Bills in connection with railways and other railway questions were being discussed.

*Chairman.*] Yes, one can understand their keeping that point in mind.

Mr. *Lipson*.

145. May I ask this question? What difference does the cost make under the present financial arrangement between the Government and the Railway Companies? The Government pays a fixed rent to the Railway Companies and takes all the profits, and presumably if this cost more the railway profits would go up. I tried to raise this matter during the war, because I did not see that it mattered as long as this financial arrangement remains with the Railway Companies. Presumably, when this comes to an end it will be dealt with differently, because the Government have their own methods of bringing something similar about. Does it really matter?—On the main issue, we do not know when the present agreement will end.

146. Under the present arrangement it would cost more to give a season ticket: is that right?—As far as I am aware, it would not cost the Government any more, but I do not know the exact terms of the financial arrangement with the Railway Companies.

*Chairman.*

147. When this extra concession was given for people travelling from their home to Parliament, was there any understanding come to through the Fees Office with the Railway Companies about it, or was it taken as a kind of accepted thing?—No. I had to get in touch with the Railway Executive Committee on various points to enable warrants to be used for the booking agencies and all booking offices accepting the warrants.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

148. And with the London Passenger Transport Board, I suppose?—Yes. They were warned they might get a lot of these vouchers.

Mr. *McKinlay*.

149. Was it ever anticipated that Members would get bus fares allowed them? It has been said here that these vouchers have been used for the purpose of what would be an ordinary short hop. It is not confined to London, because I think those who come from the far North have travelling out-of-pocket expenses backwards and forwards. It was apparently never anticipated that the vouchers would be used for that purpose. Could Mr. Moyes give us figures, or could he get figures, in regard to the cost of a season ticket from Scotland to London?—I have not got them at hand; I could get them. What particular places in Scotland have you in mind?

150. Between Glasgow and Edinburgh: I think the fares are the same?—Yes.

151. If you could get the figures I think the Scottish Members themselves could work out the average number of journeys they make each year, and in that way they can see where the balance lies?—Yes.

Mr. *Cobb*.

152. What amount of money are we talking about when we are discussing Members' travelling expenses? Is it £30,000 a year? Is it possible for Mr. Moyes to state it?—In the last financial year we spent £36,200.

*Chairman.*

153. That was generally for Members' travelling?—Yes.

Mr. *Cobb*.

154. For the year ending April, 1945?—The average for the last twenty years has been £32,600.

*Chairman.*

155. Have you any figures of the extra cost incurred by this extra concession?—No.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.] Did not the Chancellor estimate it at £20,000 in reply to a Question, Mr. Chairman?

*Chairman.*

156. Yes, I think he did give some figures?—That was an estimate.

Mr. *Cobb*.] While we are on this question of travel vouchers, could I ask Mr. Moyes this question: When you get bulk travel vouchers from a Company—and you can get them from a Railway Company—it is a much smaller piece of paper than the thing we get, and you have to fill this in. You are asked merely to state where you want to go and whether you want a single ticket or a return ticket. You can answer: "Bulk travel; monthly return; commercial travellers; day or overnight; workmen's; week-end; cheap day," etc. Supposing a Member does travel early in the morning and he fills in one of these House of Commons vouchers, he could not get a workman's ticket.

*Chairman.*] Put your question, Mr. Cobb.

Mr. *Cobb*.] I am asking it in the form of a question: Why cannot we do the same when cheap day tickets are available again, as no doubt they will be, because you could insert the necessary words upon *this* voucher? Why is it not possible to do that on the House of Commons voucher?

*Chairman.*] I think, if you look at the voucher, you will see it is possible to travel third instead of first class; there is provision there for that. I do not think there is any difficulty about that at all.

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Mr. A. J. MOYES, O.B.E.

[Continued.]

Mr. Cobb.] You can put down "bulk travel"?

Chairman.] No, it is not on the voucher.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

157. It is single, return, monthly return, same day or week-end?—With the exception of workmen's tickets; we do not put "workmen's" down.

158. Could you tell us the amount of labour involved in dealing with these vouchers, because it seems to me that the Railway Companies have a terrific amount of work in making up their returns, and that you must either take on extra staff or somehow provide the people to deal with them when they come back to you? Can you give me any idea at all about that?—I have been into that question, and at the moment I have got one assistant accountant who spends about three-quarters of his time in connection with all travel questions. For detailed work he has assistance from an office clerk, and, of course, in connection with the number of warrants used to-day that work would fall mostly on the office clerk. It is the detailed work; and I estimate that if this new concession causes a large increase in warrants it may mean as many as 20 man-hours work per week.

159. Extra?—Yes. I do not think there will be any addition to the staff, though.

Earl Winterton.

160. In the first place, I should like to get quite clear your position, Mr. Moyes. You are an official carrying out the instructions of the Treasury, who in turn receive instructions from His Majesty's Government in all these matters?—Well, I hardly like to put it in that way, Sir, because I have to carry out the instructions of the House in this matter. They make the Resolutions.

161. Yes?—And I have to see that the money is expended only in accordance with the Resolutions which they make.

162. That is all I wanted to get out. You are under the instructions of the House and not of the Treasury?—Yes.

163. So that your Department has to interpret those instructions which the House gives?—That is so; but, of course, the member of the Treasury who is the member of the Government most concerned is the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or, as very often happens, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and we take his advice in matters of doubt.

164. In carrying out those orders, like every other Department, you have to endeavour to carry them out as cheaply and with a view to saving as much money as possible, from the point of view of the public exchequer, while at the same time carrying out the instructions of the House of Commons in regard to the convenience

and rights of Members?—That is so; but I must not expend any money which the House has not given me authority to expend.

165. No. Naturally, it is not open to your Department, and I think it is rather necessary to bring this question out, to make suggestions outside of the instructions received from the House?—To whom, Sir?

166. For example, it would not be open to your Department to go to a Minister and say that you wanted free travel for everybody. You are merely concerned to carry out the instructions given to you?—Yes.

Chairman.

167. Would it come within your province, following on what Lord Winterton has said, in the light of the experience you have gained in connection with these travel vouchers, to make suggestions? I mean, there is nothing to prevent you, if you thought there was a better way or a more systematic way of working the thing than at present, making that suggestion to the Treasury?—I should do that immediately.

Earl Winterton.

168. But within the limits of what Parliament permits?—Yes, of course.

Chairman.

169. Supposing this new concession becomes so involved in the sense of the extra number of vouchers that have to be used, and you can think of a better way to let Members have the same facilities but with less annoyance, would it be within your province to make that suggestion to the Treasury?—It certainly would.

Earl Winterton.

170. It will be possible, no doubt, at some future meeting of the Committee to supply written evidence (a) as to the cost to the Exchequer of Members' free travel warrants under the conditions which existed prior to the recent concession, and (b) a return for the same period, say three months, showing the increase in the cost to the Exchequer of the recent concessions given?—It would be possible, but those figures could not be regarded as strictly comparable, because you have a new Parliament. You have men who live in different places from those in the old Parliament, and men who may possibly be attending the House more frequently. Again, you may have more days of sitting.

171. But would not it be possible to take three months for the Parliament prior to the announcement of the concession and then to take three months following the announcement of the concession, to see what difference there was, if any?—Not exactly, because Parliament was not sitting for three months continuously before the concession was announced.

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Mr. A. J. MOYES, O.B.E.

[Continued.]

172. Was it sitting for a month continuously prior to that?—Yes.

173. Then would it be possible to have comparable figures for a month?—Yes.

Earl *Winterton*.] I should like to request, through you, Sir, that we have those figures supplied to us.

*Chairman*.] Yes.

*Mrs. Wills*.

174. Could we ask Mr. Moyes what have been the difficulties he has experienced from Members regarding travel—what has been the most prevalent difficulty?—Do you mean in regard to the new home concession?

175. Yes?—I think there have been complaints arising from the fact that Members have to fill a warrant up on each occasion they want to make a journey.

*Mr. Haydn Davies*.

176. If it could be proved to you conclusively that a season ticket is cheaper than buying separate tickets, would it be within your province to issue a weekly season ticket, or would that require authorisation?—I think that would require the general approval of the House.

*Mr. Lang*.] I am not quite sure about this position. I had no idea that the new concession was to be used for 2½d. fares, and I do not think we ought to be spending our time discussing that at all. I thought it was intended that Members whose homes were away from their constituencies should be enabled to travel there, and I had no idea it meant that people who live within a 2d. or 3d. bus ride from this House and who make a daily journey would use the voucher.

*Chairman*.

177. I think Mr. Moyes will put me right if I am wrong, but before this extra concession was given I think Members living within London and representing a London constituency were able to use the voucher to and from their home and the House, but there was no minimum amount laid down?—A man whose constituency was in London could use the warrant from his constituency in London.

*Mr. Haydn Davies*.

178. But not to his home?—Yes, to Westminster. Some of the amounts were small, but never 1½d. Then a circular letter was sent round to all Members asking them for their ordinary address, and those Members who replied were given books of warrants to use. A number of Members gave me their home address but said they would not be concerned; they were men who lived very near. Others who live very near do use the warrant for 1½d. journeys.

*Chairman*.

179. Even though some Members did not use a voucher for a 1½d. journey, it was still within the resolution?—It certainly was.

*Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite*.

180. May I ask a question arising out of that? Is not it the case that what we might call the 1½d. matter is regarded as quite exceptional? I do not think Mr. Moyes quoted it, but perhaps the cases which are really more exactly in line in regard to this matter are those of Members who live on the London Passenger Transport system which runs out to Edgware, Watford and Morden, who have daily to present a voucher for a journey which costs only 1s. or 1s. 6d. Is that what we are really concerned with?—We did make arrangements with Messrs. Cook's, who, as you may know, have an office in the House, whereby Members could present warrants for two days at a time, so that when a Member is here some time during the day he can make out the warrant, give it to a messenger and get tickets back.

181. Is that possible on the Tubes?—Yes. Therefore there is no necessity for a Member to go to the booking office at all.

*Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite*.] That is important, because that is where the congestion takes place and where time is wasted.

*Mr. Joynson-Hicks*.

182. Is a Member now entitled to a ticket by warrant from his constituency to London?—Yes. That was an old privilege; that has not been disturbed.

183. I understood the old privilege was that you were only entitled to a ticket from London to your constituency?—No.

*Chairman*.] To and from.

*Major Symonds*.] It is simply between the two places.

*Earl Winterton*.] There is a matter I should rather like to raise in private session, and possibly after it has been raised we might, if the Committee take a similar view to my view, have Mr. Moyes back again.

*Chairman*.

184. Yes. We will ask you to withdraw, Mr. Moyes, in a moment?—Very well, Sir.

*Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite*.] Could Mr. Moyes add some information as to the extent to which the home to constituency privilege is being used; it is the third side of the triangle we have been discussing this morning in terms of London, but I would personally like some information upon that other point.

*Chairman*.

185. Yes, there is a point there. Some Members travel between their constituency and London every week. Some do not; some who live in London and represent provincial constituencies do not. Perhaps those comparative figures could be got out.

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Mr. A. J. MOYES, O.B.E.

[Continued.]

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Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.] During the Recesses the home to constituency side of the triangle would become more emphasised?—Yes, it would be used most then, but before I shall be able to get some

figures at least two months will have to elapse.

Chairman.

186. Thank you, Mr. Moyes. Would you kindly withdraw now? We will ask you to come back in a moment?—Yes.

(The Witness withdrew.)

(The Committee deliberated.)

(After a short time the Witness was again called in.)

Mr. Haydn Davies.

187. Could Mr. Moyes tell us how many vouchers are handled in a year; that is to say, not counting the old ones, but the new ones?—No.

Chairman.

188. Could you get that information, Mr. Moyes?—I could get the information. I could give you a rough figure. It is about 1,500 a month. It was in the last Parliament about 1,500.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

189. Have you formed any estimate of how many are likely to be used under the new concession?—I have not attempted to make an estimate. I am afraid if I did it would be only a guess. You realise that a number of Members will use the tickets from their home to London instead of from their constituencies to London at present. We do not know the extent of that saving, but I do expect an increase in vouchers during Recess periods on account of travel between home and constituency.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.

190. Is that an average figure covering the whole year, or is it merely during the Sessions of the House?—That is an average figure.

Mr. McKinlay.

191. I am quoting my own particular case. My constituency is 60 miles long and about 26 miles deep. Would it be in order for me to use these internal vouchers for travel between my home and the Western extremity or the Eastern extremity of my constituency?—Is your home outside your constituency, Sir?

192. My home is within 500 yards of a part of my constituency; it is the dead centre of the 60 miles; and I can travel 30 miles from my home in one direction and 30 miles in the other. In one direction it costs me 9s. to get to the extremity and in the other it costs me about 4s. 6d. Would I be in order in using travel vouchers to travel either East or West or North?—I am not quite sure of the position. Do you live in your constituency or not?

193. I do not actually live in the constituency, no?—Therefore you can use your travel warrant from your home to any point in your constituency as you wish.

Chairman.

194. Could I follow that up a little? Supposing a man lives in London and he represents a County constituency?—Yes.

195. And he goes to his constituency—say it is 60 miles across—and he has business from time to time directly connected with his being a Member of Parliament in the two extreme parts of his constituency, is he in order in using his voucher within the constituency for the purpose of doing his work?—A member cannot use a voucher between two places within a constituency, but if he begins his journey at either his home or London he can take a voucher to any point in the constituency. Now he may take two further points which he is going to visit, and he will probably take a monthly return ticket; that is the ordinary ticket, and he can break his journey at any point he wishes.

196. Yes; but does that quite meet the point?—No, it does not meet the point that once he is in his constituency he cannot use a warrant between any two places in his constituency.

197. So that if he wanted to go and meet a particular hard pension case, say, that he wanted to deal with at one end of his constituency, and he had also got to meet the farmers at the other end, who were dissatisfied with regard to agricultural prices or something of that kind, in between the two places he would have to pay his own railway fare or arrange to travel by car?—Yes; only he could arrange his ticket so that it would pass through one station of the place he wanted to visit on his way to the other station which was his destination.

Mr. Leslie.

198. That is how we who represent Counties are handicapped. I get a ticket to Ferry Hill, but at Ferry Hill I have got to wait perhaps a couple of hours after I arrive at Darlington, so I take the bus, which gets me there sooner, and I pay my own fare. My constituency covers 220 square miles and contains 63 villages, and I have got to hire a private car because the bus service is so bad?—Fares are not paid, but are not there certain allowances made against your Income Tax for those travelling expenses?

Mr. Leslie.] Yes, I know.

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[Continued.]

*Chairman.*] But in some cases it does not meet expenses.

Mr. *Leslie.*] No.

Mr. *Haydn Davies.*

199. These vouchers cannot be used within a constituency?—No. As a matter of fact, these new vouchers do say so on the cover.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite.*

200. Had the honourable Member opposite had his home 500 yards inside his constituency instead of 500 yards outside his constituency he would have got no facilities at all?—Yes.

Mr. *Leslie.*] The only advantage would be to take it from London to his constituency.

Mr. *Joynton-Hicks.*] Is the relevant factor where the home is or where the railway station is which you are going to use?

*Chairman.*] That really is a point that has cropped up.

Mr. *Joynton-Hicks.*

201. I say that because all my railway stations are just inside my constituency with one exception?—Then you have the one exception, Sir.

202. There is another point which follows upon a question which was raised earlier. Can the Witness tell us if in fact he does get sent back any quantity of unused return tickets?—We have a limited number coming to hand each month, usually somewhere round about 10 to 20 tickets.

203. Because I think there is a considerable practice of carrying a certain number of unused half tickets on one until they expire, against such an emergency?—That is quite a normal practice, but as the ticket has not expired there is no reason why a Member should not use it.

Major *Symonds.*

204. Mr. Moyes said, with regard to the details of the new concessions, that he had had to get in touch with the Railway Companies. Did the Railway Companies themselves have any comments to make on the voucher system? Did they have any suggestions at all as to whether this was the most suitable method from their point of view?—No; because they are generally used to the warrant system, but I had to agree with them the form of warrant for the concession.

Mr. *Joynton-Hicks.*] May we ask some questions about petrol relating to motor travel?

*Chairman.*

205. Yes. (*To the Witness.*) You do, of course, send out and give out petrol coupons; that comes under the Ministry of Fuel and Power?—Yes.

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Mr. *Joynton-Hicks.*

206. I think a question arises from the fact that a good many of us in rural constituencies within motoring range of London find the major part of the cost of passing between London and our constituencies is by car, which is far more useful than by train. Can the Accountant give us any indication as to the average amount of petrol used by any particular class of Member, from which one could derive the average mileage? Would that be possible?—Well, I should not say it would be easy to group Members into any particular classes; I cannot see how you can take one class and say: "That is the class that travels." You might say of Members who do live in London and have no more private activities taking them outside London, that they are London Members. You may have a Member with only one car. There are so many different types of cases. You have the Member who has as many as five cars in five different places, including his home and different places of business; but I do not think it would be possible to group Members successfully in order to give you any figures like that.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite.*

207. Do Members generally draw their full allotment? Is that your experience, or are there a large number who do not trouble to?—There are a large number of Members who return to me unused coupons at the end of each month; some return them three or four times a year; and others come along and say: "I have had some extra political engagements: can I have some more coupons?" If it is possible they are given more coupons.

208. But is there a large number who do not come at all, Members who, for instance, live in an industrial constituency with good train services to London, a constituency which you could cover in half an hour by public transport, who do not trouble you at all?—There are a number who do not; I think it is about 60.

Mr. *Haydn Davies.*

209. Why is it that all travelling arrangements deal with the railways only? What is the objection to using buses, or free travel on the buses?—Well, I think the main objection is that travel by bus would be liable to great abuse, and I think a certain amount of control over every item of expenditure has to be exercised.

Mr. *Leslie.*

210. Are not the bus services in the London area run by the same organisation as the Tube services, and why are we confined to the Tube? One may want to take a bus. For instance, I have to take a bus to get to Bounds Green and on to East Finchley, and then I get a voucher for the Tube there?—The London Passenger Transport Board do not operate the voucher system on the buses.

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[Continued.]

Mr. Lipson.

211. One can use a voucher when there is a joint bus and train service; for instance, the one which I use when I visit my constituency. I take a train to Oxford, and then from there the Railway runs a bus service?—Yes; but the Railways issue a rail ticket here.

212. Yes; I have found they have accepted my ticket in those circumstances?—Yes.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.] The London Passenger Transport Board have, or had, a joint bus and tube ticket; for instance, you could board a bus outside Golders Green Station to take you to Charing Cross or Westminster, but obviously if you presented your green voucher to the bus conductress she would fall down dead. By the same token (I think this is an analogy, really) if one travels from Westminster to Bounds Green one way of passing the green voucher is to travel by the London Passenger Transport Board system and then take a bus to your final destination.

Mr. Leslie.] If I were buying one, I would buy one right through.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.] I am wondering whether they can issue it from the Tube booking office.

Mr. Leslie.] They say it is only on the Tube.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

213. My constituency is a 2d. bus ride away, and I am therefore never likely to use a voucher to travel to it; but I still cannot see the point why, if I wanted to go to my constituency by bus, I should be prevented from using a voucher?—The first thing is that the bus companies would not accept it. We have made no arrangements with them to accept a travel warrant.

214. But you have made arrangements with the London Passenger Transport Board, which also operates the buses in London?—I think the arrangements which were made where bus services are used for the continuation of rail journeys were in cases where railway stations have been closed, and there you travel on a rail ticket. The tickets are obtained from the railway booking office.

Chairman.

215. I take it that no such arrangements were made, because nobody anticipated the issue of vouchers for short bus journeys, or that there would be short bus journeys brought into question?—I think that may be one of the reasons, but I think the main reason is the question of safeguard.

Mr. Cobb.] Could I ask the Witness this? Take the question raised by an honourable Member earlier this morning. If you have a train journey, and you can

finish the last 30 miles by bus as against waiting two hours for a train, what is the rule that says that you cannot carry on that journey right through for the last 30 miles?

Chairman.

216. Now, Mr. Moyes, I presume in that case the bus would be privately owned and nothing to do with the Railway Company?—Yes.

Mr. Lipson.

217. Where they are owned by the Railway Company you can use them?—Yes, and where the journey is made as part of the rail journey.

Mr. Lipson.] Yes.

Chairman.] You would have the same difficulty in my constituency; if you handed one of these vouchers to the bus conductress she would not be able to accept it.

Mr. Joynson-Hicks.

218. One more petrol question, Sir. When a Member makes an application for petrol coupons, has the Witness any standard upon which he issues the coupons, or does he issue what is requested by the Member?—I have the maximum rates which the Minister has laid down, which I must not exceed, according to certain circumstances. When a Member makes an application, I ask him to tell me what his circumstances are, and I then place him in a certain category according to the horsepower of his car. Then I say to him: "How many miles do you want to do?" It works out at so much on that basis.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.

219. You say you are working under the Minister's instructions?—Yes.

220. Which Minister?—The Minister of Fuel and Power.

Earl Winterton.

221. In this particular only are you under the Minister's instructions?—For petrol; I issue petrol coupons to Members for the convenience of Members, instead of Members having to go to the Regional Petroleum Officer.

222. That is the only instance where you act under Ministerial control?—On the question of travel, I think, yes.

223. I mean generally; there is no other instance where you act under Ministerial control except this one?—On the question of Votes or Estimates; that has various Treasury control in regard to certain paragraphs, and I am subject to Treasury control upon those as the Accountant.

Mr. Joynson-Hicks.

224. Would it be possible for the Witness to give us any idea as to the average number of coupons issued in any month to the total number of Members, because that

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[Continued.]

would give us some clue as to the mileage which is being done on Parliamentary duties by Ministers?—May I interrupt you to say not necessarily Parliamentary duties, because I issue petrol coupons for all purposes, including domestic and business, as well as Parliamentary.

*Chairman.*

225. To Members of Parliament?—Yes, and in various cases to their wives, who, for certain activities, use the same car.

*Earl Winterton.*

226. May I again ask a question, because I am not quite clear about this? The Witness said in respect of this petrol matter—and I will use his exact words, if I may—that he was “under Ministerial control”: is that right?—Yes.

227. He then went on to say that he was subject to Treasury control. Am I right in thinking that the Witness meant that in quite a different sense, that he is subject to Treasury control in so far as the Treasury lays down certain accountancy rules for the handling of public money?—Yes.

228. You are not in the position of an official who is in the Treasury?—That is so; I agree I am not in the position of

an official under the Treasury; but the Treasury exercise control over certain parts of the Votes of the House of Commons.

229. In the shape of rules, the ordinary rules which apply to all sections of public accountancy?—Yes; and in the shape of approval of certain payments.

*Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.*

230. I think we still want to clear this up. Do I understand this? May I put this to you: that in petrol matters you act under the control of the Minister of Fuel and Power, but that in regard to railway matters, the issue of these warrants, you are in no sense under the control of the Ministry of War Transport, for instance?—That is so.

*Earl Winterton.*

231. That answers my question?—I am under Mr. Speaker's control.

*Earl Winterton.]* Yes, that is the point.

*Chairman.*

232. I should like to extend the thanks of the Committee to you, Mr. Moyes, for the evidence you have given us and for the way you have given it.—Thank you, Sir.

*(The Witness withdrew.)*

*(The Committee deliberated.)*

WEDNESDAY, 23RD JANUARY, 1946.

Members present:

MR. TOM SMITH (*Chairman*).

Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggar.  
Mr. Haydn Davies.  
Colonel Dodds-Parker.  
Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.  
Mr. Horabin.  
Mr. Lang.

Mr. Leslie.  
Mr. Lipson.  
Mr. McKinlay.  
Captain Charles Smith.  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.  
Earl Winterton.

Sir GILBERT CAMPION, K.C.B. (Clerk of the House), and Mr. A. J. MOYES, O.B.E. (Accountant, Fees Office, House of Commons), called in and examined.

*Chairman.*

233. Sir Gilbert, we had before us at the previous meeting representatives of the Fees Office with regard to quite a number of things about which the Committee wanted information, and I think it perhaps would be easier for the Committee if I were to ask you, say, one or two specific questions that might enable you to give us the information we want?—(Sir Gilbert *Campion.*) Yes.

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234. For example, what is the *locus standi* of the Treasury in regard to expenditure on the House of Commons Votes and Estimates?—An Estimate must be presented by a Minister, and the Chancellor of Exchequer is actually responsible for presenting the House of Commons Vote. If necessary, if it was queried in the House, he would have to defend it. It is true that part of the Vote is rather independent of the Treasury; the salaries of officials do not

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[Continued.]

come directly under the Treasury but under a Commission of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a member; but, apart from that, there is no other authority responsible for the rest of it. Some Minister must be responsible, I suppose, and on that account the Chancellor of the Exchequer is the only Minister who could be responsible.

235. Could you tell us how it is that this authority has been left so indefinite? Has it in a way grown up over a period of years, or is there any particular reason for it?—Yes, it is rather anomalous, I think. It was started simply by an Estimate. In, I think, 1921, there was an Estimate presented, and the system had actually been put into operation for a week when the vote was defeated in the House, and then it was started again in 1924 simply by an Estimate—we are talking about travelling expenses now?

236. Yes.—and the service has been carried on from year to year by an Estimate incorporated in the Appropriation Act. That is precisely the same as for Members' salaries. There has never been a Statute for it, although, in the case of a continuing expense, it is usual to give the authority by Statute because it makes it easier, of course, to lay down the conditions and the authorities for interpreting them. I think probably the reason in the first instance was that it was experimental and subject to possible variation from year to year, and in that case it was no doubt a more flexible way to do it by an Estimate. Otherwise you would have always had to have a new Bill to amend the existing Statute. It has been going on for so long and is so established that it might now be convenient to subject it to statutory control.

237. Yes. I think, looking at the travelling expenses for Members as I have known them, say, since 1922, while they worked out more or less on the whole pretty evenly, there was the anomaly, which has been remedied since, that a man, say, living out west and representing a constituency in the east, could only use his voucher for travelling between London and his constituency. As you know, that was to some extent altered when rather wider travelling facilities were given to Members of Parliament, but that in itself is not working out very well, from what we have been told, and what we hear among Members, in the sense of their having to subject a voucher each time for a ticket?—Yes.

238. It is just possible that we may come to some conclusion on that point. But the thing I had in mind, in listening to the evidence given by the Fees Office, was as to how it had in a way grown up that there was this sort of indefinite authority in certain functions surrounding the House?—Yes.

239. The Speaker, of course, has to fill in certain details on occasions, has he not?—Yes, the Speaker comes in more particularly in regard to salaries, of course.

240. Yes?—Travelling is so detailed, and there are so many variations, that it has to be worked out almost in individual cases.

241. Yes, I think that one of the things the Committee will have to do is to make some recommendation on the question, but we wanted to get as much information as we could beforehand so that we were *au fait* with all that was taking place.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.

242. I think what we would like to know, Sir Gilbert, is this: When it comes to a question of interpreting the resolution of the House, which is the competent authority for giving that interpretation?—I suppose in the last resort it is the Speaker.

Chairman.

243. Mr. Speaker?—Yes; but points of detail are usually settled lower down, and Mr. Moyes on occasion consults the Treasury, as they are the Department responsible for the Vote as a whole.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.

244. Arising out of that, supposing there were to be a dispute between an honourable Member of this House and the Fees Office regarding some particular voucher, would that matter be referred to Mr. Speaker for decision, or to the Treasury?—I suppose in the last resort it would be to the Speaker, but the Treasury would come in at an earlier stage.

Chairman.] I think the average Member of Parliament is unaware that that would come before the Speaker.

Lieut.-Col. Sir Cuthbert Headlam.

245. Do such questions often arise?—I do not think so.

Colonel Dodds-Parker.

246. How often?—(Mr. Moyes.) Probably not more than once a year on an average. After certain new privileges have been given there has been a small spate of such questions, and then they have died out on that point.

Mrs. Wills.] I wonder if we could know what sort of difficulty you have in mind here? Have you one in mind you could instance?—The reference to the Treasury?

247. Yes, when it would have to be put to the Treasury.—I can give you a recent case of travelling to home. We have authority to allow travel between London and a Member's home. A Member wanted to go on to a station a matter of fourteen miles past his home. We objected, saying that we had not the authority to permit



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[Continued.]

it. He wished the matter to be raised with the Chancellor. We raised it with the Chancellor.

248. Was his reason that the travel was quicker that way?—It was because he said it was the most convenient way for him to travel.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.*

249. What was the higher authority to which this matter was referred?—I referred it to the Chancellor.

250. And he gave the final decision?—In point of fact he did not. The present Chancellor refused to give a decision, so I have now placed it before Mr. Speaker.

*Chairman.*

251. The Chancellor passed it on, in other words?—Yes; but in the past the Chancellor or the Financial Secretary has usually given a decision.

252. But in this case it has gone to the Speaker for final settlement?—Yes. Incidentally, this is the first case I have known where it has happened.

*Earl Winterton.]* This seems a very strange situation. When a matter of this kind is raised—a most delicate question of the relationship between a Member of the Government and Mr. Speaker—there must be some authority who should give the decision. Could you ask the witness from whom he receives instructions, Mr. Chairman, as to the authority to which he shall make application in a matter of this kind?

*Chairman.*

253. Yes. Can you tell us that, Sir Gilbert?—(Sir *Gilbert Campion.*) Before Lord Winterton came in, I was explaining to the Committee that an Estimate must be presented on the responsibility of a Minister, and the House of Commons Vote is presented on the responsibility of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he is responsible for defending it in the House. He is therefore, in theory, the Minister responsible. The position is somewhat anomalous, of course, because part of the Vote is outside his control, and, as far as salaries of officials is concerned, is under the control of a Commission; but all the rest of the Vote, so far as any Minister is responsible, is the responsibility of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

*Earl Winterton.*

254. Therefore if, to take an example, I wished to criticise the action of the Member or, as the case may be, the Speaker, in granting or refusing the concession, then I could do so on the Treasury Vote?—On the House of Commons Vote.

*Chairman.*

255. Sir Gilbert, supposing a Member has a dispute with regard to his voucher and travelling facilities, the Fees Office, or

somebody else, complain about it, and the Chancellor refuses to deal with it and it is passed on to the Speaker, the Speaker's decision, I presume, is final; but supposing that Member felt that the Speaker's decision was wrong in this particular case and his own interpretation of the Resolution of the House was different from that of the Speaker, would he have the opportunity of raising that matter on the Vote, or would some other Member?—It is a very difficult and anomalous situation. If the Chancellor agreed to take responsibility it could be raised, no doubt, on his Vote; but if he refused responsibility it would be very hard to say who could take it. The Speaker could not defend a Vote in the House, obviously.

*Earl Winterton.*

256. It seems to me that this raises a constitutional issue of great importance, because it might well be that a Member might wish to query the reasons of an honourable Member in pressing for something. I presume the only way Mr. Speaker's action could be criticised would be by a Vote of Censure upon Mr. Speaker, but it is unlikely that that would arise in these circumstances. We are therefore in the position that no one can criticise any action which is taken in respect of this matter?—Partly so. The point is that the machinery for putting down a motion against the Speaker is too heavy.

*Chairman.]* That is the present situation, but I do not think it is perhaps quite the best thing for the Speaker to deal with cases like this. How it can be got over is another matter, but I do not think the Speaker ought to be handling details like that.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.*

257. Did I understand you to say earlier that, in your view, the time had come now when this question of Members' expenses might be given Statutory authority?—Yes, I think so, on the whole. As I say, it has been continuing for a long time. It was begun experimentally, and most of the difficulties have now sorted themselves out. I should have thought a Statute might deal with it, laying down the conditions on which fares should be paid. Of course, the whole matter is so detailed that it is very difficult to lay down principles. You would have to have an authority, I think, for dealing with it by making temporary orders and that sort of thing from time to time as conditions changed. The machinery would be far too heavy, if you wanted to make a small change, to have to bring in a Bill to amend the Statute.

258. Could I follow that up with this question? If this system were changed and it was given a Statutory basis, would that in any way affect the position that the

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[Continued.]

Noble Lord has just mentioned as to who is the ultimate authority responsible for the interpretation of these points? Would it alter the position if it were made Statutory instead of a resolution?—It certainly might, yes. The Act could define the Minister responsible.

Major *Symonds*.

259. Sir Gilbert, you mentioned a Commission controlling such matters as salaries of the officials of the House. Could we have a little more information about that Commission—its nature, its composition, its authority, and so on—so as to be able to consider whether or not some such similar Commission might be a way out in dealing with some of the problems we are now discussing?—Yes. That Commission was established by Statute. It is a very old one, more than a hundred years old. It is the House of Commons Officers' Act, 1812, amended in 1846, and it is a Statutory authority consisting of the Speaker, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I think all the Secretaries of State who are Members of the House of Commons; and any question of pay or conditions of work of officials of the House is regulated by this body. In actual practice the active members are the Speaker and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. There could no doubt be a statutory body of some such kind in this case, or it might be possible to have a body constituted less formally by agreement.

Lieut.-Colonel Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

260. More like the House of Lords Officers' Committee, do you mean—that sort of thing?—That is a very large body. If it was only to deal with questions of railway travel, I should think you would want quite a small advisory body to advise the Speaker.

Earl *Winterton*.

261. Might I ask Sir Gilbert whether he would reconsider whether it would really be very desirable to put this onus upon the Speaker (because, though difficulties have not arisen in the past, they might in the future) and whether it would not be possible to have a Committee of Members constituted like the Public Accounts Committee, whose decisions are made by a majority vote, a body which would be the final arbiter in cases of this kind where there is an appeal?—Set up by the House itself?

Earl *Winterton*.] Yes.

Mr. *Cobb*.] I believe, Mr. Chairman, you have ruled that the question of Members' other expenses can be dealt with by this Committee?

*Chairman*.] Yes, but we had better not confuse the issue while Sir Gilbert is here as a witness.

Mr. *Cobb*.] If you do so rule, I want to ask him a question.

Mr. *Lang*.

262. I have one question with regard to the railway matter, if my friend will forgive me. It is a matter that does not affect me, but it seemed to get into a frightful tangle a month or so ago as to who could say, in the last resort, whether honourable Members could have season tickets or not, and nobody seemed able to tell us. I wondered whether Sir Gilbert could tell us that. There are some Members, I believe, who are very much affected by it. It has seemed to me that there has been great discussion as to who could settle that?—At the present moment if it is a big question the Treasury is really responsible, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer is responsible for this Estimate. He is the responsible authority at the moment.

Mrs. *Wills*.

263. If in the order it said, "Travel between London and home by the speediest possible way," how would that be interpreted—would that cover the case we have had illustrated?—If that was laid down. It is not laid down at the moment.

Mrs. *Wills*.] No, it is not; I mean if it was.

Mr. *Leslie*.] At present it is only train fares, and we often find that a train is not so handy as a 'bus.

*Chairman*.] I think what the resolution said that I had before me was "Free travel on such duties by any public railway, sea or air service," so that 'buses are excluded from the terms of the resolution.

Mrs. *Wills*.] I did not want to extend it beyond the railway really.

*Witness* (Sir *Gilbert Campion*).] Might I return to the point that Lord Winterton raised about a Committee of the House?

*Chairman*.

264-5. Yes?—I do not see how that procedure would fit into an Estimate. An Estimate is a matter presented by the Government, I do not see how the Chancellor of the Exchequer could hand over to a Committee what responsibility he has got except by a Statute, and I do not know of any precise precedent for that. It would have to be considered very carefully as to how it could be fitted into the machinery of an Estimate.

Mr. *Cobb*.

266. If Members are dissatisfied, Sir Gilbert, with the allowances they are given when they are travelling on the business of the House, does that come under the authorities of the House, namely, Mr. Speaker, as head of the department?—Primarily it would come under the

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Treasury, but it is very difficult for them, and the view they are taking at the present moment appears to be that it is a matter for the authority of the House; and, if that is so, it would eventually be for the Speaker.

267. Would that be the Commission you are speaking about?—No, that is only for the officials of the House.

268. So that, if it was a question of Members—say, for instance, those who served on the National Expenditure Committee—thinking that the allowance they were getting was not covering their expenses while they were away, they would have to raise it with Mr. Speaker, would they?—Eventually, yes, if the Treasury did not settle it, or if the Treasury refused to settle it.

269. I have raised it with the Treasury and they said they could not deal with it and that it was a matter for the Speaker?—It must in the long run go to the Speaker. Was that in connection with railway travelling?

270. No, hotel expenses?—Yes, that is rather a different matter.

Mr. *Lipson*.

271. There is a fixed limit of allowance, and if a Member exceeds that I imagine he has to meet it out of his own pocket. There is no redress, is there, in a case like that?—No, that is laid down.

Mrs. *Wills*.

272. And the amount is not assessed on present-day expenses?—That may be so.

Chairman.

273. There is another point about which this Committee has been anxious to have information. There is an allowance of 23s. 6d., I believe it is, for 24 hours when Members or Ministers are doing work of national importance?—I believe it is 30s. now.

274. Yes. The Speaker would not have authority or power to alter that figure, would he?—(Mr. *Moyes*.) It was the rate suggested by the Treasury in agreement with the main Committee of the National Expenditure Committee; and laid down with Mr. Speaker's approval. That is how that authority arose.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

275. It was never at any time decided by the House itself?—(Sir *Gilbert Campion*.) No.

Earl *Winterton*.] If we enlarge the allowances, are we not getting rather near the possibility of infringement of the rules governing offices of profit under the Crown?—That has been considered, but so long as it is only paying for expenses it has been ruled not to infringe those rules.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

276. I have a question to ask on the machinery of this matter, and I think that is what Sir Gilbert can help us with most. Do I understand, as a result of this series of replies, that in these matters the Treasury is the Department concerned, and if the Treasury are unwilling to give a ruling it goes to Mr. Speaker for decision; and is it also true that, if a Member is dissatisfied with the Treasury's ruling, in that event he has a right of appeal over the Treasury to Mr. Speaker? Is that the position?—Well, it is not absolutely certain. On paper the Treasury are the final authority.

Lieut.-Col. Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

277. Is not the allowance that is paid to a Member of Parliament for subsistence when he is doing public service just the same as it is for other people who are employed in that work?—From the Treasury point of view?

Mr. *McKinlay*.

278. Is it not a fact that it operates in a different way as between the Member of Parliament and the civil servant? I can quote the case of the Committee which dealt with procedure in Scottish Bills, when we met in Edinburgh, and I had to sign a declaration as to when I left home in the morning and when I returned at night, and on several Committees upon which I have acted there it was possible for me to leave home at eight o'clock in the morning and be back from Edinburgh at half-past two simply because the proceedings finished for the day at one o'clock, and at the end of the day I have found myself, according to the form that I was compelled to fill in, not even entitled to recover one single penny by way of a food allowance, although I had left home at eight o'clock in the morning, because I had not completed the statutory number of hours. But the civil servant who was in attendance on the Committee, and who did not leave the room at the same time as the rest of us and did not go home as the rest of us did, I presume qualified for the subsistence allowance for the rest of the day. I am not complaining, but I think it is rather an undignified thing that a Member of this House on Parliamentary business should be placed in that position when he fills in a form, while the civil servants who were in attendance on you while you were deliberating are getting an allowance. I am not trying to put the civil servants in a different category from Members of Parliament—I think we are all servants of the State—but the point is that it is 8s. if you are away from home for eight hours, and if you are not away from home for more than seven hours it is just too bad, is it not?—Yes. I am afraid I have not had an opportunity of going into that.

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Sir GILBERT CAMPION, K.C.B.,  
and Mr. A. J. MOYES, O.B.E.

[Continued.]

*Mr. Cobb.*

279. If a considerable body of Members of this House felt that the allowance they were given for travelling on the business of the House was inadequate, what possible channel is there at the moment through which they are able to raise the matter and get it reviewed?—It may be raised first as a Question; it may be raised on the Adjournment. You would have to arrange a day with the Treasury. For general convenience, I should have said it might be on the Adjournment.

280. If that were done, do you think there is anybody who would feel competent to take a decision on the matter?—On the question of subsistence?

281. Yes?—That is a matter regulated by the Treasury. They certainly would be responsible for that.

282. You feel that the Treasury would take a decision in the matter?—Certainly.

283. But it has already been raised on the Adjournment. On reference back to the Adjournment debate, I have been told in a letter from the Treasury that it is a matter for the authorities of the House itself?—They lay down a scale of fees. Would you wish the scale of fees to be altered generally or for Members only?

284. I was just raising generally the question that the present allowance is inadequate?—For everybody—Members and others?

285. Possibly?—That would be a question for the Treasury.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.*

286. Are not we, then, coming back to the point raised by my honourable friend, that whereas the Treasury can appeal to the Speaker against an honourable Member, an honourable Member cannot appeal to the Speaker against the Treasury?—I do not understand how the Treasury can be said to appeal to the Speaker.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.]* Was not such a case mentioned by somebody?

*Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.]* Not an appeal; it was when the Treasury would not rule and passed it on. All I asked was whether, in the event of an honourable Member receiving an adverse ruling from the Treasury, he had the right of appeal on the question of travelling.

*Mr. Lang.]* I am afraid I am guilty of ignorance here, but I have not the least idea of what we are discussing. I have never been on any Government business and I would be glad to know what it is.

*(The Witnesses withdrew.)**(The Committee deliberated.)**(Adjourned till Tuesday next at 11 a.m.)*

I understand the position in Scotland, but what kind of business takes honourable Members away for which they are underpaid on expenses, and is it the kind of business they are obliged to take on, whether they wish to or not?

*Chairman.]* I can help you on that. If you had ever been a Parliamentary Secretary you would have had this matter coming up constantly. You have to go away, say, on departmental work, and you have to incur expenses. You get 23s. 6d., I think, for 24 hours, which in most cases is inadequate. You are out of pocket sometimes to the extent of pounds on a journey. There have been certain honourable Members on different Committees, like the National Expenditure Committee, who have had to go away, as members of the Committee, up and down the country, visiting different factories, and so forth, and they put in their expenses, and these are the expenses to which Mr. Cobb is referring. They are expenses incurred whilst on legitimate work as a Member of Parliament, not on private work which the Member himself is doing. He is on the work of the House and goes on the authority of the House.

*Mr. Cobb.*

287. Could I just come back to this matter again? In a letter I have from the Treasury it says, on this particular question, that Mr. Speaker, as head of his department of the House of Commons, is the responsible authority for the rules governing the payment of subsistence allowances. I wanted to raise the question of the inadequacy of these allowances, and I gathered that I would have to go to the Speaker's department to discuss it?—In the case of Members only?

288. Yes?—You are thinking of a decision of some authority in the House to apply the general scale laid down by the Treasury, and this would be a request for the application of a different scale?

289. Yes. Would that be a decision, Sir Gilbert, that the Speaker himself would take, do you think?—To vary the scale?

290. Yes?—Yes. It is unlikely, I think that he would depart from anything laid down generally.

291. To quote what you remarked just now, you feel the machinery is rather heavy for the job?—Yes.

*Chairman.]* Are there any other questions? If not, I think that is all, Sir Gilbert. I am sure we are much obliged to you and to Mr. Moyes.

TUESDAY, 29TH JANUARY, 1946.

Members present:

Mr. TOM SMITH (*Chairman*).

Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggar.  
Mr. Haydn Davies.  
Col. Dodds-Parker.  
Lt.-Col. Sir Cuthbert Headlam.  
Mr. Horabin.

Mr. Lang.  
Mr. Leslie.  
Mr. Lipson.  
Mr. McKinlay.  
Captain Charles Smith.  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.

Mr. GLENVIL HALL, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (a Member of the House) examined.

*Chairman.*

292. I have explained to the Committee the reason why the Chancellor of the Exchequer could not be here this morning, and that you were coming along, and the Committee very readily agreed to hear what you have to say. Perhaps it would be for the convenience of the Committee if we were to take the points seriatim that were sent along to the Chancellor with a letter of invitation to come here. The first question is: Who is the final authority on the interpretation of the House of Commons Vote in the Estimates? Is it the Chancellor of the Exchequer as the Minister who presents the Vote or is it Mr. Speaker? Could you answer that question?—Of course, to some extent it depends on the Estimate and the Vote. What happens is that an Estimate is put before the House and is agreed to. An intimation is given to the House as to what the money is needed for. The ultimate explanation as to how the money has been expended, of course, depends on the Department. They are in fact, in the long run answerable for having expended that money according to the manner in which it was voted by the House. The Public Accounts Committee, I suppose, would be the authority who would have the Accounting Officer before them, and if they thought it necessary, would question him on the way in which the money had been spent. So far as the expenses of Members of the House are concerned, generally the matter is put before the House, either by Resolution; or sometimes, if it is thought of not first-class importance, it is done by arrangement with the Speaker by way of Question and answer, and then, of course, the Accounting Officer, in that case, I presume, would be Sir Gilbert Campion.

293. If there is a dispute with regard to some item of expenditure incurred by a Member of Parliament, who is the authority, who has the final say, with regard to that? Is that a matter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer or does it devolve upon Mr. Speaker?—Would it not depend on what the item of expenditure was? If it were a salary, obviously, the Member receives his salary as a Member

under the authority of the House, and the only possible query that could arise there surely would be as between him and the Inland Revenue, unless some change were made and rules laid down as to how he was or was not to spend his salary.

294. May I put a case to you? Has there not been some little difference of opinion with regard to a Member using his travel voucher, and is it not true that the Treasury refused to accept responsibility for dealing with it, and then it passed, I believe, to Mr. Speaker? What we are anxious to find out is this: Here is money voted for a purpose by the House, and somebody ought to know who has the last word in deciding differences. Who is responsible for it? It appeared to us from evidence we had last time a rather loose method, if I may put it no stronger than that, of handling public money. Who has the final say in regard to these things?—I think you will find it is Mr. Speaker. If the House has laid down certain regulations by which a Member is entitled to go to the Fees Office and get a voucher for a certain type of railway journey, and he uses that voucher for something outside the purpose for which he was entitled to use it, then, obviously, it is a matter for the Accounting Officer of the House, who would be Sir Gilbert Campion, acting for the Speaker. The final authority would, I take it, rest with Mr. Speaker.

295. Would not that be a question of interpreting as to whether a voucher was used wrongly or not? Supposing a Member used his travel voucher in all good faith, under the Resolution passed by the House, and then is told one morning that he has done something that was improper and he says: "No; in my reading of the Resolution passed by the House I feel that what I have done is in accord with that Resolution." Somebody has then to decide whether the Member is right or whether those who object to the Member are right. What we are trying to find out, who has the last word on the point?—I am advised that Mr. Speaker would be the final authority in that matter; but anything, of course, done by the Accounting Officer

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Mr. GLENVIL HALL.

[Continued.]

under his authority would be open to challenge naturally by the Comptroller and Auditor General and to criticism or anything of that kind by the Public Accounts Committee.

Lt.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.] Are the Public Accounts Committee in a position to criticise a decision of Mr. Speaker?

*Chairman*.] I do not know whether the Witness can help us on that point.

Lt.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.]

296. Perhaps Mr. Glenvil Hall does not know the answer to that?—I am advised that that is the position; that the House in its wisdom makes certain regulations and votes money for certain purposes. That money, one expects, is expended as the House has authorised; but the officer whose duty it is to see that the money is properly expended is, in this case, as we are dealing with the House, the Accounting Officer, and, therefore, Sir Gilbert Campion. He, of course, naturally, acts under the authority of Mr. Speaker; and any expenditure incurred, when it goes before the Public Accounts Committee or the Comptroller and Auditor General for auditing, is like all other Votes and moneys expended on behalf of the State, subject to their scrutiny, criticism and comment.

Lt.-Col. Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

297. Would Mr. Speaker be in the same position as a Government Department? Supposing the case arose in some Government Department that some payment or expenditure was criticised by the Public Accounts Committee, the man who would be responsible would really be the head of the Department in question, would he not?—In the last resort the Minister is responsible, but anyone here who is a Member of the Public Accounts Committee knows that the Minister rarely, if ever, appears before the Public Accounts Committee. Days are set apart when the accounts of a certain Ministry are under scrutiny, and the Accounting Officer—usually, the Permanent Secretary—appears with other officials, and answers any questions put to him and produces any papers asked for.

Lt.-Col. Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.] I know that. In this case, with regard to the House of Commons, presumably Mr. Speaker would be in the same position as the political head of a Department. Therefore, the man who would come before the Public Accounts Committee would be Sir Gilbert Campion?

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

298. The Treasury does not enter into this at all. In any question of interpreting a Resolution of the House the Treasury takes a back seat. It is done by the

Accounting Officer, Sir Gilbert Campion, acting for Mr. Speaker?—Yes, officially in theory. I have not the slightest doubt that when a query arises someone might unofficially ask the Treasury what its view of the original decision was and how it interpreted it, but apart from that, obviously, the Accounting Officer of the Department concerned—in this case, the House—is the official acting for the head of the Department.

Mr. *Lipson*.

299. Arising out of this particular instance, may I ask a question? The matter in dispute was referred to the Treasury. The Treasury passed it on to Mr. Speaker. Did the Treasury do that because it was not within the province of the Treasury to deal with it, or because it was an awkward matter which the Treasury did not want to deal with? According to your ruling it was because it was outside its province?—The instance the Committee have in mind is quite unknown to me, and it is the first I have heard of it, therefore, it is difficult to answer a question of that kind. If, to their knowledge, the matter was referred to the Treasury for comment it does, perhaps, bear out what I have said.

Mr. *Lipson*.] Could the Financial Secretary be given the nature of the case?

*Chairman*. I have not the details here.

Mr. *Lipson*. It was that he went to a station beyond where he should have gone, was it not?

Lt.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.] My recollection is that the incident occurred in a previous Parliament, not in this Parliament, or during the term of office of the witness. The Fees Office ruled against a Member travelling to a station beyond. That matter was referred to the Financial Secretary of the day, who declined to give a ruling, and it was then referred to Mr. Speaker. That is my recollection of the matter.

*Chairman*.

300. I think, Commander Braithwaite, we had better confine ourselves to interrogating the witness on this point. If the Financial Secretary does not know of the incident, it may be as well, when he gets back, for him to find out all the particulars in regard to it, and he may then be able to let us know what the Treasury's views are on the matter?—Of course, I cannot promise that until I know what the facts are. But I think I have heard enough now to gather what is in your minds, and if I may say so, it does bear out what I have said, namely, that there was some difference of opinion as to whether a certain Member was or was not entitled to travel a certain distance on a certain journey beyond his own station, and the Fees Office, very properly, working within the

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[Continued.]

regulations as it read them, raised the matter. It was referred to the Financial Secretary. The Treasury must have gone into it at that time, and they came to the conclusion that the rule was as I have tried to put it to you.

Mr. Cobb.

301. Could the Financial Secretary say whether, in such cases, it is now the established custom for the Speaker's department to seek the advice of the Treasury before it takes a decision?—I would not know whether it sought our advice on every occasion. I would, however, say, that every Department from time to time, owing to the peculiar nature of the Treasury and its central situation, does come to the Treasury unofficially or even officially for advice and guidance as to what they should do in a given set of circumstances.

Mr. Haydn Davies.] Could I go back to it in another way? Several times in the course of this Committee the question of travel has cropped up.

Chairman.] We must take one point at a time.

Mr. Haydn Davies.] I am taking this question of travel as an illustration of what I am trying to get at. It has been mentioned several times that season tickets are much cheaper.

Chairman.] Another point on the paper will cover that.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

302. I do not want to ask anything about travel; I want to ask the Witness who decides that you cannot have season tickets, or that the journey must be done in the form set out on the voucher? Is that a Treasury decision?—No. It is surely a decision taken some time ago by the House that Members should be entitled to have their railway fares paid; and that was the method laid down.

Mr. Haydn Davies.] It was not in the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who merely said . . .

Chairman.] I must point out, first of all, that the specific question put to the Financial Secretary was: Who is the final authority on the interpretation. You will find the other matters will come later. We will deal with them seriatim.

Mr. Cobb.] Could I ask the Financial Secretary this? In a letter I have had from the Chancellor's office he made this statement: "Mr. Speaker, as head of his department of the House of Commons, is the responsible authority for the rules governing the payment of subsistence allowances." I do not want to bring in the question of subsistence allowances.

Chairman.] The first question is: Who is the final authority to interpret?

Mr. Cobb.

303. Is that the ruling, that on the interpretation of the Rules, Mr. Speaker, as head of his department of the House of Commons, is the responsible authority for interpreting the Rules?—I think so. We must accept that someone must have final authority within his Department, and no one is more capable or competent of being the final arbiter than the head of the Department, in this case, Mr. Speaker. But he naturally must, like other heads of Departments or Ministers of State, work within the terms laid down when the money was voted.

Chairman.] Can we leave that point there and go on to the next?

Mr. McKinlay.

304. I suppose it is all one Vote—Members' Allowances. Who is in charge of that Vote when it is before the House? When the money is being provided, who is in charge of the Vote?—I think I usually take it in the House on behalf of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

305. Is it not peculiar that a Minister in charge of a Vote delegates to some other person the interpretation of that Vote? I think that is the point we are trying to get at: Where, exactly, Mr. Speaker comes into this at all?—Perhaps I may answer that in this way. The Treasury naturally is interested in all Estimates, whether they are the main Estimates or Supplementary. But all of you know that when those Votes are before the House, supposing it is a Vote dealing with the Ministry of Fuel and Power, the Minister himself pilots his Vote through the House, although normally there is a Treasury Minister on the bench with him to help him, if necessary. But the Minister himself, who has asked for the money and knows what his Department needs and has authority from the Treasury for the amount he asks for, puts his own Estimate through the House. It is quite obviously impossible for Mr. Speaker to put his own Estimate through the House. Therefore a system has grown up, which is not peculiar to the case of Mr. Speaker. You have other Departments who need money and who, in a sense, are too small to have a Minister of their own; and, therefore, the Treasury itself pilots the Votes through the House for them, because they have no definite spokesman in the House who is there to act on their behalf.

306. I am interested in this, Mr. Chairman. When I took my seat on a By-Election in 1941 I think it was generally understood (I am not complaining now; I did not complain at the time, because I accepted what was told me) that this was the ruling of Mr. Speaker: the poll was declared on the 28th February and the Writ did not arrive in London until the 5th or 6th March, but Mr. Speaker ruled that I was entitled to be paid only from

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[Continued.]

the day the Writ arrived declaring me a Member. Mr. Speaker ruled that, but it has always rankled with me. What had Mr. Speaker to do with this? Has Mr. Speaker control of the finances of this House? A suitable occasion on which to raise it has never arisen?—I have not turned up this point, but probably if one did one would find that Mr. Speaker was acting in accordance with either the Act laid down at the time or some other decision taken by the House as to when payment of a Member should start, and possibly the wording is that it should start from the day when the Writ arrived in London. But I have not looked it up. He would, I think, undoubtedly be working to some definite rule that guided him, otherwise I hardly think he would do a thing of that sort.

307. Does a By-Election come under a different procedure from a General Election?—It may be an old precedent which has never yet been upset, and he was acting on what his predecessors did.

*Chairman.*] Are there any other questions on this point?

*Mr. Lang.* I would like to follow up that question, because a rather unusual thing happened at the beginning of this Parliament, when, as you will remember, the Speaker announced that payment was to be retrogressive from the date of the declaration, and it seemed to be entirely his own statement.

*Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.*] The day of polling.

*Mr. Lang.*

308. It seemed to be entirely his own statement, as though he himself decided it?—There, again, normally the method I have described is the usual method, but occasionally things of what one might call minor importance are, shall I use the word, assumed by Ministers, after a Question and answer have been given in the House, by leave of Mr. Speaker. Perhaps, it is known through the usual channels that there is general agreement that that should be done. Actually, I speak here without exact knowledge, but it has always been my assumption—and it is possibly correct—that this decision to make the pay of Members retrogressive was a Cabinet decision, and I take it that by general consent Mr. Speaker fell in with the feeling expressed that that should be done. But, again, I am speaking without exact knowledge, but I am positive in this, that I do not think it was Mr. Speaker's own decision, taken purely without consultation with the Government.

309. It would be his authority, and without it, I take it, it would not be done?—No, I do not think so. If the Government itself gave authority Mr. Speaker, as the head of the department, would carry out what it decided. He

could not himself decide to raise salaries to, say, £750 a year for the ordinary Member. He could only work within the regulations and terms laid down by the House.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.*

310. Are we not now back exactly where we started from, that really it is not Mr. Speaker who makes a decision. The Cabinet made the decision?—As I understood it, the question put to me was—and it is the core of the point we are discussing—whether the Treasury or Mr. Speaker has the last word in interpreting what is the will of the House in these matters.

*Mr. McKinlay.*] It would clarify matters if someone could produce the regulations which have been made.

*Chairman.*

311. I wonder whether there are any in existence. May we go on to the next point?—I am at your service.

312. Mr. Financial Secretary, you know that a great many Members of Parliament who are on Select Committees and other Committees have, from time to time, to travel on Government business, for which they are entitled to put in for a certain amount of money for subsistence. It appears to most people who have experience of it that the sum to-day is totally inadequate, leaving Members and Ministers out-of-pocket. To whom would a recommendation for an increase be put and how would it have to be put? Can you help us on that?—Do you mean by your Select Committee?

313. No. There were Select Committees set up during the war which had to visit factories, and so on. Members have to do their work and they are allowed to put in only a certain figure which leaves them out-of-pocket. What we want to find out is to whom an application should be made for an increase in this scale?—Again, do you mean by a group or an individual?

314. We are here as a Select Committee to recommend back to the House within our terms of reference. We want to try to find out to whom should an application be made to get this figure increased to make it adequate for the work that has to be done?—I think the method to be employed would be to approach Mr. Speaker, as the head of the department, and discuss with him the fact that the rates laid down—which were laid down by the Treasury in the beginning—are inadequate, and suggest to him that something should be done to make representations to the Government—because that is what it means—that these rates should be looked at again, and possibly raised. But there would be nothing, it seems to me, to prevent a group of Members themselves going to the Treasury. But I think it would be wrong of them to do so, because obviously the appropriate



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[Continued.]

channel is through the head of the department concerned, namely, Mr. Speaker. I imagine one would approach his Private Secretary. You know how these things are done as well as I do. Many of these things that have grown up have nothing in writing to substantiate the procedure followed; but that procedure is the courteous procedure, and I think you will find the right one.

Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.

315. May I ask, arising out of that, whether theoretically the Speaker is responsible for the existing subsistence rates paid to Members of Parliament going outside the House on public duty, or are we on a scale of rates laid down by the Treasury?—They were laid down by the Treasury and they are the highest rates paid to the higher administrative class within the Civil Service engaged on similar work.

316. So that Mr. Speaker endorsed these rates on the recommendation of the Treasury? That is the position?—I have not been briefed as to what happened then, but I am told that they were arranged, as these things are arranged, when Committees began and Select Committees began to travel and so on.

Chairman.

317. Would you undertake to let the Committee have your views in writing on those particular points?—Certainly, in so far as we can help you; though I am afraid I cannot help you more than I have, namely, that those rates were laid down by the Treasury in consultation with the authorities at the House, and at the time they were laid down they were agreed rates and they were thought to be reasonable.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

318. Could the rates for Members be raised without touching the whole of the rates paid to the Civil Service generally?—Yes, anything of that kind could be done, if agreement were reached in that direction.

Mr. Cobb.

319. So if the Permanent Head of the Treasury, as a Civil Servant travels, he gets the same rate as is at present given to Members of Parliament?—Yes, but there is nothing more in it than that these were the Treasury rates at that time, and it was felt they were roughly applicable, and they were accepted. They are not sacrosanct by any means.

Mr. Lipson.

320. Is there a higher rate for anybody? What about higher ranking officers in the Forces?—They would come under the Service Vote.

Mr. Cobb.

321. The decision on this is the decision of Mr. Speaker, as the responsible head of the Government, advised by the Treasury?—Yes.

Chairman.

322. There is another point on which I would like your opinion. You know the terms of reference with regard to travel?—Might I add to that? I should say that I think fairly recently certain rates were arranged between the Chairman of a Select Committee and Mr. Speaker, with some guidance from the Treasury. Perhaps if I had said that at the beginning it would have completed the picture for you in a few words. It shows you how these rates are built up.

323. Would not that be only in a particular case and not generally applicable to all Members of Parliament doing their public duties?—That occurred when the Committee on National Expenditure was set up.

Mr. Cobb.

324. One other question: Do junior Ministers get the same rates or do they get a higher rate when they go travelling on public business?—They get the same rates.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

325. And Cabinet Ministers?—Yes.

326. Everyone is on the same level?—Yes. But that does show you that the old rate which was laid down for Members and which corresponded to the rate then in existence and paid by the Treasury to its higher grade officials has since been slightly amended when the Committee on National Expenditure was set up. The Chairman—possibly at the request of those serving with him—obviously thought that some change should be made, and he took it to the Speaker and it was arranged between the Chairman and the Speaker, with some guidance from the Treasury.

Mr. Cobb.] In order to help us, could we have given to us the rates of the higher ranking officers in the other branches of the public service?

Chairman.

327. I do not think that is within the province of the Treasury?—I have the figures here. If you want them you can have them.

Chairman.] You want them ascertained?

Mr. Cobb.] Yes.

Chairman.

328. There are two subjects on which there have been many points of detail, and those are the question of the issue of season tickets for travel from a Member's home to this House, in place of the ordinary railway warrant. The other is the question that has been raised of an

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[Continued.]

allowance for the use of a motor car between a Member's home and the House, and between London and his constituency, in both cases, in place of the present railway warrant. I am sure the Committee would be glad to have some idea whether, on those points, there would be any administrative difficulty in putting them into operation. With regard to the journey between a Member's home and the House, a good many Members have been told that they have to submit a voucher every day. We would like to hear from you whether there would be any difficulty with regard to season tickets being provided in those cases?—Apart altogether from whether it would be more costly in a given set of circumstances?

329. Certainly?—Obviously, there would be no difficulty whatever, from a mechanical point of view. It is as easy to issue a season ticket as an ordinary ticket, and, therefore, so far as the mechanics of the matter are concerned, there would, I imagine, be no difficulty whatever.

330. Is the objection then to the cost?—I do not know whether it is appropriate for me to answer that, because the matter has not been raised officially. That is, I assume, one of the points that your Committee is considering, and it would be, perhaps, unwise for me to comment on whether it is considered that the cost would be prohibitive or not.

*Mr. Leslie.*

331. I travel from Bounds Green to Westminster. I have to submit a voucher each day, and speaking to Mr. Buchanan this morning, he said: "It is simply overwhelming and I cannot cope with it, and it is a waste of voucher books to be given one each day like this. It is hanging up my work?"—The situation at present is—and this goes back to what we were talking about earlier on—that members have to fill in a voucher every time they

make a journey, and unless that is altered, as a result of your deliberations, I take it that it will have to continue. The fact that it causes Mr. Buchanan a lot of extra work and increases the use of paper cannot alone possibly make any difference.

*Mr. Cobb.*

332. Who made the regulation, could you say?—When the payment of Members' fares was first introduced it was laid down at that time that Members were to get their tickets by filling in a voucher which they had to fill in personally, and exchange it for a ticket, either at the booking office or through an agency.

333. Was that detailed regulation made by the authorities of the House—that is Mr. Speaker's department—or the Treasury?—Whether it was done by the Treasury or the House itself it was done upon the authority and in furtherance of the will of the House.

*Mr. Leslie.*

334. Are not the bus services and the tube services under one corporation?—Yes.

335. If that is so, why should an individual either have to walk three miles to get to the tube, or else pay his own fares to get to it? Could not one ticket serve for both?—Is not that a matter for the Railway? All the Government undertakes to do is to reimburse a Member for his expenditure in travelling from point A to point B by railway, and now, by the will of the House, it has been extended to travel by air. But apart from that I am afraid I could not comment usefully on the fact that it does mean in some instances a Member walking three miles.

*Chairman.*] We had better leave it there then, I think, Mr. Glenvil Hall. I think we are indebted to Mr. Hall for his evidence, and I desire to thank him on your behalf.

Mr. W. J. BROWN (a Member of the House) examined.

*Chairman.*

336. You have been a Member of the House for a good many years. I think you know the terms of reference of this Select Committee?—Yes.

337. You were good enough to respond to the circular letter, asking that you might have the opportunity of giving evidence, and you are here for that purpose this morning. Suppose we took it at Items 1, 2 and 3, in order to get your specific opinion?—Would it be equally convenient if I made a brief statement, because these matters are mixed up one with another, and what I would like to give the Committee is a considered view of the position, as I see it, both in relation to pay, expenses, postage, secretarial help and so forth and so on. If after that you wanted to question me

about any aspect of what I have said I would be very happy indeed.

338. I was only trying to find out the best way of putting it. If that is the Committee's pleasure we will proceed like that?—I am very glad to have the opportunity of giving evidence this morning for two reasons. First, that I made myself responsible in the last Parliament for initiating this matter, and I am delighted that at last there is a Committee to consider it. Secondly, because it is rather a delicate matter, and I have no doubt that at some stage or other in the proceedings the question will arise as to what the public reaction is going to be to Members of Parliament increasing their own salaries. It so happens, as I think every Member here knows, that I am in the relatively

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happy position of not being in the least dependent upon my salary as a Member of Parliament. It will not make a ha'p'orth of difference to me personally in that regard whatever the Committee does, but I am greatly concerned about the position of other Members of the House, of whom that is not true, and I think it is perhaps better that pressure for improved conditions should come from people who are not particularly concerned with it than that it should come from those about whom it might be said that they were concerned with it. I start from the point of view that there will probably be no argument at all, whatever our purpose may be, on the broad issue that some payment should be made to Members; that is to say, I would not discuss over again the issue that was discussed in 1911 as to whether there should be any payment to Members at all. If that is so, then the question becomes: Are our present arrangements adequate? It is my firm conviction that they are very inadequate and, indeed, completely out-of-date. When the £400 a year was first applied I think in 1911 or thereabouts it was professedly based on the idea not that Members should have a salary but that they should have a grant towards expenses. Subsequently, that was increased to £600, curiously enough because the cost of living had risen. So that quite early on the emphasis of expenses ceased to be the prime thing, and we began to treat it any rate partly as if it were a remuneration. Since 1911 the character of the House has changed a great deal. Whatever view one takes about the desirability of Members being full-time Members or not (and in brackets I would say that I personally do not think they should be; that there is a great advantage in having people occupied in other professions simultaneously), there is no doubt about it that the whole drift of events is towards taking more and more of Members' time and making it less and less possible for them to pursue in a sustained fashion some other occupation. I must say that the proceedings of another Committee with which I am concerned, the Select Committee on Procedure, will probably intensify rather than diminish that tendency. In other words, I submit that we do stand in a radically different situation from that in which we stood even as recently as 35 years ago, in 1911. I submit that in modern conditions we ought to review our present arrangements, and that the principle upon which we ought to work is as follows: We should not give so much that the salary becomes in itself an object of attraction. We have to avoid that extreme at the one end. On the other hand, we should not give so little that either of two consequences arises—one consequence, that the Member is inhibited from doing his job to the full; or the second consequence, that, if he does do his job to the full, he finds it difficult or impossible to live. Now, somewhere between those two

extremes, we have to try to find the happy line. The present position, in my own experience, is that about £200 a year out of the £600 goes on postage. Whether my postage bill is higher or lower than other people's I do not know, but that is my experience. I estimate that visits to my constituency (I represent a provincial City, as you know) cost about £100 to £120 a year. I would say here that that expenditure is much less than the expenditure incurred by a provincial Member coming to live in London—living in London during Parliamentary sittings. I happen to live in London and go to my Division about once a month, but other Members have to come from the country and live in London several days a week for many weeks of the year, and, therefore, that £120 may be typical of a London man going to a provincial City but not in the least typical of a provincial Member working in London. I pay my Secretary £450 a year and I regard her as cheap at the price. That probably is a little higher than secretaries normally command, but I have an extremely good one and I do not regard her as a penny over paid. It will at once be seen that if you add £200 on postage to about £100 on going to the Division, and knock the £450 down to £300, the whole of the Parliamentary salary has gone before you have spent a single penny on living; and quite frankly I could not be a Member of this House if I did not have other sources of income to rest upon. This gives rise to what I regard as a thoroughly undesirable position in principle. I think it undesirable in principle that Members should be dependent upon outside subsidies, whether they are Trade Union subsidies—as mine is—or whether they are subsidies from private interests. I think in principle that is undesirable. I do not say that a man ought not to have a Trade Union subsidy or a subsidy from his own particular interest. I do say that he should not be utterly dependent upon it, because that impinges on the independency of the Member, if not explicitly and obviously, even worse—rather insidiously and subtly. Again, I think it prompts party servility. This will not be popular here, but my views on this subject are well known. If a man can be sentenced to economic death by his party—and that is the case; I have seen men sentenced to economic death here—that, again, intends to impinge upon the right of a free Englishman freely to speak his mind in a free House of Commons. That I regard as undesirable, and in the extreme case—I want to put this very cautiously—I should say that the standard of probity and honour in this House is as high as anywhere in the world, but you and I have known tragedies in this House due to the pressure of poverty, and I do not think those tragedies ought to be allowed to continue. Then I ask myself: What is the sort of basis on which we proceed?

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and I can think of two analogies which seem to me to be roughly right. One is the analogy of the Trade Union officer, the other is the analogy of the commercial traveller. I think nobody can argue that I am pitching my objectives too high in taking those two modestly treated sections of the community. When we are dealing with a Trade Union officer what do we do? We give him, first of all, adequate secretarial help. We pay him his railway fares. We pay him a subsistence allowance—in the case of my Union, it is an open secret that it is £1 2s. 6d. a day when the officer is engaged on official business. We pay his fares. We pay his postage, and, when we have done all those things, we then give him enough to live on. Similarly, with a commercial traveller in a reasonably good firm they will pay his fare or subsidise his car, whichever he uses. They will pay his hotel bills. They will give him secretarial assistance in the office when he is back at headquarters. They will even give him an allowance for what I believe is colloquially known as “mixing”—indeed, newspapers do that; I believe that in the case of some Pressmen the larger part of their income comes from the mixing allowance. Having done those things for the commercial traveller then you give him enough to live on. That seems to me broadly the sort of approach that ought to be ours here. It is certainly my approach to the problem. I would give Members free postage. Some Members will abuse it. I believe it was abolished originally because one Member was discovered sending his washing through the post. But I would say that it is much better that the privilege should be occasionally abused than that it should be denied to 600 of the 615 of us, or whatever the number is, who will not abuse it. It is the old issue of the means test. I always took the view in this House that it was better to have a few people abusing unemployment insurance than to have a means test, with thousands upon thousands of them out of benefit. Next I would give him free travel anywhere in Britain and not merely between his house and London and his constituency. The point about that is an important one in principle. It is conveyed in the phrase of Burke: That a Member of Parliament ought not merely to be the Member for Bristol but the Member for Britain, and whatever goes on in these Islands is our concern and we ought not to be inhibited from going and coming freely to see what conditions are like in the country. Next I would give him an allowance for a secretary, and I put that conservatively, I think, at £300 a year. Now, I want to warn the Committee on this point. Later on probably you will have the Treasury here, if they have not anticipated me, and if you talk about secretarial help they will try and thrust on you what is known in the Civil Service as the Treasury pool—

a pool of typists from which you draw, if you are lucky, when the girl happens not to be working for some other Member. I warn you against that for two reasons. Firstly, it does not work. Secondly, I do not think that a Member of Parliament can get the best service out of a secretary unless she is at his beck and call the whole time. So I beg you not to be put off with a typists' pool. Then I would give the Member £1,000 a year on which to live. Here you have to have regard to the fact that £1,000 is worth very little more than £500 was in the old days, and you have to have regard to the fact that the man probably has to maintain two homes, or at least a home in the Provinces and a hotel in London, or a hotel in the Provinces and a home in London, and if he has anything left after he has paid tax on his £1,000 (and I would remind you there that tax is 9s. in the pound) I think you are leaving him with a very modest sum indeed on which to live. Those are my proposals, and with regard to Under-Secretaries, the same conditions, with their £1,500 a year. At the moment, as you know, an Under-Secretary is not allowed to deduct expenses as the ordinary Member is, and it is wrong in principle that a man should be inhibited wholly or partly from accepting promotion because he is worse off after he has accepted it. We fought that battle of principle in the Civil Service many years ago, and long ago won it. I would like to add only two points. The first is that we treat our Members of Parliament very badly by comparison with other people's Members of Parliament. The United States Senate, for example, in Congress, give their men £2,500 a year and the President has recommended that that should be increased to £5,000. They have a secretarial allowance which, speaking from recollection, is I think about £800 a year. They have a room to work in and they have a telephone. Now I do not know how far this Committee is going to deal with the question of facilities as well as conditions, but here I would say that in my opinion our arrangements for enabling Members to do their business are archaic and indefensible, and if it cannot be done within this building, then I am in favour of doing what they have done in Washington—they have built just across the road from the Capitol—and giving a Member of Parliament an office and a telephone where he can do his job. You cannot work adequately in this House without a telephone, and if every time you want to telephone you have to leave the library and walk half a mile to the telephone your day is broken up and your output diminishes. I think it is quite wrong that Members should spend hour after hour writing letters by hand in the library of this House because they cannot afford a secretary. The only other thing I would say is this—and I apologise if I have been a little lengthy. The Committee at some stage or other will

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confront the fear of public opinion on this issue. Public opinion has never bothered me. I owe whatever success I have ever achieved in life to two things—a massive ignorance of all subjects and a complete scorn of consequences. Public opinion has never worried me on this or any other issue. I might say this, that in my opinion there is no reason to fear public opinion on this point; that is to say, there is no reason to fear an informed public opinion on this point. The difficulty about public opinion is that it is not informed, and although I attend a good many meetings in the course of the year, addressing audiences on how the House of Commons works and often deal with this point, I have never had the slightest difficulty in carrying an audience with me once they have understood that £600 is not a salary but is a grant in aid towards expenses, and that all or most of it is swallowed up in those expenses. Once they understand that you get an entirely different reaction. At present what happens is that the workman says: “£600 a year—12 quid a week—I only get 6 quid” or “5 quid,” or whatever it may be, and he draws an immediate and instinctive comparison. That is why I think your angle of approach here should be, first of all, meet a the legitimate expenses and take them out of the salary category altogether. Then give an allowance on which a man can live when income tax is paid. That concludes what I want to say, and I am most grateful for the opportunity of saying it.

*Chairman.*] Thank you. Has any Member any questions to put to Mr. Brown?

*Mr. Leslie.*

339. On the question of free postage, how far would you go in that direction? For instance, as you know, you may get a letter from a mother asking for her son to be released. She forgets to say what regiment he is in and where he is stationed, so you have to write for that information. It happens in many other cases, where you have to write for information before you can take it up with the Minister concerned. I suggest that franking does not cover that. How far would you go?—I would give a Member of Parliament the right to frank every letter he sends.

*Chairman.*

340. You put him on his honour?—You put him on his honour not to abuse it. Some Members will, I have no doubt.

*Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.*

341. May I ask one question, arising out of what has been put? When the motion to appoint this Select Committee was being debated one point that was made on this subject of free postage was that it would give an undue advantage to the sitting Member as opposed to his prospective opponent in the constituency—that he might

avail himself of the free postage facilities to send out something in the nature of a monthly letter or political journal to the constituency, and that that would be taking an unfair advantage of somebody who was nursing that constituency in the Opposition party, with a view to trying to knock him out at the first opportunity. Might I have your view on that?—Let me say at once I agree straightaway that the sitting Member does have an advantage anyway. I put that advantage at about 15 per cent.; in the case of a good Member it may be a little more, and I do not think there is anything we can ever do that will stop the sitting Member having an advantage, but it is an advantage which, over the years tells for and against people. In the past it has told heavily in favour of the Conservative Party. Probably at the next Election it will tell heavily in favour of the Labour Party. In my case it will permanently tell in favour of the Independent. That permanent advantage is there. I agree, however, that it would be an abuse of this privilege to make use of it in order to send out electioneering literature or monthly letters or anything of that kind. I am talking about genuine postage which arises in the course of a Member's business, between himself and his constituents, between himself and Departments, between himself and sometimes other people's constituents—because people do write to you all over the country. If you are discourteous you do not reply; but you would like to reply, and I think it should cover all that.

*Mr. Cobl.*

342. You say there should be free postage for running the business of a constituency as a Member, but you would rule out anything that might be classed as running the constituency as a prospective candidate at the next election?—Yes.

*Mr. Horabin.*

343. I would like to ask a question on postage. I believe you said you spent approximately £200 a year on postage?—Yes.

344. Did that include the cost of telephoning?—No, it does not in my case, because I do all my work from my Trade Union office, and the telephone bill goes in with the general Trade Union bill. That is the explanation in my case. But it would be a formidable item.

*Mr. Lang.*

345. I would like to ask you this on this postage question. In view of the fact that some abuses are inevitable if you have free postage, and also, if there is an extension of secretarial assistance one presumes the secretaries would have a good deal to do with enclosing and sending letters, and there might be wider abuses still, would you not think it better, if the Committee

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still thought that there ought to be free postage, that there should be an allowance for postage rather than that there should be free envelopes or franking?—I have thought about that, I think you will find yourself up against the same difficulty in principle, whether you have the allowance method or the franking method. Let me put it in this way. If you are going to have an allowance for postage, you must either fix it so high that it covers the most voluminous postbag, which probably would be a good deal higher than would be necessary for many other postbags, or you have to fix it on the basis of what you conceive to be the average, in which case it will fall short of the heavy postbags, and might still be generous with regard to the light ones. I do not see how you can devise any method which guarantees the public Exchequer from unreasonable loss on this. I think it is a thing you have to risk and say: Is it better that we should face the possibility of a certain amount of abuse, in order that 600 out of the 640 Members can do good work or not?

Lieut.-Colonel Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

346. Do you intend this free postage to be free postage from anywhere or only from the House of Commons?—I would say from anywhere. I am thinking of my practical experience. I do all my work at Upper Belgrave Street, which is only about a mile away; my office happens to be there. It is very convenient, and I should regard it as a waste of my secretary's time to drag her down here and do all my work here and post the letters from here. So when I am in London I should prefer to post my letters from my office. But one is not always in London; one is in Rugby or some other part of the country. One carries on one's correspondence wherever one is, and I do not think it would be practicable to restrict it to the House.

347. Do you not think you would be opening a road to the most tremendous chance of fraud, not only from Members of Parliament, but from anybody?—No, I do not.

348. I do not see how you can possibly avoid it, because if Members of Parliament have the right to send letters from all over the country free of postage, why should we be any more honourable than our forefathers: It had to be done away with because Members used to post half the letters of their constituents. It was a most injurious thing. I am quite certain you are

under-estimating the dangers of this proposal?—I must say that I think probably during the last 100 years there has been a marked improvement in the moral quality of Members of the House. It was noticeable at the last Election, I thought! I agree there is a possibility of abuse, but I think that is part of the price you have to pay. I do not think you can start with the assumption that a man, whose reputation and whose history are good enough to enable him to come here, will immediately become a damned scoundrel as soon as you say: "You can post some letters with a frank".

Mr. *Lipson*.

349. Is it not a fact also that such an abuse would be comparatively easily discovered, and would that not be a cheap way of getting rid of an undesirable Member of Parliament ultimately?—It would get discovered.

350. Do you suggest that the money allowance for a secretary should be subject to income tax?—No; I think that should be treated as expenses for the purposes of tax.

351. The actual amount paid should be an allowable expense by the Inland Revenue authorities?—Yes.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

352. You would pay him £1,300?—Yes, in effect.

353. Of which £300 was expenses for a secretary?—Yes.

Mr. *Leslie*.

354. On this question of free travel anywhere, would you confine it merely to trains?—No.

355. If you take a Member for a county constituency, he may cover quite a number of constituencies, and his best method is to travel either by car or by bus and not by train?—I have thought about that. I would not confine it to any form of travel. I would give him free travel. This is the aeroplane age and not the age of the horse and coach, and if he can get to his Division more quickly by plane he should be allowed to do that, in my opinion; and if he uses his car then I think that he might claim on the basis of the mileage allowance.

*Chairman*.] We have two more witnesses, and Mr. Brown has been very clear in what he has stated, and I think we might thank him now for his evidence. Thank you very much, Mr. Brown.

Mr. A. E. DAVIES (a Member of the House) examined.

*Chairman*.

356. You were good enough to indicate in your letter to me that you would be quite willing to come and give us your views with regard to Members' expenses and matters relating thereto. Perhaps I might ask you if you would be prepared to

make a statement?—Yes. I thought, as an ordinary private Member, that to get the view of a man who is new on this job might be useful to you.

Mr. *Lang*.] On a point of information, might I ask whether you would be good enough, Mr. Chairman, to ask the Witness

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if he would, when he begins, tell us what constituency he represents. It would be most useful.

*Chairman.*

357. Yes. Mr. Davies represents Burslem? —Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent. I am a private Member—that is to say, a constituency Member. Although I have had a long association with a Trade Union I have stood without any financial support from the Trade Union. Therefore, I am entirely dependent upon my Parliamentary salary. In some ways I find myself worse off than I was when I was in civil employment. I do not mind that in some respects, because I knew when I was taking the job on, to some extent at least, what was involved. There were some things I did not know until I came here—the kind of job I should be expected to do for local authorities, trade unions, employers and business people—in fact, what would emerge from the correspondence, and I find myself now regarded as a sort of liaison between all these people. In that connection I find that much of the reading and following up of Parliamentary business which I should very much like to do here is made difficult because of the correspondence which I get. I should make it clear that I do not have an inordinate amount of correspondence. As a new Member I do not suppose my mail is disproportionately heavy. But when I receive correspondence, as I do, as an ex-member of the Stoke-on-Trent City Council, which requires me to go to one of the Ministries—the Ministry of Health, or, it may be, the Board of Trade or the Ministry of Works—in reference to matters relating to housing, health or public works (the new industries, the Police Bill, and so on) I find I have to write out all my replies to this correspondence with the local authorities. Very often this takes a great deal of time, and I am unable to keep copies of the correspondence which passes between us, because I have no secretarial assistance. I have no secretarial assistance because I am unable to afford it. I have made inquiries as to what would be involved in getting some secretarial assistance, and, quite frankly, upon my present income I could not meet it. I am, because of this experience, convinced that a good case can be made out for an improvement in private Members' conditions. This improvement may fall under two heads. It may fall under the head of monetary income, or it may fall under the head of an improvement in the services. By "services" I mean in reference to some of the matters I have mentioned—in relation to secretarial assistance, and so on. I sought this opportunity of coming before you to supplement what I have already written to you, because I feel that the raising of Members' salaries—although I am hardly hit myself—is a matter which needs to be dealt with very discreetly. I knew, when I was taking on this job, that

it would involve some sacrifice, but because I, like many other people, like this work and believe that it is a fine feature of our English life that we should be prepared to take our place in democracy, I was prepared to make some sacrifice. Therefore I think we should be very careful about raising our salaries, despite the difficulties I have brought out, to an extent which may reflect on the good standing of our Parliamentary life and the status of people who give service to the country in this way. I would think that we should be incurring possibly some criticism if a very substantial increase were given to apply immediately. I think I have satisfied you, from the brief comments I have made, that there is a good case for raising the standard of income of the ordinary private Member, of whom I am one; but even so I think that to give any substantial increase would create the impression that in an arbitrary manner, as our own masters, so to speak, in our own house, we were doing something which would lend itself to criticism in the country. I am, however, convinced there is a case for monetary improvement, and I share the view that something in the nature of £1,000 would not be too much for a public representative, who today is regarded in a different way from what he seems to have been regarded as in the past. Democracy is very lively at the moment, and I think my experience, in common with other people's shows that there is more work for the ordinary private Member to do than there was, say 20 or 50 years ago. We are no longer remote. We are persons to whom all kinds of people come, all kinds of public bodies come. I think that we have a good case for improving our conditions, so that we might be able to do our job properly, which I feel we are not able to do with the qualifications which I have brought out. Therefore, in regard to the monetary aspect of it, I personally should be reluctant to advise any considerable increase. I do not say some amendment in our monetary payment ought not to become operative during this Parliament, but I should think there is much to be said for the provision which says that it shall operate at a subsequent date, perhaps in the next Parliament. In respect of services, however, I do think something ought to be done immediately. In my experience in a commercial house I have seen that it is possible to set up a secretarial bureau, so that it is possible for correspondence to be looked at in the morning and for replies to be dictated to a secretary; and in my case I could dispose, I think, of my correspondence, if I could have a secretary, in an hour or an hour and a half in the morning, regularly to do it, the letters being typed and placed on my desk for signature at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I think there should be some office accommodation with a telephone and all the necessary conveniences

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[Continued.]

which modern conditions require, and I think that is a matter which should be attended to as early as possible. I do not imagine that it is possible to give each Member a secretary, but it seems to me that there could be some pooling arrangements, whereby we could have given to us—perhaps some two or three of us—a secretary or have the services of some member of the staff which would enable us to dispose of our correspondence and of the filing and routine work each day, as I have suggested. That would considerably relieve people like myself, who are anxious to follow the proceedings of Parliament and to keep up to date with reading. I have said that I am worse off financially. I suppose when I am living in London it costs me somewhere between £4 and £5 a week. I think that is a very reasonable provision. I could analyse that but I do not think it is necessary; I think all of you will be *au fait* with what is required of us. I have a very modest place in which to sleep, and only in which to sleep, with austerity conditions. I come here early in the morning. I get most of my meals out, and, as I have said, there will not be much left out of £5 a week when I have finished my days in London.

*Chairman.*] Thank you. We are a little behind time. Has any Member any questions?

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.

358. I want to put one question. I think it covers most of what the Witness has said. Supposing, Mr. Davies, that the difficulty from which you at present suffer of lack of secretarial assistance were to be got over either by a grant in aid, enabling you to employ a secretary, or by the provision of a secretary on the lines you have indicated, and the postage difficulty were overcome, do you consider the existing figure of £600 per annum sufficient for you to live on, with the dignity of a Member, all the year round, in view of the fact that you have to be here and in Stoke?—I do not consider the figure is adequate. Time does not permit me to deal with it at length, but there are other expenses in the

constituency. We keep available an office. I would like to pay something for the staffing of such an office, and so on; and when I am at home in the holidays I have my room on tap, which involves me in expenses for light, coal, and all the rest of it. So that the answer is that £600, plus secretarial assistance, would not be, in my view, sufficient monetary payment.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.*

359. Can you tell us briefly why you want everything deferred until the next Parliament? Surely the need is now?—My own view is that to arbitrate on our own conditions and to give ourselves a rise does not seem to be quite a wholesome feature of our Parliamentary life. I would say that there is a great amount of sympathy in the country for our point of view, but satisfactorily to deal with this would mean nothing short of £1,000, which means a monetary increase of £400, and it seems to me to be rather more than the country would stand for, in view of our making the decision ourselves.

*Mr. Leslie.*

360. If you want it deferred until after the next election, as you have said, how are you going to manage to live, because you have already stated that it is not sufficient now? You must take into consideration the fact that there are other Members to be thought of, and this Committee has to think of Members of Parliament in general?—Yes, but I am stating the position as a private Member, as a married man with a child, with a very definite duty to them, as the position is best known to me, and I am recognising that the salary should be one of £1,000 in terms of monetary payment, but that immediately to give that, in my view, may not be practicable for certain reasons. That is not to say that there should not be some amendment of our present monetary income, but not to the maximum.

*Chairman.*] That is the answer to the question. Are there any further questions? We are much obliged to you, Mr. Davies, and desire to thank you for your evidence.

MR. ROBERT BOOTHBY (a Member of the House) examined.

*Chairman.*

361. Mr. Boothby, you were good enough to send a fairly full reply to the circular letter and to indicate your willingness to come along and give evidence. Members of the Committee are *au fait* with the different points you have brought out in the letter, and perhaps it would be as well if I were to ask you now just to amplify or comment upon them for the benefit of the Committee. Take, for example, the question of travel first?—It is only that I feel that this is almost the most important item of the lot, and I was confirmed in that

view as the result of a long talk with Mr. Mackenzie King when coming across the Atlantic. He said it was one thing he could not understand about this country. They have had it for many years in Canada. Of course, the distances are longer there, but he said he thought it essential, and even more essential in some ways in a country like this, that Members should be able to go anywhere they liked. I do not think there is much point in the argument that you should go only to your constituency. In my own constituency, for example, it is absolutely essential that I



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[Continued.]

should go to Yarmouth and Lowestoft every year, when the autumn fishing is on, when practically all the fishermen in my constituency are there. I have to do that. I go every year when the autumn fishing is on. It is an automatic thing. Very often I should also require to go to Stornoway or Shetland, if they were there. I might have 300 of my constituents there with burning questions to be settled, and meetings I had to attend. Beyond that, I feel that a Member of Parliament is of much greater value if he knows what is going on in the country, if he is able to travel about and see for himself. We are required to take part in discussions on every conceivable subject. For example, I think Members of Parliament would have been very well advised to have visited some of the coalfields during recent months, which a great many would have been, quite frankly, unable to do. I think that this is the most valuable thing of all, and I feel more strongly about it than about anything else. I would rather have that alone, almost, than anything else.

Mr. Leslie.

362. Do you suggest the facilities would be by train, bus, or any other vehicle?—Yes.

Major Symonds.

363. Any form of public transport?—Yes. And if I may make just one other point, I think the question of abuse comes in here. The only case I think there ever has been of some abuse was when a Member cashed one of these innumerable vouchers we now have and handed it over to his wife or something like that. But if each Member were provided with a free pass—it is really what Railway Directors now have—a little gold or brass thing which he put on his watchchain, all question of abuse would be gone; and I believe the additional expense would be very small.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

364. Do you think the administration of such a scheme would be easy?—I do not know to what extent one is allowed to repeat conversation in the smoking-room.

Chairman.

365. You cannot do that?—I was talking to one of the Government Ministers, but I think I must not mention that. But I have talked outside this House altogether with one Treasury official, who did say that the administrative work involved in all the different voucher books we now have—the green and the blue for aeroplanes and the pink for something else—is very considerable.

366. May I put one point to you? With regard to free travel, would you include payment in lieu of travel to a Member who uses his motor car? Suppose a man decided

to go from London to Aberdeen and thought it would be better to go by motor than to take a long train journey, would you make provision for that?—I think that might be very difficult to administer, but I do not know what you are going to do about making allowances for petrol. I should have thought, if a Member went on any trip in a motor car on public business, he would be entitled to indent, perhaps, for the cost of the petrol.

Lieut.-Col. Sir Cuthbert Headlam.

367. Is not that rather a different thing? Supposing we did what you suggest—for which I think there is a good deal to be said—that instituted a general permit to go anywhere at the public charge—it means in public conveyances, I take it?—Yes.

368. Would you in addition to that allow a Member of Parliament who went out, for instance, to see the coalfields and preferred to go by car—you would not allow him petrol for that?—No.

Mr. Lipson.

369. That would inevitably lend itself to abuse?—I had not contemplated that when I wrote my letter.

Lieut.-Col. Sir Cuthbert Headlam.

370. That was the point I was trying to bring out?—I would be against that.

Chairman.

371. I wanted to see how far your suggestion of free travel went?—Sir Cuthbert Headlam's point is right. What I had in mind was public conveyances only.

372. I wanted to take a party of Members to see certain collieries, and the fact that they would have to pay their own fare was the reason why it could not be done. On the next point, salaries, would you care to comment on that?—The only point I would like to make on that, if I might, is that I still think simplicity is awfully desirable, and I think it is rather a bore if you have to fill up forms in detail. You would not know exactly. A good deal is guesswork, and, again, it lends itself to abuse. Once you start delving into free postage, free telephones and so on, you get into complications. There is the possibility of abuse and there is additional labour; and I would hope that this Committee might think it advisable to recommend a lump sum for expenses, for what they think are reasonable expenses for the ordinary Member of Parliament, and let him have that amount free of tax, in addition to his salary.

Major Symonds.

373. What is your estimate for the ordinary private Member?—I should have thought the estimate now on existing prices would be somewhere of the order of £500 to £600 a year.

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Mr. ROBERT BOOTHBY.

[Continued.]

Mr. Cobb.

374. Over and above the present allowance?—Yes. I should make the salaries that are paid, the £600 a year, subject to the full rate of tax, and give whatever allowance it was (this would be my idea) free of tax, simply for expenses. I should have thought that perhaps at present prices it should be £600 a year or something of the order of it, or £500, and give that to the Parliamentary Secretaries as well.

Mr. Lipson.

375. There is obviously a great difference in the expenditure of a man who has to maintain two homes and a man who has to maintain one. If your home is in London you have only one home, and the expense of going to your constituency occasionally is nothing like so great as having two permanent homes?—I often wonder how valid that is, if you have free travel to your constituency and home. I wonder whether it is very much more expensive.

Mr. Lipson.] You have your home where you live, and then you have your hotel in

London, whereas if you have your home in London you have the one expenditure.

Chairman.

376. There are balancing factors on that, as a matter of fact. The cost of living in London; if you are resident in London, is much higher than it is in the Provinces?—My feeling is that the simpler you make it, the less work and administrative toil are involved, and the less chance there is of any kind of abuse.

Mr. Cobb.] And there is some incentive to efficiency.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

377. What you are really suggesting is £600 a year salary as now, subject to the payment of tax, and £600 a year additional as an expense allowance?—Yes, I think that would be reasonable.

378. And then a man would pay everything himself?—Yes—and not go into details of postage or secretaries or anything like that.

Chairman.] We are indebted to you for your evidence. Thank you very much.

(Adjourned till to-morrow at 11 a.m.)

WEDNESDAY, 30TH JANUARY, 1946

Members present:

Mr. TOM SMITH (*Chairman*)

Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggar.  
Mr. Haydn Davies.  
Colonel Dodds-Parker.  
Lieut.-Colonel Sir Cuthbert Headlam.  
Mr. Lang.

Mr. Leslie.  
Mr. McKinlay.  
Captain Charles Smith  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.  
Earl Winterton.

Mr. GAMMANS (a Member of the House), examined.

Chairman.

379. Mr. Gammans, you have very readily responded to the circular letter, and you expressed a wish, if need be, to give evidence upon a particular point. What I think you had in mind was the need for encouraging Members of this House of all parties to become as acquainted as possible with different parts of the British Commonwealth. Would you like to comment upon that?—I imagine that this is a point which has not been generally considered by the Committee, but I put it forward with some diffidence, because I imagine the function of this Committee is to make recommendations as to the allowances which Members of this House shall

receive in order to carry out their duties to the country and to their constituents adequately and efficiently. I have always felt that it was a fair criticism against us that we did not realise sufficiently our responsibilities to the peoples of the Colonial Empire. After all, this House is responsible for the welfare of 60 million people overseas. I am not, of course, referring to the Dominions now nor to India. I am thinking of the Colonial Empire, and it is likely to be many years before some parts of the Colonial Empire will be self-governing, and, therefore, the responsibility for those peoples' welfare rests upon us. As you all know, this is a subject in which I take particular interest. In the years when

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Mr. GAMMANS. .f.

[Continued.]

I was overseas myself in the Colonial service I always noticed that people there felt very badly at the small attendance at debates in this House on Colonial affairs. To start with, we normally have only about one a year, but even when we do have it it is a mere handful of Members—30 or 40—who turn up and take an interest or speak. I think the reason is a simple one. It is not that Members generally do not want to accept those responsibilities, but that Colonial affairs are in an entirely different category from, say, a subject like housing, education or social services, on which all of us feel competent to express an opinion. Those matters impinge on our daily lives, and we are all prepared to get up and make a speech on any of those subjects at the shortest possible notice. But when it comes to Colonial affairs, to my mind there is an initial barrier that has to be got over, and that is that until a man has been actually abroad to one of our Colonies he says: "I know nothing about Colonial affairs. It has never come into the orbit of my interest, and, therefore, I am not going to speak on it and I am not going to take much interest in it", and it is because I believe that there is that barrier of not having been there which has to be got over before you can expect people in this House to take an interest that I venture to put forward a suggestion that when we are considering ways and means of making ourselves most efficient to carry out our duties we ought seriously to consider whether each Member of this House, if he wishes to do so, should be allowed to make, say, one trip a year to any part of the Colonial Empire to which he wants to go. It is no good to imagine that the vast majority of us would be able to do that if we had to bear the whole cost out of our own pockets. What I am suggesting is not that anybody should be given a subsistence allowance or anything of that sort, but that the actual cost of the ship or of the air passage should be a fair charge on public funds. As you know, there have been many trips done recently under the aegis of the Empire Parliamentary Association. I have been on one myself. I went to a part of the world that I have never been to before, but the number of Members in this House who can go in that way must necessarily be limited to a mere handful once a year. Therefore I do not think that the facilities now being provided under the Empire Parliamentary Association meet the point I have in my mind. That is if the Committee feels that I have made out my case for Members going at all.

380. I think what you have in mind is this. Take Ceylon: if Members felt they would like to become acquainted with the method of Government in Ceylon periodically they should have the right to go over there and see for themselves and have kind of informal discussions?—May I take

an even more topical case than that? Next week I believe in the House of Commons we are discussing the Straits Settlements Bill—the White Paper on Malaya. They discussed it yesterday in the Lords. It is a very drastic Bill. It is making revolutionary changes in the future of five million people. I do not know how many Members of the House have ever been to Malaya. I think I am the only one in the House who has ever lived there, and probably the number that have been there even on the shortest visit could be counted on both hands. What does it mean? It means that there are very few people in the House who will want to speak on that subject or want to express their views, simply because they say: "I really do not know anything about it."

Earl Winterton.

381. May I ask one or two questions, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, now, because, equally with your permission, I have to leave early? You would agree that the Empire Parliamentary Association is not an official body? The House of Commons as such does not take official cognisance of it?—That is so.

382. How would you logically limit the right of Members to receive these allowances if they went out under the auspices of the Empire Parliamentary Association? Would not each one of the other 600 Members of the House in theory have just as much right to say that he wanted to see for himself what was happening in the Straits Settlements, to take the example which you gave? How would you differentiate between the rights of the two sets of Members?—I am not quite sure if I understand, Lord Winterton. My point about the Empire Parliamentary Association was this. I thought someone would be bound to say to me: "But surely some Members of this House do visit the Colonies now, under the aegis of the Empire Parliamentary Association," and I was going to agree, but my point was going to be that the numbers who could visit in that way were so small that it did not really affect the point I was trying to make.

383. I apologise to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the Witness, because I think perhaps I put my question badly. What I meant to ask was this. I understand your contention to be that under modern conditions every Member of Parliament ought, if he is in a position to do so, to make himself acquainted with problems outside this country?—Yes.

384. My question was this. Would you agree, if that be so (I personally do not accept the statement), that every single Member of the House should have equal rights, if he so desired, to ask for a ticket to-morrow to India, or wherever there might be questions in which he was interested?—Yes.

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Mr. GAMMANS.

[Continued.]

385. So that in fact it might mean that the whole of the House of Commons might disappear to investigate some problem abroad?—That might be, but I think, if I may say so, one is rather pushing it to extremes, because there is, after all, a Whips' Office.

386. Supposing he is an Independent Member?—If we are going to assume that in the month of January, merely because it is bad weather, the whole of the House of Commons is going to come along and say: "Give me a ticket—I want to go to the Bahamas," I think we are rather pushing it to extremes and we are rather suggesting a very low level for our colleagues in the House to think that they would do that.

387. Might I put this question to you? You, as the Committee will be aware, are greatly interested in imperial questions, but there might be other Members who were interested in European questions. Would you limit it to visits to other parts of the Empire?—I am limiting it entirely to the Empire, because my point is that whilst I think every Member of Parliament should travel generally as much as he can, I am concerning myself now with those parts of the world for which this House of Commons has a direct responsibility. We have no direct responsibility, in the intimate sense, for the people of Italy, but we have a very direct responsibility for the people of the Gold Coast.

388. Might I suggest, with respect, that at the present moment the situation is not quite so simple as that. For example, presumably we have a direct responsibility, as Members of Parliament, for the people in British occupied territory in Germany; they are under complete British control?—Presumably that is a temporary phase. Here I am thinking of something permanent.

389. May I put one other question? I apologise for the number of my questions, Mr. Chairman. I understand your point to be that you want travel to those parts of the Colonial Empire for which we have an administrative responsibility, in the sense that we can criticise the Estimates? You confine it to those parts, or would you extend it to the Dominions, for which we have no administrative responsibility?—Basically I would like to extend it as much as I could, but I am putting forward the more modest suggestion of those parts of the world for which we in this House have a direct responsibility.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite.*

390. The witness did exclude India specifically. Why?—I was assuming that India is about to obtain some form of Dominion status, and, therefore, if that is so, this House of Commons will have no more responsibility for India than it has for Canada. I would certainly include

India if India is not going to attain Dominion status within a measurable space of time.

Mr. *Leslie.*

391. Would you suggest that it should be available for each individual Member of Parliament, or would you do it by a ballot system?—Personally, I would like each Member to have the chance. If, for good reasons, that were not practicable, I would certainly think the ballot system is immeasurably better than nothing at all, but I do feel that any Member of this House ought to be able to come along and say: "I am responsible for West Africa—Nigeria," if you like, "with its 20 million odd; I have never been to Nigeria; I want to go to Nigeria and get some idea of what it is all about, so that when Nigerian questions come before this House of Commons I know what I am talking about."

*Chairman.*] From experience, I can say that this travelling through the Empire is not so simple. There are other considerations to be taken into account. I have been privileged to meet 13 Empire Parliaments, and I have seen people fall in the heat who should never have gone out at all. I agree with you that it is desirable that all Members should become as fully acquainted as possible, yet there are other considerations to be taken into account when you talk about balloting.

Lieut.-Col. *Sir Cuthbert Headlam.*

392. Do you think it is impossible to form any opinion of a country without visiting it? How long do you think you ought to visit a country to be able to give an opinion about it? These are rather important questions?—May I take your second point first. You know what is always said about books of travel—you should either write one after three weeks or after thirty years. I would say that even a superficial visit to a country is better than no visit at all. May I quote my own experience? Last year I went with the Empire Parliamentary Association to the West Indies. It was a visit of weeks only. As a result of that visit I feel that not only do West Indian matters mean more to me than ever they did before, but I had an opportunity of meeting a large number of individuals with whom I correspond or whom I can go to see again, or when they come to England they come and see me. I think my visit was certainly better than not going at all.

393. Do you not think that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and very often somebody who goes for a week or three weeks to the West Indies thinks he knows all about the West Indies?—I know that is said, that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, but I am not sure that a little knowledge is not better than no knowledge.

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Mr. GAMMANS.

[Continued.]

394. You think a little knowledge creates an interest. That is your point?—Yes, it creates an interest. May I put it in this way? I go to the West Indies and am there for a matter of weeks. What does it mean? It means that thereafter, whenever any West Indian news comes into the papers I automatically read it, which I probably would not do otherwise. Perhaps it mentions a place I have been to or an individual I have met. I read books on the West Indies. If there is a lecture at Chatham House or the Royal Empire Society I am much more likely to go. If there is a Debate in this House on the West Indies I am much more likely to stay and listen to it than I am to go away. I think, as you have put it, that even a short visit creates interest.

*Chairman.*

395. May I put this point to you? Apart from the question of free travel to the place you want to visit, what about living expenses when you get there?—I would not give those. I think that is something which is unjustifiable.

*Chairman.*] Let us examine that a little. You are desirous that Members of this House should become fully acquainted with different parts of the Empire. I know that the Commonwealth is very generous in its hospitality; and I also know this, that there is nothing more humiliating for a representative of the Mother of Parliaments to be in a place when he is not in a position to meet everything that comes to him while he is there. I could give you striking illustrations of this, because I set out alone to meet thirteen Parliaments, with an itinerary, and so much money in my pocket. There were certain States in which I was the guest of the State. There were certain other places where I had to pay my own expenses. One likes to feel independent, and to meet people on terms of equality, and I think the mere cost of travel would not be sufficient, if the principle were accepted, because you might find there were some Members with a desire to absorb knowledge about the Commonwealth who probably could not go because they could not afford to pay their way.

*Mr. McKinlay.*

396. You would always have the generous Civil Service allowance of 8s. a day, if away for eight hours?—Surely the answer to the Chairman's point is that whatever your Committee may be recommending with regard to Members' emoluments generally, what we have always to be careful of is the attitude that the general public will adopt about it. Nothing could do the prestige of this House more harm than if the idea got about that we regarded Membership of the House of Commons as rather a good thing financially, and I believe it is true with regard to any trips that one may have abroad, that whereas I

believe the public, if the thing were explained to them, would readily accept the necessity for a passage, if on to that you added some sort of allowance per day the great danger would be that people would say: "Here is a nice little racket."

*Chairman.*

397. I was only putting it that if the principle were accepted by the country, the mere fact of paying the travelling expenses, leaving a man dependent on his own pocket, would have a limiting effect on the type of Member who could go?—I admit it is a point, but I think there is the argument on the other side, and it is a question of weighing up which is the stronger.

*Mr. McKinlay.*

398. Is it not a fact that what the Chairman says operates at the moment, when delegations are appointed in that mysterious way: "through the usual channel", and the same bodies are floating about that channel, it does not matter in which direction they may be led. I would like to ask this. Your case is simply this, that the Colonial Empire is as much the responsibility of Members as the City of London or other parts of Britain, and your suggestion is that travel facilities should be afforded to Members to visit those outlying places?—To enable them to carry out their responsibilities efficiently and adequately.

*Mr. Cobb.*

399. You did say in your opening remarks that you would limit this to, say, one passage per annum or something like that?—Yes. I am willing to impose any limitations on the idea which are reasonable. I go a little further if necessary, provided that I can persuade the Committee that it is essential that this House should take more interest than they have ever taken before in the peoples of the Colonial Empire, and my submission is that unless, by and large, Members visit the Colonial Empire, that interest will never be forthcoming. Put such limitations on that as you like—such safeguards as you like.

*Mr. Lang.*

400. I would like to ask the Witness, through you, Mr. Chairman, about two matters. First of all, with regard to the general question of travelling to the Colonial possessions, it would involve a large amount of public money, and without taking any low view of my colleagues, do you not think, human nature being what it is, it would be difficult to limit trips to those people who have a genuine interest as opposed to those who would see a great opportunity for pleasure or even needed relaxation? Have you any idea, therefore, of a means by which people could be sorted

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Mr. GAMMANS.

[Continued.]

out, who have proved in some way their genuine interest, which I should have thought membership of the Empire Parliamentary Association might have suggested?—The test you apply, for the reasons that Lord Winterton has given, would not be possible, and that is that the Empire Parliamentary Association is not an official body. But your general argument that this may be abused is always the argument that is put forward, if I may say so, whenever any question of concessions is brought forward. It is a fair criticism of our general attitude of mind that we very often legislate for the 5 per cent. who will abuse it, and we create a great injustice to the 95 per cent. who will not. If you say to me: "Will this be abused?" I should answer: "I am quite sure it will be, to a limited extent." I am quite sure there are people who would turn round and say: "I do not think much of Christmas in England. I think Christmas in Jamaica would be very much more pleasant." But I think the percentage who will do that will be a small percentage, and I think there is no way of safeguarding against it. You come down in the end to the type of person who is elected to this House, and I think we have, by and large, to assume that our colleagues are men of integrity, and men who have been elected to this House with a genuine desire to serve the people, not only of their own constituency, but of the country and of the Empire.

401. You have given me a very good lecture, and if I may say so, I was aware of all that before you said it, but I want to take it further. Perhaps what I said at the beginning appeared a little crude, but here is the position I would like to take with you. Members avail themselves of this opportunity, and we will take them now as all *bona fide* people who want to go and see a place. They cannot stay there long. What would happen next time there was a debate on a particular matter? You would have an awful stampede to get into the Debate. You would probably have things said that were not too wise. You might have promises made on the spot. That is why I would want to limit it to people who have a genuine interest. We might find ourselves detained by people with very superficial views. I am tired to death of meeting people who have been for two days in Czechoslovakia, who want to take me aside and instruct me about it?—I am not allowed to ask you questions, I suppose?

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

402. I would like to ask a question. Do you not think that although it is an unofficial body, the Empire Parliamentary Association is a most efficient sieve in this matter, for sifting Members who have really a concern to know the Empire, and does it not in fact provide the best vehicle for what you have in mind—namely, which

Members should go?—I would agree. I think the Empire Parliamentary Association is a most efficient sieve. The only criticism I have of it is that the number of Members of this House who can avail themselves of it is so small. I have nothing else against it at all.

Earl *Winterton*.

403. May I put a further question, and I again apologise for the number of questions I have asked. You spoke of the responsibilities which we have, and which I think we all admit, for the people of the Colonies. I am speaking of Colonies in the true sense, not the Dominions. How would you differentiate between those responsibilities and the responsibility which every Member of Parliament has, not merely to his own constituents, but to the general body of the public, and if you were to allow these concessions in respect of the Colonies, ought you not also to give a free travelling allowance so that Members might go all over Britain to investigate all sorts of problems with which they might not be personally familiar?—I would do so.

404. So that your proposal is not only for the Colonies but for this country as well? In other words, your proposal is that there should be free travel to those parts of this country and those parts of the Colonies for which, to use your phrase, Members have a direct responsibility?—I thought you wanted my views on the particular proposal I put forward. If you also want my views on the matter generally which is under discussion I shall be pleased to give them.

*Chairman*.

405. I think you have brought out the particular point?—If I might be allowed to deal with Lord Winterton's point, I personally do think that Members of this House should be given travel facilities to any part of the United Kingdom—as they are in the United States and I think in Canada.

406. In other words a free travel pass here and in the Colonies. I only ask the question because it is difficult to disentangle the two. What you are really advocating is free travel facilities for Members of Parliament in the Colonies and in this country?—Quite.

Mr. *Lang*.

407. You would, I am sure, agree that with regard to travel in this country, with which proposal I am in full agreement, there would be the wholesome corrective of Members by the actual Members for the constituencies that they might go into. There would not be the danger of Members jumping in with all kinds of *ex parte* statements about different parts of this

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Mr. GAMMANS.

[Continued.]

country?—I should think the most wholesome corrective at the moment would be the discomfort of the railways!

*Chairman.*] May we leave it there?

*Mrs. Wills.*

408. I would like to ask your opinion on Members of the House specialising in one particular colony, rather than getting a superficial view of all of them. What do you think of the suggestion of groups of people, say, taking an interest in the West Indies or in the Gold Coast?—If I may say so, there are 60 territories which come under the Colonial Office. They range from just small places to very large ones, and are in many different parts of the world. I think it is the experience of this House that inevitably one does specialise in a par-

ticular part of the world very largely because it would be almost impossible to have been to all of them.

409. Would it enable Members to make more than one visit to a particular part?—I think that is a matter for the Member himself. A Member might say: "I know nothing at all about the Colonies, and, therefore, I am going to visit as many as I can to get a general overall picture." Or a Member might say: "I have a slight knowledge of West Africa now, and I am going to utilise these facilities for getting an intimate knowledge of West Africa". I think it is a matter for each Member to decide.

*Chairman.*

410. May we leave it there and say thank you, Mr. Gammans?—Thank you.

Mr. ASTERLEY JONES (a Member of the House), examined.

*Chairman.*

411. Mr. Asterley Jones, this is your first Parliament, is it not?—Yes.

412. You are the Member for Hitchin?—Yes.

413. You very quickly and readily responded to the circular letter, setting out quite a number of points. Perhaps it would be convenient for the Committee if you were to make a statement?—As the Committee will have seen from the points I raised in my letter, I did not attempt to deal with the general issue. I simply put up one or two things which, in the short experience I have had, have hit me rather hard as a Member. The first point I should like to make is that by comparison with a large number of my colleagues I appear to be in a very fortunate position, in that I have a constituency which can be run from London; that is to say, I do not have to keep up two homes. The next point is that, for some reason which I have never been able to understand, my constituents do not write me as many letters as other Members' constituents write to them. That is a matter which I cannot understand. I believe that in general I probably have less commitments than the majority of Members. As regards the first point, reasonable expenses for entertainment of constituents in the House and the extra meals which one has to obtain, when I made my return of expenses for income tax purposes I attempted to have these reasonable expenses of entertainment and extra meals included, and I was told, of course, that it was not possible. That, I think, has hit a large number of Members very hard, because it means, in order, shall we say, to earn 2s. for a dinner one has to earn 4s. altogether in order to account for the tax. There is no doubt that all of us have to spend very much more on our own personal convenience. Even though

it may result in some economy, perhaps, at home, the total outgoings are very much more than those incurred by anybody in an ordinary business. As regards the entertainment of constituents, we all of us have people who come to this House to see us, and one can hardly send them away hungry. They usually come in twos, and even if one is to give them a very light meal, again, it is not only the actual cost which comes hard; it is the fact that you are not allowed to deduct those expenses for income tax purposes, and so, again, one has to earn double the amount of the cost of the meal in order to defray it. That is the situation as I see it, and I think that in view of the fact that our constituents do come quite frequently, some allowance should be made, in assessing our expenses, for those reasonable costs. Quite clearly, of course, some Members might find it convenient to entertain constituents every night. I hardly think that would be acceptable as a general basis; and might I suggest that possibly twice a week—that I think is a fair experience—one would be at any rate reasonably expected to provide constituents with a dinner. Shall we say perhaps, four meals a week or something on those lines? Perhaps I may deal with the points first and then any questions that arise later? As regards secretarial assistance, I have had experience of all three methods of working in the last few months. I first of all started off by doing it myself, and I found that it took up, in my view, wastefully, a very large amount of time. That is to say, I considered I should be very much better employed in doing other things than simply sitting and typing my own letters. Then I tried a secretarial bureau. The difficulty about that, of course, is that it works for fixed hours, and the time that we have available for dictating letters is not always in ordinary office hours; and I considered that that same objection would

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Mr. ASTERLEY JONES.

[Continued.]

apply to any sort of official pool which was set up in this House, that it would have to have certain fixed hours. If it did not have fixed hours, then you could never be certain of getting the same person, and while I was in the Army I did for a time have experience of a pool. Even though the pool was on duty for perhaps 14 hours or 15 hours a day, as it was in the Army, it was unsatisfactory, because, as we all know, a shorthand-typist gets used to the ways of one particular person. It is all right for copying typing; it is all right for duplicating, and that sort of thing, but it is not all right for dictating, and you can waste an enormous amount of time by having to explain your own methods to a different shorthand-typist every time you dictate. As I say, my use of a secretarial bureau had those disadvantages. The third disadvantage is that, of course, a very large amount of time is taken up with filing. If we are to do our job properly we must keep accurate records of everything we do. It is one thing to type a letter; it is quite another to fold it up, to separate the carbon copy from it, and to find the previous correspondence. If you get a dozen letters in, all of which refer to previous correspondence, it is a matter of ease to say to a secretary: "Look up the previous correspondence and let me have it." But it takes, perhaps, in many cases half-an-hour or an hour to do it yourself. There, again, it is a waste of time. It is quite impossible for a pool of typists to take on filing unless it is so arranged that one typist is allocated to one Member; and in that case I do not see that we have any of the advantages of a pool. I have recently engaged a secretary who, by very fortunate chance, (this may be of interest to Members) occupies perhaps two-thirds of her time being my secretary, and the other one-third she does the cooking in the flat, which is an unusual combination. But I find that I can employ a secretary two-thirds of her time. I do not suggest that is a common combination.

Mr. McKinlay.

414. It is a very attractive one?—Very attractive. It works remarkably well, if I may say so. However, I do not put that forward as an arrangement that could be adopted by everyone. It is a coincidence. I must say I think it is absolutely essential that every Member should have a personal secretary who can do his work for him, and, as I say, for reasons which I cannot understand it appears that I need a secretary for only two-thirds of her time instead of whole-time. No doubt, possibly, as time goes on that may change. The third point I want to put is this question of travel by car. It has been accepted recently that travel by rail between this House and a Member's home is borne on the public funds. That is a new departure, I understand. Previously, if one's home were in one's constituency, then it was all right,

but otherwise it was not. Those of us who live or hope to live at some time at any rate in Greater London (at the moment I am living in inner London, so it does not arise) for a little further out will find it necessary to travel by car, because the House sits fairly late. As I think a Witness said just as I came in, train services are not very good, and if we are not allowed to charge to public funds the cost of travelling by car, then, of course, we shall have to find some other way of having a *piéd à terre* in town. That, again, will involve us in expense. I do suggest that as the principle has been accepted that travel to and from one's home by rail is borne by public funds, a similar claim, not exceeding the cost by rail, should be allowable in respect of travel by car to and from the House. That is the only point I want to make on travel. Telephone calls are, clearly, of course, a very big commitment. For Members who have London constituencies there are free facilities for telephoning from the House, but those who have constituencies outside London, even a short distance outside London, and in particular those of us who are a very short distance outside—say, 40 miles—find that very frequently we are called upon to make telephone calls, whereas if we were further away, perhaps it would not be quite so necessary. People who live 100 or 200 miles away perhaps do not telephone as much as those who live 30 miles or 40 miles away. I find that very frequently I am called upon to telephone somebody in my constituency, and there again although that expense can, of course, be deducted for income tax purposes, it does place a burden on our pockets. Those are the four points. As I say, they are simply four isolated points. They do not attempt to deal with the general framework of the thing. They are four things which have hit me personally rather hard, and it occurred to me that it might be of use to the Committee to know about them.

Chairman.

415. From your comparatively short experience in Parliament, could you give us any idea as to the actual amount of money you think it has cost you on the various heads?—Yes. I pay a secretary for two-thirds of her time £4 a week, which is equivalent to a whole-time salary of about £6. As regards the entertainment, here I must admit that I have been hampered by the fact that I simply have not been able to afford to invite people. I put that quite frankly. I have not been able to afford to invite people, but I calculate on reasonable outgoings it would be somewhere in the region of 30s. a week.

416. What about telephones and postage?—As regards postage, I do not send out more at the moment—this is just at the moment—than about 70 letters a week,



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Mr. ASTERLEY JONES.

[Continued.]

which is very low by comparison with other Members—very low indeed. I cannot account for it. Possibly my constituency has not woken up to the fact that I am there yet. I do not know. They will do in due course. I should say that mine is one of the lowest postage bills in the House.

Mrs. Wills.

417. Your constituents must be trouble-free—I think they must be.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.

418. On the point of the cost of entertaining constituents, would you agree that it would be better to deal with this problem, if this Select Committee makes recommendations on these lines at all, by granting Members a global figure which will cover that sort of expense, and that it would be most undesirable if we were to do anything to create in the public mind the impression that there is now an entertainment allowance, and that constituents would be wise to come to the House of Commons and trust to their Members for meals, especially in the present congested state of restaurants? As a member of the Kitchen Committee I should regard that with the greatest alarm?—I agree entirely. I think it would be most undesirable to build this up in the form of a series of small allowances, such as is done in the Army. It is one of the most infuriating things in the Army to collect odd bits and pieces here and there. What I am suggesting is that this should be taken into account when assessing the average expenses of Members.

Lieut.-Com. Gurney Braithwaite.] I would like to say, as one who has been here rather longer than the Witness, that I do feel this is a point about which we have to be careful. I remember a green card was given to me one afternoon, pre-war, from two people I had never heard of: "Business—tea on the terrace". The public must understand that this is a workshop and not a sort of club where people can come and be fed. I think one has to be careful about that.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

419. Would you agree it would be highly improper for us to recommend something for Members of Parliament that does not apply equally to people outside?—In what way?

Viscount HINCHINGBROOKE (a Member of the House), examined.

Chairman.

424. The Committee are, of course, aware, Lord Hinchingbrooke, of the subject matter of your letter in reply to the circular letter I sent to you, and perhaps it would be for the convenience of all of us if you were to make a statement and tell us what is in your mind?—Thank you very much. May I deal with questions a little beyond those I dealt with in the letter?

420. In this sense, that the ordinary man engaged in ordinary work cannot obtain an allowance for entertainment?—Is that absolutely right—

421. I have not finished—unless he can show that it is wholly, necessarily and exclusively arising out of his employment?—I should say this does arise exclusively out of our occupation. Let us take a company which entertains its customers. I have yet to come across a company which does not regard that as being part of the legitimate expenses of the company. I think that is true, is it not, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. McKinlay

422. If you are engaged in an occupation and you are given an allowance by your firm to cover hospitality, is it not the fact that that allowance does not appear in your return for income tax purposes? It does not appear in the employee's return. The point I am trying to make here is that we not only pay tax, but we are spending money on entertainment on which we have already paid tax. What Mr. Davies suggests is that we would be having something which other people outside would not get. I am suggesting that anyone outside, employed on a salary basis, who gets an allowance for entertainment purposes, for the purpose of making contacts for business, does not return that amount. That appears as an allowance to the employee and is not subject to a return for tax purposes?—I should say that is the usual practice, although I would not suggest for a moment that our allowances here should correspond in some ways to those which are paid by firms.

Mr. Leslie.

423. Would you agree that the best way to deal with this would be a really substantial allowance to cover everything; your secretary, your entertainment, your postage, and so forth?—I would. I would say, as I have said in answer to a previous question, that I do not believe in having the allowances in bits and pieces. All I am suggesting is that these matters should be taken into consideration when assessing the average expenses of Members.

Chairman.] Thank you, Mr. Asterley Jones. We are much obliged to you.

425. Certainly. Try to keep it in a straight line and separate the points from each other, so that we do not get confused?—In considering this matter I have been concerned, as I expect all members of the Committee have, in steering a straight course between Scylla and Charybdis. The Scylla I define as the highly remunerated professional Member of Parliament who will stick at nothing in order to remain in the

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Viscount HINCHINGBROOKE.

[Continued.]

House of Commons. I think we are very far from that situation to-day. The Charybdis is the over-worked and harassed non-professional Member of Parliament who has to wash up his breakfast things when he gets home at night. I think we are perhaps a little nearer to that to-day than we are to the former case. I believe we ought to maintain a proper balance between the professional and the non-professional Member of Parliament. If there are no professional Members, then business in the House of Commons comes to an end, because there is nobody to work it. On the other hand, if all are professional Members, then I think it is true to say that conviction lacks force, and arguments become second-hand, sterile and unreal. It is difficult to assess a new House of Commons, but if anything to-day we are rather short of professional Members. We have to discount what I might, for want of a better term, call the sensation-hunting which is characteristic of a new Parliament, and is reflected to-day—

Lieut.-Col. Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

426. What do you mean by a professional Member?—A full-time Member who has no other outside interests, practically speaking, and who gives his full time to the service of the House.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

427. With no outside interests or other source of livelihood?—Or other source of livelihood.

Lieut.-Col. Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

428. Or other source of livelihood—that is the point?—I think in the full-time professional Member I should have to include those who have independent means, and who also have their Parliamentary salary. I am trying to exclude those who derive incomes from businesses and come here and talk particularly on topics connected with their businesses.

429. I am sorry to interrupt, but I wanted to be quite sure what you meant?—I was speaking of that sensation-hunting which is characteristic in a new Parliament, and which is reflected to-day in the present high attendance figures. I believe there will be a falling off as time goes on. In general I think there are sound arguments for an increase in salary, and in arriving at my conclusion on the subject I have rejected any comparisons with other Parliaments, because I do not think they are a useful guide. The costs and circumstances of living are very different. On the question of cash and kind I would say this, that if we were all saints of course it would be much better if we had cash only, and if we were all devils it would be wiser to give us in kind only, but as we are neither one nor the other I think we ought to have a bit of both, with a bias towards cash. I think Members of Parliament were underpaid

before the war. The cost of living to those in the middle income groups is up by at least 50 per cent. on pre-war figures. Therefore, on the cash side I would say this: I think Members ought to be paid £1,000, which is subject to tax. I do not think it is any use niggling about with an extra £100 or £200. Ministerial salaries should remain as at present. Now, with regard to deductions for tax purposes, I believe that those deductions should be to the extent of all expenses, exclusive of entertainment expenses, which can be proved by the Member as contributory to earning the salary up to the total amount of the salary whatever it is, whether a private Member's salary or a ministerial salary. That is, I believe, in conformity with the Income Tax law, but that is not for me to say. Business houses, it is true, do charge entertainment allowances against taxation, but the position is not at all analogous in my opinion. I myself would not give private Members any entertainment allowance. As regards remuneration in kind, there has been an extension recently of free travel by public service transport, to the Member's home as well as to his constituency, and I think there is a case for extending that to cars as well, because cars these days are not a luxury for a Member of Parliament. Therefore I would say that the car licence and the insurance should be paid by the Fees Office, and, in addition, there should be a car allowance of £50 towards the cost of petrol, garage and repairs, and any proved excess over that amount—it might well be that if frequent car journeys were made the amount would be in excess of £50—should be deducted from the tax on the salary, as I explained in my letter. On postage, I think all letters posted from the House of Commons should be franked free. About one-third of my correspondence today is so franked, and the extra concession will not be large; but there would have to be a safeguard introduced against Members posting the circulars of some agency quite beyond their own personal correspondence. But I do not imagine a safeguard would be difficult to arrange. The question of free trunk telephone calls and telegrams is a very difficult one. I think there is a danger of Members of Parliament running their businesses from the telephone booths in the lobby. On balance I am against making any change. As regards conditions of work I have not anything very much to say. I myself do not find them intolerable. There will be very great improvements made when the new House of Commons Chamber is built. Those are my general conclusions. If the Committee would like to ask any questions I should be only too pleased to answer them.

Lieut.-Com. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

430. The noble Lord did mention what I understood to be a global figure of £1,000 as being a suitable salary for private Mem-

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Viscount HINCHINGBROOKE.

[Continued.]

bers, and he used the phrase: "subject to income tax", which I took to mean a carrying on of the present position, in which one can claim certain set-offs?—That is so.

431. But he went on to say, if I understood him correctly, that he thought no change desirable in the case of Ministers. I want to ask the noble Lord whether he extends that view to junior Ministers—whether he is proposing a rise in the remuneration of private Members to £1,000, while maintaining the salaries of some junior Ministers at £1,200 to £1,500, making no comparative rise there at all; or was he referring to Cabinet Ministers at £5,000?—What I think I said was that the Parliamentary salaries of junior Ministers and, for that matter, of senior Ministers, should remain as now, while the salaries of private Members should be raised to £1,000. On the question of deduction of tax, I thought I said that tax should be deductible up to the limit of the salary, whatever it was, whether ministerial or private Members' salary. At the present time junior Ministers are not allowed to claim, and I am now recommending that they should be allowed to claim.

432. That is the point I want to bring out?—And not only junior Ministers but also senior Ministers.

Mr. Leslie.

433. On the question of letters being franked, you say letters sent from the House should be franked. A good deal of our correspondence is done during the week-end at home, and very often, when a constituent writes to you about a certain subject, you have to write back to him and ask for further particulars before you can take it up with the Ministry concerned. How can you get those letters franked?—Today I understand Members are supplied free with franked envelopes which they send from their homes to the Departments, and there is a kind of check on what is sent by the recipient of those letters at the Departments. I do not mean that they go into it in detail, as to where it comes from; but a Member knows that if he is using a franked envelope and sending it from his home it is received by a Department and receives official attention. That is some safeguard against Members sending a vast amount of correspondence, including a great deal of personal and business correspondence, by franked envelope. I would make no change in that. The only change I recommend is with regard to the House of Commons, that any letter sent from the House to the constituency as well as to the Departments should be freely franked, and also other letters of Members.

Mr. Leslie.] That only deals with a proportion of your letters. It does not deal with all your letters. If it is known that letters are franked, naturally the income

tax authorities will not make any allowance as you do get at the present time.

Mr. McKinlay.

434. Quite right, too?—I am concerned about the safeguards really, because I do believe that some Members might abuse the privilege. I do think there would be a safeguard if the letters were posted in the House. I cannot see the administrative arrangements being such that there could be a safeguard if they were posted from the home.

Chairman.] I think you have made your point perfectly clear. Are there any further questions?

Mr. Haydn Davies.

435. If I might refer to the point about junior Ministers, is not the decision as to whether or not what they receive shall be tax free, or with certain allowances made for income tax purposes, not made by this Committee or by the House but by the Board of Inland Revenue, and it has been quite clearly ruled that a Cabinet Minister and a junior Minister cannot make the usual deductions that an ordinary private Member can? That decision stands. It is a ruling of the Board of Inland Revenue, so what you are saying in effect is that private Members should have an increase, and then you are recommending something which cannot be done, namely, that junior Ministers and Cabinet Ministers could claim up to the limit for other income tax purposes. If you will accept my statement that they cannot claim income tax allowances, would that cause you to revise your statement that junior Ministers should have no change?—I do not know that I accept the statement as lasting. I always understood that Parliament was a sovereign body.

436. Not over the Board of Inland Revenue—unless there is a new Act of Parliament?—I should have thought if this Committee recommended a course of action in regard to Members' expenses and their salaries, and that was adopted by the House and approved of by the Government, no regulation or rule of the Board of Inland Revenue would be of the slightest avail.

Chairman.

437. I think what you have in mind is this. If you take any Member of Parliament who becomes a Minister, junior or senior, the very moment he becomes a Minister he has not anything for living in London, anything for clerical assistance, anything for postage, or anything else. The only thing he is entitled to is his wife's allowance and what he is ordinarily entitled to under income tax law. I think what you have in mind is that while you would not alter the salary, you would at least give to those Ministers, whether junior or in the Cabinet, the same allowance which ordinary Members would get?—That is so.

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Viscount HINCHINGBROOKE.

[Continued.]

Lieut.-Col. Sir *Cuthbert Headlam*.

438. Does that mean the same allowance on his salary? Would you not think it fairer to allow him to retain his Member's salary as well as his so-called salary as a junior Minister?—If you divided it into two and said that he should receive something as a private Member of Parliament, and an additional salary as a Minister, then with regard to expenses he could only charge expenses up to the salary of the House of Commons. But I think we must recognise the principle there that a junior Minister is a rather more important figure than a private Member of Parliament, and should be entitled to claim additional expenses up to a higher standard and scale of living.

Major *Symonds*.

439. May I raise one point about travel? The Witness has suggested an extension of travel to cover motor cars. Would he limit the extension simply to that, or extend railway facilities in any way? For instance, would he suggest that railway travel should be limited as now to the constituency and home, or extend it?—I would not extend it immediately, no. I would maintain the rail, sea and air travel as at present, and make the concession with regard to cars, but I would not go beyond that until we have had experience.

440. You would simply preserve the arrangement as now?—Yes.

Mr. *Leslie*.

441. On the car question, would you agree that a Member who had not a car could hire one for the purpose of travelling, say, in a county constituency?—Certainly.

442. And charge up the expense?—Certainly.

Lieut.-Comdr. *Gurney Braithwaite*.

443. May I go back for a moment to the question of franking correspondence? I would like to ask the noble Lord whether he thinks it might not be more desirable to take this postage question broadly into account in a global figure—

for this reason: it has happened before now and will again, with the stress at which we are working, that a Member is unavoidably absent from this House owing to illness, but an illness not so serious that it prevents his dealing with his correspondence. That man is ill at his home in Yorkshire, and the only way he would be able to take advantage of the noble Lord's suggestion would be by sending somebody up here to post those letters. Do you not think it would be better to deal with this postage problem by taking it into account in a global figure covering a Member's general expenses in doing his work?—I think there is a lot to be said for that.

Mr. *Lang*.

444. I understood the noble Lord was rather against allowing a Member's entertainment expenses. If it were a question of entertaining his friends we should all agree, but there are times when a Member is obliged to entertain. In my own case I have three separate boroughs which will be engaged shortly in strenuous fights against two County Councils Bills, which will mean I shall have the Town Clerks and some other officials of each of these three boroughs here again and again, and I shall be obliged to entertain them. There will be times when the only chance of having a real talk about matters might be lunch time or dinner time. Would the noble Lord think that an improper thing to be considered as part of a Member's expenses?—I think it is a borderline case. I am very much afraid that the granting of entertainment allowances would lead to gross abuse. In the particular case given to me I should have thought it might be possible to put it on the other foot—in other words to regard the Member of Parliament as the guest of the bodies which are seeking redress.

Mr. *Lang*.] I hope that will happen, but when I was here before it was entirely the other way round every time.

Chairman.

445. We are indebted to you, and I would like to express the Committee's thanks?—I am obliged to the Committee for the privilege.

(Adjourned till Tuesday next at 11 a.m.)

TUESDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present:

Mr. TOM SMITH (*Chairman*).

Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggar.  
Mr. Haydn Davies.  
Col. Dodds-Parker.  
Mr. Horabin.  
Mr. Lang.

Mr. McKinlay.  
Major Ramsay.  
Captain Charles Smith.  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.  
Earl Winterton.

Mr. GEORGE HICKS, Mr. ROGERS and Mrs. CORBET (Members of the House) examined.

*Chairman.*

446. Mr. Hicks, the London group have been good enough to send into the Committee a memorandum with regard to various points, particularly as to how London Members are placed in relation to other Members, and it might be for the convenience of the Committee and also expedite the proceedings if you were to make a statement with regard to it.\* Would that suit you?—[Mr. Hicks.] Yes. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for those remarks. We have sent in a short memorandum, after having exhaustively discussed the matter with the London Members, of which group I have the honour to be Chairman. They asked if they could give evidence before you in regard to the position of London Members in relation to Income Tax, as they felt they were at a definite disadvantage. We prepared this short memorandum, of which you have a copy, in order to try to illustrate a few points. With your permission I would ask Mr. Rogers, who is very familiar with a number of the details, to amplify that, if you will allow him.

Mr. Rogers.] I do not propose to waste the time of the Committee by reiterating the points which are contained in the memorandum, but I hope the Committee are fully conscious of the serious difference which this Income Tax principle, as applied to the London Members, makes to the London Members' income. It is very true that it does make an extremely serious financial difference. For example, one of our Members who is a married man with two young children, because of this invidious distinction has to pay £11 a month Income Tax. Therefore, the position is that we London Members feel that we are, with the present salary, in an even worse position than any other group of Members in the country.

We are absolutely unable to comprehend what constitutes a London Member and what constitutes a provincial Member; and perhaps I may give you just two brief examples to illustrate the absurdity of the distinction. For example, the Member for North Kensington lives in South Wembley. The Member for South Wembley also lives in that

\* See Appendix VI.

area, in his own constituency. Both have exactly the same journey to make to Westminster. The only difference between them is that the Member for South Wembley does not have to pay money travelling to and from his constituency, assuming he does not use the railway voucher, and yet the Member for South Wembley is a provincial Member, and the Member for North Kensington is a London Member. Similarly, the Member for one of the Hackney Divisions lives in Hornsey and is a London Member, and is treated as such for Income Tax purposes, but if he lived in Hackney and represented Hornsey he would be treated as a provincial Member and granted generous Income Tax allowances because of that fact. With regard to travelling facilities—

447. May we keep to that point for the moment, so as not to confuse the issue. Do any of your colleagues wish to expand that point?—No. That is all I wish to say on that point.

448. Very well. Then we will go on to travelling as it affects London Members?—As a railwayman I thoroughly appreciate the unsatisfactory nature of the present travelling arrangements. I do know from my own experience that the present method is one which annoys the railway authorities very much indeed, because of the enormous amount of clerical work that the collation and analysis of these vouchers causes to them, in order that they may present their accounts for the cost of Members' travel. I am sure that if this Committee could agree to recommend either a monthly season ticket, or, preferably, an annual season ticket, it would be welcomed by the transport authorities and would be a very great benefit and very great assistance to our Members, because we are in the peculiar position that we have to present a voucher sometimes for a small sum like 4d., for example, which might be the cost of a journey to our constituency, or 9d. or 10d., which might be the cost of the journey to our home. I believe that some Members do feel a little humiliated at having to do that, but where they have to rely upon their Parliamentary salary as their sole income, having regard to their special position as far as Income

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Mr. GEORGE HICKS, Mr. ROGERS and  
Mrs. CORBET.

[Continued.]

Tax is concerned it is an additional expense which they have to consider when arranging their budget. Then, again, it would be much more convenient for many London Members to travel to their constituency from Westminster by 'bus or taxi, because, as you can realise, a number of London constituencies are quite close here, and the Members could easily travel, and much more conveniently travel, by bus or taxi or in some other way than by using the underground railway system. Yet, of course, if they do that they are not allowed free travel under the present arrangement, and it does seem to us a feasible proposition that arrangements could be made with the London Passenger Transport Board, who control the whole of the road and rail services in London, for some sort of periodical season ticket, which would enable Members to travel free within the London area. The other point is that a number of Members find it convenient to use a car instead of the recognised public services. At present there is no arrangement for an allowance because of that preference, and we feel we would like the Committee to consider that when they are deciding this question of travel facilities.

449. There is another point I think you wish to bring out, and that is the position of a London Member who is kept here for a late Division, and then there are no means of getting home. Perhaps you would like to say a word or two on that?—That is fairly clearly set out, I think, in the memorandum which we have submitted. Here, again, a provincial Member who has lodgings in Central London might be much more conveniently situated to the House than a London Member who may live in the suburbs. For example, a Member may live at Woolwich or Surbiton or Wembley, or in one of those places, and he naturally desires to get home if he can. As things are at the moment, if there is a possibility of catching a train from one of the main line termini he can take a taxi at his own expense; he is not allowed to charge that for Income Tax purposes. Alternatively he must stay here all night and travel home by the first train or a later one in the morning; but in any case he is unable to claim any allowance for Income Tax purposes. There is also the question of the London Member's liability to be called to address meetings in his constituency. That is a very real factor. As every Member who has had experience will know, a London man is expected by his constituents to attend more meetings in his Division than is the case with a provincial Member whose constituency is perhaps several hundred miles away from London. That, of course, is quite a serious consideration, because in these days of congested legislation, when Divisions frequently occur, we are liable to get into trouble if we miss too many. Members are not anxious to miss Divisions, and so,

generally speaking, we are forced to take a taxi to our constituency and to arrange for it to be kept waiting, so that we may return quickly to the House. For that charge we can claim nothing in Income Tax.

450. Might I bring out a point there, related to what you have been saying? Whilst it is true that London Members get a lesser allowance for Income Tax purposes it is commonly said that they receive more visitors than provincial Members and that is more costly to them. Could you give the Committee any information as to the approximate expenditure you incur as the result of that?—I can only quote an example here, without having collected information, from my own experience. One day, for instance, I was unable to be present in the Chamber at all because of the frequency of visitors. I received a number of soldiers who required assistance, starting in the afternoon and carrying on to the late evening. At 7 o'clock ten of my constituents came up to me with a complaint. It was necessary to give them refreshment, so I took them down to the cafeteria. They were rather delighted at the generous display of food which was then on the counters and they helped themselves quite liberally, and when I reached the end of the counter and requested to know the charge the waitress said: "That will be 21s. 3d." Altogether, that day my expenses for entertaining visitors amounted to 32s. That is just one example which I can quote from personal experience, which is, of course, by no means confined to that particular day.

451. Before I ask the Members of the Committee if they have any questions, would Mrs. Corbet like to say anything?—[Mrs. Corbet.] I think we have in the memorandum drawn attention to the fact that London Members get no cost-of-living allowance so far as Income Tax is concerned, but it is really a fact that we stand at as great expense with regard to all meals, except breakfast, as any other Member, and we have said very definitely that, so far as cost of living is concerned, we differ from the provincial Member only in so far as bed and breakfast is concerned. It is very costly indeed getting these meals out. We might have to have a mid-day meal out in any case, but when you go right on late into the evening you must have your tea and you must have a further meal.

*Chairman.*] Has any Member of the Committee any questions he would like to put to the Witness?

*Mr. Lang.*

452. There is one point I would like to ask. I quite see the serious position of the London Members, and the case that Mr. Rogers has quoted of the Member with two children having to pay £11 a month Income Tax on his small salary shocks me, at the

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Mr. GEORGE HICKS, Mr. ROGERS and  
Mrs. CORBET.

[Continued.]

tremendous discrimination which is made against London Members; but I have tried to work it out, and, as I see it, my position with grown-up children, if I were similarly taxed, would land me in something like £20 or £22 more tax than I now have to pay, which is about equivalent to what I have to pay now for my accommodation in London. Although I do not for a moment minimise your serious problem, it is really a general problem of all Members, and we are all of us in the cart together. You lose it on Income Tax and the rest of us have to find it on accommodation. As Mrs. Corbet has pointed out, the expense on meals is one that is general.—(Mr. Rogers.) Except that the provincial Member is allowed a cost of living expense which covers that.

453. He is allowed relief from tax on a certain amount of it. It does not quite cover it.—There is an allowance for expenses for attending Westminster in addition to the family allowance. (Mrs. Corbet.) What it really amounts to is that it evens up the difference between the two sets of Members.

454. It does.—But it does not account for the fact that these expenses have to be paid out of our salaries.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

455. Have you ever tried to get a ruling on what is London and what is provincial, from the point of view of the Inland Revenue?—(Mr. Rogers.) When we saw the Financial Secretary to the Treasury we did make efforts to ascertain the difference, but without success.

456. May I get it perfectly clear? You live in South Wembley?—Yes.

457. If the Member for South Wembley spent a night in London because of his Parliamentary duties he could charge that to relief of Income Tax?—Yes.

458. If you spent it here you could not?—That is true.

Earl Winterton.

459. Perhaps I should have heard the answer to the first question which I want to ask the witness, but I was not here at the beginning. I understand he represents a section of London Members of Parliament. Is that so?—That is so.

460. Not all Members of Parliament?—We represent the London group of Labour Members.

461. You represent your own Party Members?—Exactly.

462. You do not represent all London Members?—Exactly.

463. Therefore, your evidence is on behalf of the Labour Party in London?—Yes.

464. My second question is this. I was not quite clear what exactly you were advocating when you spoke of entertainment.

I understood you to give in evidence an instance of how you had been involved in an expenditure of I think 20s. for entertaining some constituents. Do you suggest that London Members or all Members should have an allowance for entertainment of constituents at this House? Is that what you were advocating before the Committee?—What we feel is that the question of our entertainment expenses should be taken into account by the Inland Revenue Authorities when assessing our liability for Income Tax, because it is an inescapable part of our responsibility as Members of Parliament. It is an expense which arises solely out of our duties as Members.

465. You are not advocating that there should be a special sum paid, but that you should get a remission of tax for entertainment purposes?—Yes. (Mr. Hicks.) For London Members.

466. That is the point I wish to examine. I want to know why London Members in that respect are in a special category. For example, those who have constituencies like I have near London frequently see their constituents. Is it the suggestion of the witnesses that there should be a general allowance from Income Tax for entertainment for Members of this House?—(Mr. Rogers.) Yes. We feel that when considering the expenses of a Member of Parliament the Committee should bear that in mind, either from the point of view of approaching the Board of Inland Revenue for some allowance for Income Tax purposes, or by equating it by some extra increase in salary, whichever the Committee considers preferable.

467. That is quite clear now, if I may say so. You advocate either that it should be an Income Tax allowance or that there should be an actual cash payment to cover the cost of Members' entertainment of their constituents?—That is so.

468. Would you put any limit upon that amount? Would you suggest that a Member should be allowed £50 or £100 a year? What is the figure you would suggest?—I do not know whether, Mr. Chairman, one could deal with it separately. It is difficult to assess the exact amount, but I should say roughly in the neighbourhood of £50 to £100 a year.

469. Would you make a difference between London Members and other Members in that respect? Would you, in other words, permit a higher sum to London Members and a lesser one to provincial Members? Perhaps "provincial" is an unfortunate term. Let me say Members representing other parts of the country?—Yes. Broadly speaking, I should claim that a London Member had a greater degree of expense for entertaining than a provincial Member.

470. What do you mean by "London Member"? Do you mean the Metropolitan

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[Continued.]

Police District?—That is our difficulty, that we do not know where the borderline in drawn. It is the London County Council area, roughly, as far as we are concerned.

471. What I want to get at is this. It is very necessary for my purposes, as a Member of the Committee, that I should get the Witness's point clear. When you speak of a "London Member", in what sense are you using the term? Is it the London County Council area or the Metropolitan Police area?—As a representative of the London group of London Members I am speaking as a Member of the Metropolitan group.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

472. The London County Council area?—The London County Council area.

Earl Winterton.

473. You are speaking on behalf of those in the London County Council area?—Yes; but in assessing this cost of entertainment I would suggest that it might be advisable to throw the net a little wider and include some of the Greater London areas which are quite close to London, and whose representatives doubtless in fact receive quite a lot of visitors.

474. You are not prepared to make a definite submission to the Committee, I understand, on that point. You merely suggest that we should take the factor into consideration?—Yes. (Mr. Hicks.) It is very difficult to make a definite recommendation, in view of the fact that we do not know exactly what is meant by the "London area". We think in London the London Members receive more visitors on the average than Members outside London. As we say in our evidence here, Woolwich is further away from the City of Westminster than Willesden, but Willesden is not in the Metropolitan area. Woolwich is.

475. I was not seeking to controvert your evidence. I was merely trying, as is the duty of any tribunal, to ascertain what it meant. As I think you will agree, with your wide knowledge and experience, people, when they talk of the "London area", sometimes mean the Metropolitan Police area and sometimes the London County Council area?—That is right.

476. I think it is quite clear now what the Witness's evidence is. My last question is this. One of the Witnesses spoke of the necessity for a motor car allowance. You did not, however, confine your recommendation exclusively to London Members?—(Mr. Rogers.) No—generally.

477. Could you supplement your evidence a little on that point? Here, again, it is a question of figures. What do you suggest would be a fair figure to assess in the matter of a motor car allowance?—It is

very difficult to say. It depends on the horse-power of the car, the kind of car with which a Member is satisfied. I do not know whether the Committee would agree to recommend it on a mileage basis or recommend an average sum which would be expected to cover the average expenses of a Member who used a car, irrespective of whether it was a Rolls Royce or a Ford.

Earl Winterton.] My difficulty is this. In examining witnesses I always endeavour to find out exactly what they mean. I understood the Witness advocated a motor car allowance. I wonder if it would be possible for him to reconsider the question and perhaps send in written evidence as to the basis on which it should be granted?

Chairman.] On what basis, and the approximate amount?

Earl Winterton.

478. The approximate amount. It is possible that, with your approval, Mr. Chairman, a statement could be sent in on that?—(Mr. Hicks.) As Lord Winterton has said, we are necessarily limited to the London Labour Members with whom we have discussed this matter. We discussed the matter extensively with them, and with regard to those who did not use a railway voucher, but used a car for their particular convenience, and, I suppose, from the point of view of accessibility, and so on—and late hours have to be considered—it was generally thought that provided they did not use the railway voucher for the purpose of getting to their constituencies or to the House of Commons, an allowance should be made, and £150 a year, it was generally thought, might be agreed to be allowed to a Member who used a motor car, whatever the horse power might be.

479. £150?—Yes. It was thought that that would not be an unfair amount.

Earl Winterton.

480. In lieu of a railway ticket?—Yes.

481. A Member in the London area could choose? The view of the Members that the honourable Members represent is that a Member should have the option of an allowance which is to be, roughly, £150, in lieu of a railway ticket?—That is right.

482. Or rather that they should have the option of one or the other?—Yes.

Earl Winterton.] That, if I may say so, is very clear.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.

483. I want to put one question on the subject of entertainment of visitors. I would like to ask the Witness this. In the event of this Committee making a recommendation for an allowance in respect of the cost of entertaining constituents, either as an entertainment allowance or entirely as a set-off against Income Tax, their report having been debated in the



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House and, therefore, published to the world, I should like the witnesses' opinion as to whether they would expect a greater or less influx of visitors to see them?—Not from Ealing!

*Chairman.*

484. Thank you, Gentlemen. We are very much obliged to you.—Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee.

Mr. QUINTIN HOGG (a Member of the House) examined.

*Chairman.*

485. You were good enough to send in a memorandum of your views for consideration by this Select Committee.\* You have had experience both as a Member of Parliament and as a Parliamentary Secretary, and as your memorandum has been circulated to Members of the Committee perhaps you would care to make a statement or enlarge upon what you have already written?—I do not know that I need enlarge upon it, because I really set down there the various considerations which have driven me to my view about this very difficult matter.

486. Would you care to emphasise any points?—I am quite clear in my own mind that the only way to maintain the prestige of any institution is to see that those who do the work are paid properly. It is not in order to give them a profit or to make them comfortable; but in the last resort, if you pay people badly for work which they genuinely do, you do not get the service and you do not get the prestige. Now, I have seen, since I have been in the House, one or two things very clearly. One is that it is not possible for an ordinary man to become a Member of Parliament unless he belongs to a few privileged professions. One of those professions is my own—the Bar; another is also my own—Journalism. A third is Trade Union officialdom; a fourth is being a Company Director. But the main bulk of the population is excluded from Membership of this House already, because the main bulk of the population have to earn their livings, and the majority cannot earn their livings by any one of these ways. That is very unsatisfactory. The second thing is this. It is becoming increasingly difficult as time goes by for a Member of Parliament to do his work and earn his living, even in those privileged professions. My own opinion is that no person would be advised by his doctor to be a junior barrister and a Member of Parliament, and only a person of the very strongest physique could hope to do it, even when, as in my case, his practice is not an enormous one. The third thing is this: that it is inevitable (and I say this as delicately as possible) that people with positions of high responsibility will from time to time, over the generations, be submitted to temptation. There is no question about it. We have in this country developed a particularly high standard of honour which we fortunately maintained right through revolutionary political and social

changes, but that is not a matter of complete security for anybody at any time. Neither a democratic system nor an aristocratic system is proof against corruption, and to my mind you are inviting a lowering of the standard of morals in the public life of this country if you do not pay Members of Parliament properly for the services which they legitimately perform. I have come to the conclusion that you have to raise their salaries very completely. I also stated my reasons for disliking cutting it up into salary and expenses. I think an all-in-all payment is the most likely to lead to efficiency in the Member and the least likely to lead to difficulties of conscience about returning expenses. My experience of expenses allowances, both of myself and other people, has been an unhappy one, on the whole. Further I consider that the expenses to which individual Members are subjected vary so greatly in individual cases that it would be very difficult to make out a case. Most of you remember Sir Basil Neven-Spence's speech, when one of these matters was before the House; how he had to come in a motor-boat between island and island and that was a legitimate expense for the Member for Orkney. But I do not need a launch up and down the Thames at Oxford. You could go on multiplying the individual cases and individual circumstances, and I think the fair thing is to pay £1,500 a year.

487. May I bring out one point? You were Under-Secretary of State for Air, and you know from experience the position of Parliamentary Secretaries?—I do, indeed.

488. Would you care to add to what you have set out in your memorandum?—I set it out in my memorandum. The position really is this. I think that a public man belongs to a profession—public life. It is as much a vocation as anything else—priesthood, schoolmastering, or anything else; and the expenses of being a public man ought to be deducted on that basis, that you are in the public life, and that you ought to be able to deduct them. The fact at the moment is that the Treasury does not take that view. When you become a junior Minister you have two choices. You can retain your Parliamentary salary of £600 or you can take your Minister's salary of £1,500. If you take your Parliamentary salary you can deduct your expenses from it as a Member of Parliament, as before. That is to say, you are neither better off nor worse off as the result of

\* See Appendix VII.

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[Continued.]

being a junior Minister. If you take your Minister's salary you cannot deduct any expenses from it at all in practice, because they say: "No, those are not your expenses of being a Minister; they are your expenses of being a Member of Parliament." It is a technical point, and the result is that Ministers with some private means of their own—in my party, certainly—have quite often refused to take their Ministerial salary because in practice they actually would have suffered a financial loss if they had done so. That was not exactly so in my case. What happened in my own case was this. I had not very big private means of my own at the time, and I gained about £150 a year if I took my Minister's salary instead of my £600. I had to pay all my Member's expenses out of my taxed income instead of out of my untaxed income, which brought me down a good deal; but still, at the end of it I was about £150 up on the deal. On the other hand, I did, as a matter of fact, lose a great deal more, having regard to the fact that a Member of Parliament cannot live as a married man on his salary. I had been earning a good deal of money by journalism—about £1,500 at the time. The result was that I had to abandon all that; and the net result of my becoming a Minister was that I was down to the extent of over £1,000 a year. That was quite a serious thing for me, although less serious for me than it might possibly have been for others, because I have always had my father behind me, and I have always known that when peace came I could earn a little money if I did not remain in office. But it might be a very serious thing for a Minister who had not quite my backing, and I think it ought to be amended and altered.

489. Could I put one point to you? I have been a Parliamentary Secretary myself. Would you agree that a Parliamentary Secretary does get some advantage in the secretarial sense?—Yes.

490. In this sense—if he is allowed enough to employ a private secretary to reply to his constituents' correspondence, that is one matter. If he is not, while he pays his own postage, it is true that he gets secretarial assistance?—That is true to a limited degree, but strictly speaking—I am bound to say that the rule is more honoured in the breach than in the observance—but strictly speaking one is not entitled to deal with one's constituents' correspondence with one's Civil Service secretariat. One is entitled to deal with it with the Civil Service secretariat only when it affects the affairs of one's own Office. If I had a letter to me as the Member for Oxford about the Air Ministry, I could put the Civil Service machine in operation legitimately, but if I had one, let us say, about the War Office, strictly speaking I had to employ my own secretary or do it myself; and in fact I employed my own secretary. I know that during the war

difficulties were such that junior Ministers did in fact sometimes use the Civil Service machine, but they were not strictly entitled to do so.

*Chairman.*] I put that point to you because many honourable Members have put it to me.

*Earl Winterton.*

491. Can you quote any ruling on that subject, because my experience is the same, quite apart from the war. When I was in office I adopted the same method as the Witness, but other Ministers, both junior and senior, used their private secretariat in order to deal with their ordinary Members' correspondence. Is there any ruling on the subject by the Treasury, or by any Prime Minister, or is there any Cabinet ruling?—There was a ruling, but I could not say what it was. I know it was a ruling which, in practice, could never be very strictly observed, and was not very strictly observed. I was informed by the Civil Service that there had been rulings and they told me that although they would help me in any way they could, and they did, I must bear in mind that that was a ruling.

*Earl Winterton.*] It only arises indirectly out of the Witness's evidence, but perhaps we might have some information on that point? But I will raise that in private session.

*Lieutenant-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.*

492. One point summarising and underlining your very able memorandum. I take it what you are aiming at in this matter is a global figure?—Yes.

493. Which will remove financial anxiety from a Member and enable him to perform his duties with dignity, and yet at the same time avoid temptation on the part of what I may call the "careerist," to use a broad word. The question I really want to put is this. In the event of this Select Committee making a recommendation of this kind (of a very large figure, if I may say so), does the Witness feel that this would avoid something we are all anxious about, namely, increasing the power of the Executive over a private Member—the strain upon a private Member, when it came to the sort of crisis which we have seen in the past, where there might have to be a revolt against the Government, rather like the Norway vote of May, 1940? I hope I have made my question clear?—I think on the whole it would assist the private Member. It is quite the opposite of interfering with him. One of the inner workings of our Constitution is that when the Government are threatened with a revolt they threaten the private Member with a dissolution, which at any rate in the case of my own party, until recently, has meant that they had to put their hands in their pockets to the extent of anything between £500 and £1,500 for Election expenses. They were therefore threatening to fine the private Member a very large

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[Continued.]

sum if he threw the Government out. That is not true to the same extent now even of my party, and not true to the same extent of other parties. But it is true that it deprives them of the salary in any case. If a private Member is living in poverty and in need and struggling, I am perfectly sure that so far from the weapon being weaker in the hands of the Government it is stronger. If a private Member has been well paid during his four or five years, although he is losing more, he is less frightened of losing it. If a man really does not know where to turn for money—and there are people in this House known to me who are almost in that position—I am perfectly sure that the threat of the sudden cessation of his employment would be a more serious one, even though the salary he was losing was a less ample one.

Colonel *Dodds-Parker*.

494. Do you see any objection in principle to junior Ministers or all Ministers using their Civil Service secretariat to do their constituency work?—I think that is a very hard question, and I cannot give a considered reply. I should prefer to see him paid a sum which would enable him to have a private secretary. I would not say that the other thing was corrupt or vicious, but I should prefer to do it in the way I said, to give him plenty of money to employ a secretary and keep it separately. Look at it from this point of view, if I may amplify it. Supposing you had a resolution from your Trades Council asking for the nationalisation of the mines, which is a highly controversial political subject. It would not really be fair to ask your Civil Service to reply in highly controversial terms, refusing or accepting it. I think it ought to be done by a Member as a Member with his private secretary. Although I am not saying it would be always wrong or unwise to use the Civil Service, I think it is preferable to have a private secretary.

Earl *Winterton*.

495. I am afraid I shall have to trouble you and the Witness with a good number of questions, because I am anxious to be clear in my own mind what his advocacy entails. It is perhaps my fault that it is not yet clear in my own mind. May I commence by asking this question? Is the Witness aware that at one time a Minister was permitted to have outside functions? He could be a Director of a Company; he could write articles?—I am not sure that I was aware about the articles, but I was aware, certainly, that the Attorney-General was entitled to continue private work. I assume that it would have been true of other Ministers, too.

496. May I ask the Witness to take it from me that in my experience a Minister was allowed to have directorships, and that, I think I am right in saying, was brought to an end in the 1900 Parliament.

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He was also, until comparatively recently, allowed to write articles. To-day he is allowed to write them only under very strict conditions. In other words, that a Minister's job is a whole-time job has been the position in recent years. My next point is this (and here I come more closely to the Witness's evidence; I apologise if my first question appeared to go slightly outside it): I understand the Witness to advocate that a Member of Parliament should be a properly paid full-time servant of the State, or of the Crown, whichever term is preferred?—No. I think I made it plain that I regard the part-timer as an essential part of our Constitution. I think you will find that in my memorandum. If it is not in my memorandum I hasten to put it in now. I do not think it is desirable to make Members of Parliament whole-time, or rather to make all Members of Parliament whole-time.

497. I apologise if I did not read the memorandum clearly. At any rate you advocate that a Member should receive sufficient emoluments to enable him, if he so desires, to be a full-time servant of the State?—Yes. I think the emoluments should be sufficient to enable the real enthusiast, at a sacrifice, to be a full-time Member.

498. If he so desires?—If he so desires.

499. If he received a sum of money which in your opinion was sufficient to enable him to perform the functions of his office, if that be the correct phrase, without any outside employment of any kind, would you think there would be a danger that public opinion might say that, that being so, he must devote himself to his duties, that he should have no outside duties?—There might be some danger, but the first thing you have to do is to make up your minds as to what is right and public opinion in the end will accept what is right. Do not make up your mind, first of all, as to what public opinion will accept and then do that—because that would be wrong.

500. I was not asking your opinion as to public opinion. I was asking what the effect would be on public opinion?—I think the answer to that is that public opinion quite rightly demands at the present time a much greater attention to duty by Members of Parliament than they have had to show in the past. I do not criticise the past; but it is true that a Member nowadays has to do a great deal more in order to satisfy public opinion, and if he is paid more probably the public will not become less exacting. I hope they will not.

501. To put it shortly, what you state is that a Member should receive a sum of money sufficient to enable him to live in accord with his dignity and position without the necessity of earning any outside emoluments?—At a sacrifice. He ought to be in such a position that he could live, at a sacrifice, in accordance with that dignity.

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[Continued.]

502. The amount you advocate is not the full amount. It is only what he could live on at a sacrifice?—Certainly. That I have made clear in my memorandum.

503. Have you examined the salaries of higher-paid Civil Servants?—Some of them, I think—not Under-Secretaries, but Assistant Under-Secretaries—in some offices receive not much less than the amount which you advocate in your memorandum?—I think in some cases they receive the exact sum, but there the situation is different, because they have practically no expenses, and my sum was designed to cover at least £700 expenses.

504. They are also precluded from earning other emoluments. They would be in an entirely different position from Members. They would be excluded from earning outside emoluments by journalism?—But then their employment is not subject to the curious insecurity which attends upon General Elections.

505. That is most interesting. The Witness thinks that the insecurity of the Member's profession is an element in the case?—Hardly that; but I think that the security of a Civil Servant's profession makes the comparison an inapposite one.

506. In other words, you think, taking everything into consideration, because his position is less secure than that of a Civil Servant, you cannot draw any comparison between the two positions?—That is not the only point of difference. I pointed out two. One was that the Civil Servant was secure, and the other was that he had no expenses, and I should have thought that that was quite sufficient to destroy the comparison, although I dare say I could find other difference if I wanted to.

Earl *Winterton*.] Is it true to say that a Civil Servant in these days has no expenses of any kind?—I should have thought he had some necessary expenses, not provided for in his expense allowance.

*Chairman*.] I think that is rather outside our scope.

Earl *Winterton*.

507. Yes. May I ask the Witness how he would deal with the question of the cost of living? If there were a serious fall in the value of the pound or an increase in the value of the pound would there from time to time be anybody that would recommend an increase or decrease in Members' salaries? Who would consider the salaries of Members of Parliament? How would the Witness suggest that any increase or decrease in the value of money should be dealt with?—I think it should be dealt with as part of the general problem. Supposing there were a big variation in the value of the pound, all salaries and wages would be fundamentally affected, and obviously Members should be dealt with as a part of that general problem.

508. What I was really getting at was this. In the case of the Civil Service that is provided for. There is a cost of living

allowance. I apologise for the poverty of my language. What I meant to ask was: What would be the body which would be responsible for supervising this? Would it be the Treasury? Would it be the Prime Minister; or would you suggest that somebody should be appointed in the House, or would you alternatively advocate an automatic change in accord with the changes in the Civil Service?—I should not recommend an automatic change. I think the initiative in the matter should rest with the Government of the day, as it always has in the past, that it is essentially a matter for the House of Commons as a House, and if there were a radical change I think this procedure by Select Committee would be the appropriate procedure. It might be desirable—I would not like to commit myself—if the pound were subject to fluctuation to have a Select Committee meeting at regular intervals; but one hopes the Government will be successful in pegging the pound at some level, in which case it will not be necessary.

509. I was not thinking of this Parliament. I was thinking of future Parliaments?—If you once got into a period of economic stability such as existed between 1815 and 1913, I do not think you would need to review it more than once a century.

*Chairman*.] May we go on now?

Earl *Winterton*.

510. I understand there is no limit to the number of questions a Member may ask in a Select Committee. If you rule that is not so, very well; but I understood that that was one of the prerogatives of Members of a Select Committee. (*To the Witness*.) You think, therefore, there will be no need for any supervisory body in ordinary circumstances?—It depends what you mean by "ordinary circumstances." I do not want to discuss what I think about what is going to happen in economics, but I should not suggest any machinery being recommended by this Select Committee.

511. My point is really this: Assuming that this Select Committee recommended an increase in salaries which was accepted by the House, if there were no supervisory machine of any kind might there not be a danger of some subsequent Parliament, with a different attitude towards public affairs from that which is possessed by this Parliament, saying that there should be a further rise in salaries? Somebody might produce an excellent memorandum pointing out that there should have been an increase in expenses and suggesting a figure of £2,500. Would it not be better to have some machinery of an all-party character which would, on the one hand, preserve the Government from the pressure which might be put upon it by Members, and, on the other hand, would enable Parliament to have an authoritative non-party body to advise it?—I do not want to commit myself against that. It is rather outside the scope of my evidence, I think.

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Mr. QUINTIN HOGG.

[Continued.]

512. You are merely concerned with the moment and not with the future?—Perhaps I should make this observation, that in the past attempts by one Parliament to fetter subsequent Parliaments have not been happy.

513. In what regard?—It has always been laid down as a principle of our working Constitution, and the principle has only seldom been departed from. Attempts by one Parliament to forestall errors by some subsequent Parliament which might be more evilly-intentioned or less well-intentioned than themselves have not in practice been encouraged in our political life.

[Earl *Winterton*.] I only suggest that the Witness should give evidence before the Committee on Procedure, because I should like to ask him some questions on that.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

514. Is the figure of £2,500 for a junior Minister based on the assumption that Members would receive £1,500? In other words, is it made up of £1,500 salary as a Member and £1,000 for being a Minister, or do things remain as they are, £600 for a Member and £1,900 for a Minister?—The assumption, as far as there was any assumption, was that the whole of my recommended changes would be accepted.

515. The second point is this. On the £1,500, in paragraph 3 you say you are in favour of paying this figure and having nothing for expenses, but letting Members pay their own expenses, and then claim Income Tax rebates?—Yes.

516. But at the end of paragraph 2 you say that the figure of £1,500 "in my own case would work out at £750 expenses and £750 taxable income."—That is about what it would do in practice, but it would not be the same at all for all Members.

517. I was coming to that point, because if you lay down a fixed figure of £750 for everyone, it does not fit in with your third point?—I quite agree. I was only giving an illustration there, but I adhere to the general principle and not to the illustration.

Captain *Charles Smith*.

518. I understand the point of view of the Witness is that there should be no distinction between the expense allowance and salary, in the narrower sense?—It should all come out of the same fund.

519. As far as payment is concerned, you are in favour, I understand, of an emolument of, shall we say, £1,500, without any distinction being made as to how much of that is paid in respect of expenses and how much in respect of salary, in the narrower sense?—That is right.

520. The point I would like to put to the Witness, Mr. Chairman, is this. Would he not think it would make the position

a great deal clearer to the public if there were some division made between the expense allowance and salary; or does he consider that the position in regard to expenses which a Member of Parliament must bear from his own income in respect of his duties is sufficiently appreciated?—I do not think it is sufficiently appreciated, but I hope the Report of this Select Committee will assist the public in that matter. I do not think it will necessarily be good public relations to do it in that way, because the public is very familiar with expense accounts nowadays, and knows exactly how they are abused. Since taxation has assumed its present proportions it is an extremely corrupting influence, and I do not think the public will take kindly at all to Members of Parliament receiving very generous expense allowances which they perhaps would pocket. I think they would far rather see it done in the way which I suggest—to be paid a certain amount and expected to do the job decently.

Mr. *Cobb*.

521. You were a junior Minister, Mr. Hogg?—Yes, for a short time.

522. You had to travel on behalf of the Government?—Yes, a good deal.

523. You got an allowance of 25s. a night for subsistence, did you?—I never in fact claimed that allowance.

524. Had you claimed it, would you have considered it sufficient?—I should think probably I should, yes.

525. What date was that?—In my particular Office I ought to explain that when I travelled I was always put up by the R.A.F.; it cost me nothing. I went by aeroplane and I was put up by the R.A.F., but I charge my own Income Tax, for my professional purposes, £1 a night for staying away, and I do not think that as a junior Minister I should have spent more. I should have had a good deal of hospitality, as junior Ministers generally do.

*Chairman*.

526. The point Mr. Cobb is trying to bring out is this. He was assuming that as a junior Minister you slept in a hotel and paid your own bills. But in your own case the R.A.F. put you up?—Yes, always, I think.

527. You were not in office sufficiently long to be able to give a reasoned opinion as to whether the amount was adequate or not?—I think I could, because I charge a good deal to my tax accounts, both professional and Parliamentary, for staying away. Last week I spent three nights in Norwich, for example, and I in fact charged them less than 25s., and I think if it cost me more I would be more generous to myself.

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Mr. QUINTIN HOGG.

[Continued.]

Mr. Cobb.

528. Do you think you could spend three nights in Norwich for £3 15s.?—Yes, I do. My hotel bill last time for Friday and Saturday, 24 hours, was 18s. 3d.

529. For your total expenditure on meals and accommodation?—Yes.

Chairman.] Would that be lunch and dinner as well?—No. I did not have dinner. I had lunch but not dinner. I think 25s. would have covered the whole thing, which was the original question.

Mr. Lang.

530. There is only one matter I should like to take up with the Witness, and that is because his memorandum and evidence have been so important. It is a fact, I believe, that there is no compulsion upon any Member of Parliament to attend Parliament. That is to say, once he has taken the Oath and signed the Roll his salary is automatically paid, whether he attends or no?—I think that is one of the most important and difficult factors in this matter.

531. I was going to ask you whether, if a much more substantial salary is paid, you had thought at all if there could be any means of ensuring that Members did put in some regular attendance at the House? I think that is a question which the public will ask much more than any other question?—I think it is an extremely important matter, and I cannot give you a very satisfactory reply. I do think it is important to preserve the position of somebody who is what Lord Winterton called a person who is not a whole-time servant of the State. I do not think the House of Commons would be what it is if we spent all our time glaring at each other in the Chamber.

Chairman.

532. That would be a matter for the Committee to consider?—I think it is a matter for this Committee, but rather than see Members of Parliament badly paid I would prefer to see the danger that the only check on them was their own conscience and their own constituents.

Mrs. Wills.

533. There is one point regarding the separation of the allowances for a Member and a Minister in the case of junior Ministers. It is the law, we understand, that the Inland Revenue will not recognise expenses for one job against another?—That is right.

534. Do you think that cutting the salary into a Member's salary plus an additional amount for a Minister is a good way to get over that difficulty?—It is a possible way, but personally I prefer the view which I put before the Committee, that public life is a profession, and that a junior Minister is *ipso facto* a Member of Parli-

ment, and therefore his expenses as a Member of Parliament are part of his expenses in public life. It would be possible to do it the other way and would be justifiable to do it the other way, if the Committee preferred it.

Earl Winterton.

535. May I ask one question arising out of the question asked by the honourable Member opposite? I want to be quite clear on this question of attendance in Parliament. Will you assume that a Member who was elected to Parliament did not attend owing to illness—not, so to speak, contumaciously, not that he was a bad attendant when he was well, but supposing he were ill and for various reasons did not resign? There have been many such cases in the past. If there were no machinery to prevent that Member from getting a salary, might it not lead to very serious criticism of our Parliamentary institution?—It might, but on the other hand I think, on the whole, the public must be educated up to being generous to its servants, and when we have a servant who is ill we usually try to look after him. Although it might be that he became so ill that he ought to resign, that raises a totally different issue, because if he is too ill to do his job he ought to resign quite independently of whether he draws a salary or not.

536. Might I ask this question, because it seems to me to have a bearing on the matter: Assuming that the salary which is going to be paid is regarded as a full-time salary, is there any other instance in a public or private profession of a man being permitted to draw a salary after two years' illness, without being ordered to resign his position?—I do not agree that it is a full-time salary for a professional man. I was pointing out in my own case that my net emoluments would be £750, after I had deducted my expenses, and I certainly do not agree that that is my full-time salary.

537. Is there any other instance of a man or woman receiving a salary, either in public or private employment, where they would be permitted to go on year after year, say for three years without attending their duties, without being called upon to resign?—That I would not be prepared to say, but, in my opinion, this raises a totally different issue, which is a very important constitutional issue, but it is a separate one—that is to say, whether the constituency or the House ought to be in a position to call upon Members to resign who are not discharging their proper functions. If it is right for them to do so, it is right for them to do so quite independently of salary. I do not think the issue of salary really alters it in the least.

Chairman.] I think it is a matter the Committee might have to consider. I am inclined to think it is outside your purview as a Witness.

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Mr. QUINTIN HOGG.

[Continued.]

Earl Winterton.

538. I do not want to ask to have the room cleared while I raise a point of order. Obviously, if I may respectfully submit it to you, if a Member advocates a substantial increase in salary—I think there could be no difference between us on this—all sorts of questions connected with the effect of that increase must arise. To put it rather absurdly, if a Member received only £10 a year nobody would suggest that it would make much difference to the State whether he gave up that salary or not, but if he received £2,000 a year there might be a lot of people who would query his right to receive it?—If the question were addressed to me I should respectfully differ. The functions of the Member and whether he discharges them, is the important point, in considering whether you are entitled to disenfranchise your constituency. The fact that you happen to draw a salary may aggravate the offence or mitigate it, but it is so small in comparison to actual proper discharge of your functions that it is something which could be disregarded.

539. May I put a question arising out of that? The Witness would agree that we are all servants of the public in this matter; it is not what this Committee wants to do, or the honourable Member, but it is what the public are prepared to support us in doing. Is it his suggestion that, from the point of view of the public, the amount of salary bears no relationship to the conditions which surround it?—I do not think I said that, nor do I think it can be deduced from my evidence.

Mr. McKinlay.] One further point, Mr. Chairman. Could I ask you for an interpretation of our terms of reference? My submission is that the introduction of the question of a Member not attending his duties is wholly outwith the terms of reference and has nothing whatever to do with our remit from the House.

Chairman.] I think the Committee is aware of the terms of reference.

Mr. McKinlay.] My submission is that this is starting a hare.

Earl Winterton.] Perhaps we could have a private discussion about that.

Mr. McKinlay.] I agree; but the fact is that a private discussion is not placed on record. I simply raised it at the moment so that it would be placed on record that I am challenging that this has anything to do with our terms of reference at all.

Lieutenant-Commander Gurney  
Braithwaite.

540. I would like to ask one question, and that is whether the Witness considers, that with the raising of the Parliamentary salary to the figure, or approximately to the figure which he recommends, absentee Members would be put under greater pressure by their constituents?—Yes, I think they would, and I think that would be a highly desirable thing.

Chairman.] May I thank you, Mr. Hogg, on behalf of the Committee.

(Adjourned till tomorrow at 11 a.m.)

WEDNESDAY, 6TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present:

Mr. TOM SMITH (Chairman).

Lieutenant-Commander  
Gurney Braithwaite.  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggart.  
Mr. Haydn Davies.  
Colonel Dodds-Parker.  
Mr. Horabin.  
Mr. Lang.

Mr. Leslie.  
Mr. Lipson.  
Mr. McKinlay.  
Major Ramsay.  
Captain Charles Smith.  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.  
Earl Winterton.

Mr. MARTIN LINDSAY and Mr. JOHN MAUDE, K.C. (Members of the House), examined.

Chairman.

541. You were good enough to send in, for the Committee's consideration, a memorandum representing the views of a number of Conservative Members of Parliament.\* The memorandum has been circulated, and perhaps it would be for the

convenience of yourselves and of the Committee if you were to make a statement, or comment upon it?—(Mr. Lindsay.) Do you want me to give my solution to what should be done in the way of figures, or do you want me to comment on any particular part of that memorandum?

\* See Appendix VIII.

542. I think you might tell us what led

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[Continued.]

you to come to your conclusions?—My answer to this very difficult problem is this. I think it is most important to keep salaries and expenses separate. I know those of us who subscribe to this memorandum would not be prepared to support an increase in salaries except with effect from after the next General Election. What I would like to suggest is that to get over the immediate difficulty the answer is to call the £600 the salary and not increase that, but to give an expenses allowance straightaway, which will be a matter of permanency, up to something like £500 a year, covering postage, the cost of living in two places and secretarial assistance. I think that allowance should be given straightaway, and that will be a permanent feature, and then increase the £600 salary with effect from after the next General Election. We would be prepared to support any measures to that extent, but we would not be prepared to support a large increase in salaries as distinct from expenses until after the next General Election.

543. But you would be prepared to make an expenses payment, you say?—I think it is essential we should.

Mr. Lang.] Do I understand that to be additional to the Member's salary or part of the £600?

Chairman.

544. I think the Witness said (correct me if I am wrong) that they are not in favour of altering the £600 which is paid to Members now until after the next General Election, but he would support an amount of money being paid to Members of Parliament for expenses, to cover quite a number of items, such as secretarial assistance, postage, living in London, etc.?—That is right, yes.

Mr. Leslie.

545. Did you state the amount you suggest?—I will if the Committee wishes me to do so. Is that what you wish?

Chairman.

546. Yes. I think while you are here you might give the Committee the benefit of your views?—On the question of salary, the way I look at it is this. I think the first thing to do is to decide what is the object one is trying to get to and then to decide how to do it. The way I look at it is this, that the status of a Member of Parliament is now quite different from what it was some years ago. A Member of Parliament nowadays is a public servant. He is not a little demi-god, who likes to live in Sussex because it is a nice part of the world and go to his constituency in Lancashire three times a year, like he used to do some years ago. Therefore, he should be paid as a public servant. I say—and this group of ours is in general agreement with this—that the object should be to give a Member of Parliament the

same sort of standard of living as the average Town Clerk of an average borough. That is the way we put it, because that is something which everybody can understand. It is a reasonably high standard of living, without being extravagant. The average Town Clerk is getting £1,400 to £1,500 a year at the present time, gross, which, with a car allowance and two children—which is what an average Town Clerk, I am informed, has—is bringing him in at the moment about £1,000 a year net after paying Income Tax. If it is agreed that that is a reasonable objective to try to aim at, to give a Member the same sort of standard of living as an average Town Clerk, then I say the salary should be increased from £600 a year to £1,500, subject to Tax, of course, with effect from after the next General Election.

Major Symonds.

547. Your expenses allowance will be quite separate?—Quite separate, and I think it should be given now. I do not know whether the Committee wants to hear my views on that as to what the allowance should be?

Mr. Leslie.

548. You would suggest that the expense allowance should be free of Income Tax?—Free of Income Tax, but if, for example, a Member has a constituency in London and lives in only one place, then he would not draw the particular allowance for the cost of living in two places.

Mr. Daggar.

549. I do not know whether we might again ask for the figure which the Witness has in mind as an increase?—For the allowances?

550. Yes?—I would suggest (this is a matter on which the Members of the Committee will all have their own opinions) something like, say, £200 to £250 a year, if the Member lives in his constituency, and has to have accommodation in London, and if he does not live in his constituency he does not draw it. That is my view; and not more than £100 for postage or possibly a number of stamped envelopes in lieu. I suggest some allowance like that, and £3 a week for secretarial expenses—which would not enable a Member to have his own secretary, although I maintain that a Member needs one, if he is really going to do his job properly; but at least it would enable him to share a secretary with another Member. That comes to £450 or £500 a year—that sort of figure.

Mr. Cobb.

551. Tax free?—Yes, definitely.

Chairman.

552. I thought I heard you say, earlier on, that the figure you had in mind was roughly about £500 a year?—About £500 a year—the maximum allowance if a Mem-



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[Continued.]

ber has all the expenses, but, again, I think a motor car is very important. I cannot afford a motor car, and it is very difficult to run my constituency and do my job without a car. I think that should be covered in some way, but what I suggest is that it should be covered in the way of an allowance from the salary—that a Member should, from his salary, be able to claim exemption for his car, just in the same way as a Town Clerk does.

Earl *Winterton*.] May I raise a point of order? I would suggest, with respect, that the ordinary procedure we adopt in most Select Committees, of going round the table alternatively from right to left, is a more appropriate method.

*Chairman*.

553. I wanted, first of all, to let the Witnesses make a statement and then we can go round the table. Is there anything you wish to say, Mr. Maude?—(Mr. *Maude*.) What I would like to do is to draw attention to paragraph 16 of our memorandum, if I may. What we put there was: "In conclusion we would repeat that while we are not all in agreement as to the best methods of effecting it, we are in no doubt whatever that a considerable increase in the emoluments of Members is in the national interest and that this increase is a matter of urgent public importance." When this was drafted and settled I must confess that I then (I think Mr. Lindsay did, too) took a great deal rosier view of what the immediate future was going to be than I do this morning. We have tried to make up our minds independently, and one has tried to think out for oneself what the future is. I think it is very grave indeed, and I am deeply concerned that there should not be any very substantial immediate increase, because what Mr. Lindsay was largely speaking of, of course, is the ultimate objective when we have been to the country again. But if there were any immediate substantial increase I think the country would feel that we were getting a larger share of the diminishing national cake at a time when we ought to be suffering just like everybody else is suffering. I have no doubt that the degree of suffering varies enormously from Member to Member and pocket to pocket. But it is impossible to explain in detail to the country complicated computations as to why one should have  $x$  pounds increase, and I believe that anything, for instance, in the nature of £3 a week extra the working man would feel—and not go beyond his feelings—at such a time as this was the absolute limit. I feel that deeply. I do not believe you would ever be able to explain to him that anything more than that was showing that leadership and self-denying frame of mind which I think they still do expect. May I just add this (I do not want to go on too long) that if at this time, when it is impossible to believe that things are going to improve for

some considerable time—that is my view—these sums, or allowances, or whatever you have, are pushed up in this House, I believe it will bring very great discredit on this House and cause considerable alarm, in that it will be felt: "Oh, well, they look after themselves and they look after their own interests, but what have they done for us?" I believe the working man is beginning to understand about the national income, and that there is only so much to go round. Therefore, so far as the increases for the immediate future are concerned, although the figure that Colonel Lindsay mentions, going up to £500 a year, is right, I think at the present time, whatever we have to suffer, that it would be wrong, and it must be something much less than that.

Mr. *McKinlay*.

554. I should like to ask this. Do I take it that there is a division of opinion, other than that expressed in the memorandum submitted? Since the memorandum was submitted to the Committee, do I take it that you have somewhat changed your outlook, in view of what you say are changed conditions?—May I answer, first of all, for myself, and then I will show you the impossibility of answering for the others. I have changed my mind since last night. I truly confess, hearing last night what the situation was, although I had felt anxious about it before I feel this morning gravely perturbed about what is going to happen. As far as the others are concerned, you know how impossible it is to keep in touch with everybody. I could not do that. Therefore I venture to hazard the guess—and I would be prepared to put quite a large sum of money on it—that not only every single man on that list, but I very respectfully would be prepared to put a pound or two on it that every single person here also has revised his opinion since last night.

555. Everyone admits, of course, in all parties, that this is a delicate question, and there is a paragraph in the memorandum which suggests that dealing with this in a permanent way should be postponed until after the General Election?—Yes.

556. Do you agree that it is every party's desire that this should not be made the subject of electioneering?—(Mr. *Lindsay*.) I entirely agree. The way I look at it is that legislation should be passed before the General Election putting up the salaries, but that it should only take effect from after the next General Election.

557. The point I want to make is that if such an arrangement were agreed upon, would not that intensify, at the hustings, the issue as to whether the candidate was more concerned about getting the increased emoluments associated with the job than

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[Continued.]

with the welfare of the country?—I do not think that would arise, because if legislation were already enacted then it would be a fact, and both candidates or any number of candidates would equally stand, if they won the Election, to benefit by the increased salaries; but I would not suggest it should be an issue at the Election.

Earl *Winterton*.] May I raise a point of order? Perhaps through you, Mr. Chairman, I could put this point to the Witnesses. As far as I am aware, there is no statutory power which enables a Government to say that certain things shall be done in a subsequent Parliament, because that would be binding its successors. I do not know whether this matter could be examined, but I would submit, with respect, that it is an utterly unprecedented proposal that we should say that a new Parliament shall in fact do so and so.

Chairman.] I wanted to put one or two points on that, but I did not want to stop Mr. *McKinlay*.

Earl *Winterton*.] I am sorry, but it seemed to me a point of procedure.

Mr. *McKinlay*.

558. Do the Witnesses agree that whatever recommendation this Committee makes, it should be made on the rights or wrongs of the position? I mean by that, is it right to pay Members or is it wrong to pay Members? If it is right, then any recommendation of this Committee should be based on the fact that it is accepted by all parties that it is essential that Members of Parliament should be paid, and that ought to be the only thing governing our decision?—(Mr. *Maude*.) I must say I do not quite follow the question. I thought everybody decided many years ago that Members of Parliament had to be paid. I do not feel anybody is going to start saying that Members of Parliament should not be paid. But it is a very different matter when you come to decide exactly how much should be paid, and I quite agree, respectfully, with what Lord *Winterton* has just been saying. I do not see how you can have a measure whereby you bind the next Parliament. That seems to me quite impossible. But if, in fact, there is a measure of agreement between all the parties as to the reasonable amount that should be received by Members of Parliament, I can see no difficulty why one should not go to the country saying: "We have all agreed that this is right." It is true that it might then become a party matter. You might get some "economy candidates" coming forward. Indeed, if you went to the country now and started to do this, you would get "economy candidates" in every single constituency.

Mrs. *Wills*.

559. With regard to the question of putting off what we do until the next Parliament, the point that has come out in most of the evidence we have received has been how very inadequate is the amount to particular Members, and how impossible it is for them to do the job properly on this amount. Is it better to have the job done in a slipshod way for the rest of this Parliament, or to have the job done well? Which is going to be of the most benefit to the nation?—Speaking for myself, I did not know that it was being done in a slipshod way. I rather doubt that. I fancy that what is happening is that these people are suffering and having a tremendous strain put on them, but they are doing the job. I cannot help thinking also that one of the inevitable consequences of seeking the suffrages of the British public—one of the inevitable burdens—is that it is a very, very heavy burden. I know that it does vary from man to man. How much it varies you will be able to find out; we do not honestly know. The point I would like to make is that I personally have no doubt whatsoever (and I can speak to this) that in days gone by within my memory Members of Parliament were finding it desperately hard. (Mr. *Lindsay*.) May I comment on something Mrs. *Wills* said? I agree with the suggestion she made. I am equally certain that this job is being done in a slipshod way at the present moment. You have only to go into the library at night at 11 o'clock, and you will see 10 or 20 Members answering their constituents' letters in their own handwriting, which means that they have not got carbon copies, and you cannot run constituencies properly on that basis. I go further, and I say that Members are having to earn a living; and it is so complicated—there is so much legislation that unless you can sit down and read the Bills in the morning and study them, and go and consult your local authorities about what is proposed, and so on, you cannot do this job properly. I feel most frightfully frustrated, because I am extremely keen on this work, and I spend three or four hours a day earning my living, and I resent having to do so when I would like to concentrate such faculties as I have on this particular job. I think Mrs. *Wills* is quite right in saying that this job is being done in a slipshod way.

Mr. *Daggar*.

560. I should like to ascertain from the Witnesses whether they agree that substantially to increase the emoluments would have a similar effect upon the electorate as if the salaries were interfered with? Why the difference?—I say the difference is important because if you put up a Member's salary—we will take postage—by £100 a year for postage expenses, the ordinary man-in-the-street thinks of the Member

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[Continued.]

getting another £100 a year to put in his pocket; he does not realise and never will realise the amount of correspondence or the need for a secretary, and the expense of living in two places at once, and I can see no reason why, like the Civil Servant who does not have to pay for his postage (he is not accused of having hidden emoluments because his postage is free), these things should not be covered by an allowance, so that in point of fact the man-in-the-street is not led to think that the Member's personal salary is being increased by that amount of money. That is why I am so keen to divorce them.

Mr. Lang.

561. I would like, through you, Mr. Chairman, to try to clarify with the Witnesses the position, because it seems to me that there are two matters that they have both raised this morning. The first one is that of the crucial economic conditions as they see them. I do not believe that a single Member of this Committee would wish to take advantage of anybody else in those circumstances, and if it is proved, or we have good reason to think that conditions are going to be very serious, Members of this Committee would take that into the fullest account, and I think both Witnesses were very right to remind us of that. In regard to the other matter I have failed to hear a single reason yet given for the postponement. Is it fear of public opinion?—Yes, I think it is. I think one has to be quite frank about it and I think it is. We do not want to be accused of putting up our own salaries at a time when the pensions have not been substantially increased. That is the point. It is fear of public opinion, and I do not think one can get away from that.

562. Do the Witnesses realise that you might have this position; you might have a position in which the present Parliament agrees to substantial increases in emoluments to take effect after the next Election, and there would be a fair number of the present Members obviously not going to the country again; and you would therefore have candidates standing at the next Election who would have had no responsibility for this decision, and, therefore, could not be tested upon it, and, therefore, could not gain any kind of public opinion upon the matter? Would not that be likely to be the case?—(Mr. Maude.) May I answer that? I do not quite put it as fear of public opinion. This is my view, that it is a desire to gauge public opinion, and I do not think public opinion is necessarily a thing that acts upon arithmetical calculations. I have tried to assess what I think the public would deem to be fair as an increase, and what they would, therefore, be likely to approve of, and I do not think it is any good assuming that public opinion is something like a multiplication

table or any arithmetical calculation. My own view is that it is a very broad, rather amorphous thing, and at the present moment there is no question of fear of it. I do not fear it in the least; I try to assess it and I still stick to my view that it ought not to be.

563. If it is a question of what is right or wrong, the honourable and learned Member would agree, surely, that this House, either in Committee or in its public sessions, ought never to be deterred from doing what it knows to be right because public opinion may not be instructed or may be slow to understand?—But what you know to be right is something that you know the public would approve of, taking it generally. It is not a moral issue; it is not a question of what is right in the ethical sense or what is wrong in the ethical sense. What you are trying to gauge is something that you think the great mass of the public—not merely the majority but the great mass of the public—will approve of, as to the conduct of Members of Parliament, and it should not be a matter of adverse comment by any substantial section of the public whatsoever. And I do not believe you will get that measure of agreement if in fact at this time you take many hundreds.

564. I would not wish to discuss with the Witness the question whether the rightness of a matter is decided by the approval of the public. I have only one other question. If we are to consider the reaction of the public, would the witnesses agree with me or not that the one thing the public does desire is efficient service from Members of this House; that the way in which they use us—corporations, tradespeople, private people, charitable organisations—means that they do expect a great deal of applied service from us; and do they not think that the public would approve of anything which would enable us to make that service not only more efficient, but in view of what they have said—and I am not inclined to differ about it—without any question of seeking personal gain or illegitimate additions to salaries?—(Mr. Lindsay.) I think so much depends on how it is put across, how it is done. There is much difference between a favourable and an unfavourable Press. I have not the slightest doubt that there would be a most unpleasant debate. I have not the slightest doubt that quite a number of Members would get up and say it is absolutely monstrous that salaries should be increased a penny. I think so much depends on how the public is educated. I think every Member should have a meeting in his own constituency and explain it. I attach great importance to the idea of linking it up with something that the public understands, like, as I suggest, the Town Clerk, and making the comparison of two public

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[Continued.]

servants, one of whom is living in penury and not able to do his job properly without an adequate salary, while the other is giving the public efficient service. I should like to comment on something Mr. Maude said, because perhaps we are not entirely in agreement on this matter. I have not changed my opinion since last night, perhaps because I have not read the papers this morning, but what I feel about it is that if you link it up with something like the Town Clerk's salary, then if circumstances are different in the years ahead, as Mr. Maude anticipates, perhaps like the cuts in 1931 the Town Clerks' salaries will come down and Admirals' and Judges' and everybody else's, and Members' salaries will come down accordingly; but I cannot see there is any justification, because we have heard grave news in the last few days and weeks, for not putting it up to a certain height, from which it might have to come down, like everybody else's.

Mr. Cobb.

565. Could I ask the honourable and learned Witness whether he would not agree that Members are almost alone in the country in not having had an increase, either in their allowance for expenses or in salary, since the beginning of the war?—(Mr. Maude.) I really honestly do not know. I should suspect that to be so. The strong probabilities are that there may be sections, clerks, and so on, that have not had an increase. I really do not know. I should expect they probably have.

566. Do you not think, on that account, the public would tolerate some increase?—I am sure they would tolerate some increase—I agree with you.

567. Your proposition, if I understand it correctly, is that the salary should stay where it is at the moment, at £600, and there should be an expenses allowance of £500 a year maximum, tax free, and where a Member did not incur that amount of expenses they should be less?—(Mr. Lindsay.) Yes.

568. That should go into operation immediately?—Yes.

569. And in the next Parliament the expenses allowance should remain like that?—Yes.

570. But the salary should go up to £1,500?—Yes; from £600 to £1,500.

571. Mr. Maude, I understand your opinion is that there should be an increase limited to £3 or £4 a week at the moment?—(Mr. Maude.) Yes, I think so.

572. Could I then ask the two Witnesses—do they represent two differences of opinion in their group—Mr. Maude on the extreme left and Mr. Lindsay on the extreme right?—No, I think not, because,

as I say, I have not had an opportunity of seeing these other Members who signed this memorandum since I came to the conclusion to which I have come. £500 a year is nearly £10 a week. It would be translated in those simple terms. I do not think that is likely to do good at the present time.

Chairman.] That point has been brought out very clearly. Do not let us pursue it too far.

Mr. Cobb.

573. Is there anybody else in your group who would have a lower figure in mind than yourself, Mr. Maude?—I simply cannot tell you. I should suspect yes. It is all very well to put your expenses allowance maximum up to £500 a year, it is an excellent thing, but I think the public would think probably that everybody got the maximum allowance.

Major Symonds.

574. One point about this matter of allowances. Do I take it that the £500 suggested would be payable in lump sums of say, £100 for postage, £150 for secretarial assistance, then £200 or £250 for a person living at two homes—that each individual Member would qualify under two or three of those heads?—(Mr. Lindsay.) I think each individual Member would undoubtedly qualify for the secretarial assistance (there would be no question about that) and the postage allowance, but it does vary so much between, as I say, one Member who has his constituency in London or very near London, possibly, and another Member who has to keep two homes.

Chairman.

575. Do you appreciate that a Member living in London can, in certain circumstances, actually spend more in cost of living than in keeping two homes going? Let me tell you what I have in mind. The rents, for example, in London (I know this from quite a number of Members in the past who have experienced it), have been far higher than they were in the Provinces before, and on balance there was not much in it. Do not assume that a man can leave the Provinces and come to London and get a house at the same rent as he paid before. It has been put to me time and time again in the last ten years by men who have done it, so that you must not consider that a man who lives in London is living relatively cheaper than a man in the Provinces?—At the present time you can get a sort of minimum comfort accommodation in London for about £4 a week. You can get two rooms in London for approximately £4 a week.

Mr. Lipson

576. With service?—No, without service. You have to cook your own breakfast and that sort of thing. I have done it; I have

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[Continued.]

got a little place for £4 a week. I do not think you can get it for less. If you also live in your constituency, which I maintain is becoming more and more necessary for a Member, if you go home at weekends and your family is there, you have to pay another £2 a week rent up there. That is the position which I happen to know a large number of Members are in. Most of the people on this list live in their constituencies.

Major Symonds.

577. What I am really getting at is this. These expenses, I take it, would be paid automatically to a Member qualified under those three heads—double residence, postage and secretarial assistance?—Yes.

578. In other words, if he qualified he would automatically draw them, and it would not be a matter of his being able to draw up to that amount of approved expenditure?—I have not considered this in such detail. Obviously, a Member should have a half-share of a secretary, and he would draw his £3 a week. I do not think there is any escaping that.

579. All I was getting at was really to suggest that you should give a Member an amount to cover his expenses of this kind and then leave it to him to make his own detailed arrangements as to how he applies it?—I would not disagree on a small matter of detail like that.

580. The only other point is that in all these calculations there has been no reference at all to travel. Do you consider the present travel arrangements adequate, or do you consider that, with the increased amount suggested, any payments are necessary in addition to the present travel arrangements?—I think the car question is most important. But there, again, constituencies vary so much. In practically any constituency—nine out of ten—if a Member is really going to do his job, when Mrs. Snooks writes about her pension trouble, either he or his wife goes round to see the woman, which is the only way to deal with these cases; and he goes to see the factories in his constituency, and travels round. If he is going to do the job properly he must have a car; there is no doubt about it. I dare say that the Member for a constituency like Chelsea does not need a car, but he is about the only one in England who does not, if it is the case. If you are going to increase the salary to something comparable with the Town Clerk's salary, then I suggest it should be covered by an allowance like the Town Clerk gets against his Income Tax, but if it is only a question of an allowance like £400 or £500 a year—an expenses allowance—and the £600 is not going to be increased, then I think you must add something or in some way cover the question of a car—

either by saying that such an expense is deductible from the £600 a year salary, for Income Tax, or I think you must include it in these allowances and make the allowances £550 instead of £450. I think the car question is most important. I am sorry if I have talked at length on that subject.

581. No. Could I enlarge that to cover travel generally? You speak of cars. I am also thinking of the Members who have not cars. Do you think it would lead to greater efficiency and knowledge among Members if they were in a position to travel here and there about the country to get first hand knowledge of various parts of the country? Do you consider any change would be desirable in the present travel arrangements for Members who have not cars?—(Mr. Maude.) Do you mean outside their constituencies?

582. Yes—All over the Island?

583. Yes—Personally, I should say no. (Mr. Lindsay.) I think it is very important that a Member should travel, but I think it would lead to, I do not like to use the word "abuse," but I think it would be difficult to ensure that he was going on some public work and not merely to see his relations.

Mr. Leslie.

584. Mr. Maude, you mentioned that you thought the self-denying frame of mind of the people at the present time would grudge an increase to Members of Parliament, but would you agree that that self-denying frame of mind on the part of the people would not want to go below subsistence level, and that, if they believed Members of Parliament would be placed below subsistence level, they would naturally think that Members were quite right in asking for some increase?—(Mr. Maude.) I entirely agree.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

585. Could I put this to the honourable and learned gentleman? When you put your name to this memorandum (if I may say so, a very excellent memorandum in many respects) it was because, in your considered judgment, there was a real need among Members of Parliament?—Yes.

586. I would call it (I use the word deliberately) poverty among many. Without relation to any external events which may happen, that poverty still exists; it has not changed in the course of the last week?—May I say this: I am not certain that I say poverty. I do not really know at the moment whether it is a question of poverty. What I do think is that there is not sufficient money to provide the necessary amenities, to put it that way—lack of means for the job.

587. I did not mean poverty in the sense that would be applied outside, but to do his job efficiently?—Yes.

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[Continued.]

588. Nothing has happened outside to alter the fact that there is this genuine need for doing something to help Members to become efficient?—I agree.

589. I think you would also agree that while in this arrangement we have no party, in the sense that we are all working together as a team, we do not all necessarily accept your gloomy outlook of the future?—No.

590. Therefore, seeing that there are two points of view about that, why, since there was a need a week ago and there is a need now, should you have changed your mind about giving anything immediately?—I have not changed my mind about giving anything immediately.

591. Immediately?—No.

*Chairman.*] I think the Witness explained before what led him to change his view.—I want to make it clear in your minds that I am not suggesting that you give nothing immediately. What I am suggesting is that you take great care not to give a large sum immediately, and I think it is best to put it per week. If you look at it in that way, that is the way in which the ordinary man and woman will look at it.

592. One other question. This need is going to continue, and if you give a small increase it will help things a little bit; but on this point of waiting for the next General Election, it is possible that the next General Election will not come until July, 1950, and in the meantime the need among Members is going to increase, because many now are living on their savings, which are diminishing, so that to postpone it until a possible date in 1950 is going to aggravate the position, unless something more than a small helping hand is given.—(Mr. *Lindsay*.) Personally, I entirely agree with you. (Mr. *Maude*.) That you would know more about than I do. I cannot give evidence about that. You are gathering that from other Witnesses; I know nothing of it.

*Mr. Lipson.*

593. Both the Witnesses, I gather, are in favour of some immediate increase. I am not quite clear whether they say the public should be told about the further increase contemplated possibly in the next Parliament or at the next General Election, or that the public be told that, while we are giving this immediate small increase, the other increase is contemplated?—Are you not asking me what you yourselves have to decide?

*Chairman.*] I think that is our task.

*Mr. Lipson.*

594. I thought that was their suggestion, that we should do this, that there should be a small increase now.—I do not think either Mr. *Lindsay* or myself ventured

to suggest that you should do anything. What we say is what we think is desirable.

*Chairman.*] We wanted your views, and I think that point was made quite clear.

*Mr. Lipson.*

595. Mr. *Maude*, all you suggest immediately is £3 to £4 increase, and in Mr. *Lindsay's* opinion, it should be £500 tax-free allowance?—(Mr. *Lindsay*.) Yes, (Mr. *Maude*.) You follow how difficult it is for us to form any definite opinion. I suspect there is great need. You will find it.

596. What difference would it make to the reaction of public opinion if we gave what we thought Members ought to have now instead of saying: "We will pay you so much now, but we propose to make a further payment in another Parliament"?—You will no doubt recommend that they get what they ought to have now. That no doubt will be one of the findings of the Committee.

*Chairman.*

597. I think the House knew, when the Select Committee was appointed, that it was because it was felt there was real need.—Of course.

*Mr. Lipson.*

598. Have the Witnesses taken into account what happened when a 50 per cent. increase was made in 1937 and operated immediately?—What was the reaction of public opinion to that increase at that time? Have you taken that into account? Was there any serious objection to it?—No, there was not. If you are asking me to compare it with the present time I should say it is very different.

599. In 1937 there was a very large number of people unemployed.—There was.

600. I should have thought the general mass of the people was in a very much more serious position. There was a means test, and all sorts of things. I should have thought, personally, from the point of view of the general public, the situation was at least as unfavourable then for an increase as it is now?—My answer is quite a short one. From the evidence you collect you will be able to decide whether there is as strong a case, a stronger case or a less strong case, compared with 1937. I think it would be an undesirable comparison, because I believe the situation is so entirely different. (Mr. *Lindsay*.) May I say a word about the point raised by Mr. *Lipson*, because I am not quite sure we have disposed of it, as far as our evidence is concerned. It is on the difference between a long-term policy and a short-term policy. I still stick to my point of view that one should differentiate between the two. I can only say that these people who put their names down for this, while they would all support a short-term rise of anything like £500 a year—they will support that—

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[Continued.]

they will not support an immediate increase of more than, although they say it should be done as a long-term policy.

*Chairman.*

601. I think you brought that point out very clearly?—I am sorry. I wanted it to be quite clear that I still believe in the long-term policy.

*Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.]* Arising out of this discussion, the Witnesses this morning have been very anxious about the impact of these proposals on public opinion, informed and uninformed—largely uninformed. Have they considered the implications of their suggestion on public interest, that this matter should be referred to the people at the General Election? May I put it in this way. I have fought five elections, all of them highly contested, two of them unsuccessfully. I have never had a safe seat. I had to fight very hard to get here, and fight even harder to stay here last July. At a General Election the people are invited to choose a Government on the broadest possible line. At the next Election one imagines they will be asked whether they want to go on with planned economy or whether they want some reversal or easing of it. What you are really asking is that the Government of the day, having received the report of this Select Committee, consisting of Members of all sections of the House and all opinions, that Committee having reported on all the evidence it has had in front of it, should put in their Election programme a proposal that the salaries of Members of Parliament should be raised to £X.

*Chairman.]* May I make a suggestion that we extract from the Witnesses their views on these points and leave just a little to the imagination.

*Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.*

602. This is my point. Mr. Maude has told us that we shall all be agreed on this matter at the Election. Is he not putting rather a strain upon human nature?—(Mr. Maude.) I do not agree that I said that.

603. Please let me go on. It may well be that all Members submitting themselves for re-election are agreed on this matter, and all parties. That may be so. But are you not putting rather a strain on their political opponents? Is it not possible that the very thing we are anxious to avoid will in fact arise, that some candidate with ample private means will get up on the platform and say: "My opponent is committed to drawing £1,500 a year when he gets into the House of Commons. I shall be prepared to give back £500 of that to charitable appeals in the constituency; I do not need £1,500. I do not know whether he needs it." Have you considered that aspect?—My answer is yes. (Mr. Lindsay.) May I make a comment on one point? This idea is an old one. It has appeared in books by Members, and it was

quite a surprise to me when Lord Winterton said it could not be done. I was assuming that it would be enacted as from after the next Election; in fact that the salaries would be increased, but not taking effect until then. I was certainly not assuming that it would be a matter which would be referred to as an issue of the Election, and if what Lord Winterton suggested is correct and it cannot be done that way, then I think we have to face up to it and do it ourselves.

*Colonel Dodds-Parker.*

604. I think Mr. Lindsay did put the figure for a car allowance at about £100 or £150 a year in a rural constituency?—I would not like to commit myself to any figure, because I have not had a car in this country since 1939. I would not like to put a figure as to what it costs to run a car, but I am quite certain of the need for it.

*Colonel Dodds-Parker.]* Have the Witnesses any views on the conditions of service, other than remuneration, or any ideas on the remuneration of junior Ministers?

*Chairman.*

605. Should we not keep the Witnesses merely to the points in the memorandum submitted?—I would rather you did, as far as I am concerned. (Mr. Maude.) Otherwise, there is a great deal one could say about business premises.

*Chairman.]* While the point is a good one and a relevant one I think we had better leave it to another occasion.

*Major Ramsay.*

606. I am not quite sure, Mr. Chairman, whether it is in order for me to ask the Witnesses any questions, because I see my name appears on the front page of the memorandum as being one of the group. I would like to ask one question about expenses. I do feel it is rather important that we should get this matter as straight as possible, because I think it is so very important, and I should like to hear the Witnesses' opinion about expenses. Mr. Lindsay said he would like to include expenses for a car, two dwelling places, secretarial assistance, postage and telephones, and perhaps other lesser items. He has mentioned the cost of two dwelling places as coming to an aggregate sum of approximately £300, secretarial assistance, £120, and he has just said that he would not like to state a figure in respect of a car, but I dare say £100 would not be far out. Those items add up to £520, and we still have not tackled postage or telephones, and no doubt there will be other minor expenses. Does he, in view of this, consider his original suggestion of £500 enough?—(Mr. Lindsay.) I did not really think it was necessary for us to go into that detail, because I feel that is a matter for this Committee. I say that there should be allowances for these things in the neighbourhood

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[Continued.]

of £500, and if this Committee, after going into the question and taking evidence, recommends it should be £400 or £600, we are all in agreement. I do not think I can be asked to give evidence that would be worth anything as to the nearest possible figure for Members' postage. Do you, Mr. Chairman?—You follow what I mean?

*Chairman.*] Yes.

*Mr. Horabin.*

607. I would like to ask the Witnesses one question. I think that both of them are agreed that Members of Parliament should be in a position to carry out their constituency work efficiently. By their "constituency work" I mean dealing with their correspondence in London and so on. They also referred, in estimating the amount that should be paid for expenses, to the employment of a secretary on a part-time basis. I want to ask them whether in their experience they have found that the use of a part-time secretary does enable them to carry out their constituency work efficiently?—I am quite clear in my own mind that if you are really giving your full time to this job and doing it properly you need a full-time secretary. I am quite clear on that point, but I think it is asking too much. I think £3 a week for secretarial expenses is as much as we can ask for. I am not anxious to ask for the maximum but rather to ask for the minimum, and that is why I say £3 at least does enable a Member to share a secretary with someone else.

608. May I take it that the view of the Witness is that the efficiency of the Member of Parliament should be sacrificed in this direction to public opinion, or what they fear is public opinion?—I think it is a question of compromise. I am trying to compromise, as I say, not to ask for the maximum but to ask for the minimum. (*Mr. Maude.*) May I answer that question? I think Mr. Lindsay is a whole-timer. You are, are you not? (*Mr. Lindsay.*) Subject to working about three hours a day. (*Mr. Maude.*) I am not. I am hard at law work all day.

Sir BASIL NEVEN-SPENCE (a Member of the House) examined.

*Chairman.*

613. Sir Basil, you are in a very peculiar position as a Member of Parliament. You seem to represent a constituency that may be described as one of the outposts of the United Kingdom. You indicated your willingness to come and tell the Committee some of your difficulties and experiences, so I will now leave it to you?—May I raise one general Scottish point, first of all, and that is the question of Members being allowed to use their warrants when the House is sitting in order to go to Edinburgh? Very often it happens, after having a talk with a Minister, that the

*Chairman.*

609. I think you two are in a peculiar position to-day. You are both here on one memorandum, but there is between you a difference of opinion?—It is a different experience. When Mr. Lindsay says a part-time secretary is not enough for him, that is his evidence. So far as I am concerned, a part-time secretary is no use to me whatsoever. I must have a full-time secretary, and I pray for the day when there are proper offices, such as there are in Congress, so that every Member can have an office where he can go and do his work.

*Mr. Haydn Davies.*

610. Quite obviously, a full-time secretary would cost more than £150 a year?—She does.

*Mr. McKinlay.*

611. Before the Witnesses go there is one point that I feel I should ask. The Witnesses will agree that if any report comes from this Select Committee, either one way or the other, it must have unanimity. Do I take it, from what has been said on behalf of the group who have supplied us with this informative memorandum, that if what they have suggested is not the crux of the Committee's report, they are prepared to make it an issue on the floor of the House?—(*Mr. Lindsay.*) I do not understand.

*Chairman.*] That is outside our scope.

*Mr. McKinlay.*] I think we ought to be clear on that.

*Chairman.*

612. Every Member of Parliament, each of the 640, has a perfect right, when the matter comes before the House of Commons, to express his own point of view. We are taking evidence as to what should be done, within our terms of reference?—(*Mr. Maude.*) I think the honourable Member would be satisfied with this answer, that we are here because all these people feel very strongly about it.

*Chairman.*] I would like to thank you on behalf of the Committee. We are indebted to you.

Member wants to have a talk with some of his officials there, and, as things are now, unless you happen to be an Edinburgh Member, you have to pay your own expenses in going there. I think the same thing really arises when the House is not sitting, because it sometime happens that a Member has to go down to Edinburgh. So I put that forward as a suggestion, that that might be dealt with. I think it is reasonable. Then with regard to my own particular problem, one point I want to bring up is the present arrangements, by which, if you are travelling by air, your journey ends at the



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[Continued.]

airport as far as expenses are concerned. Of course, in Orkney and Shetlands there are no railways, and you have to find some other means of getting on. You may be able to use public transport. Sometimes you cannot do that. To show the extreme case I will tell you exactly what happens if I want to go to my own home. I have a map here (*producing same*). The aerodrome is in the extreme south, *here*. That was the only place where they were able to make one. Consequently, it is a very long journey to get up further north. Supposing I leave London when the House rises on Friday and take the 7.20 from Euston, I get up to Inverness the following morning; I fly from Inverness and I shall be in Lerwick, the capital *here*, about mid-day on Saturday. In the meantime the steamer will have left at 7 o'clock or 8 o'clock in the morning, so there are no means of public transport, and, therefore, the only way you can do it is by hiring. There are certain days of the week on which they run what is called the Overland Route public service, and it is fairly moderate, but if it does not happen to be the day on which you can get that you are left to hire. You have a very long journey to make. First of all, there is a 30-mile journey from Lerwick up to Mossbank by car; then 3 miles across the Yell Sound; then another 21 miles from there up to a place called Gutter, and another 2 miles by motor boat, and a car journey beyond that. The cost of that journey is £5 3s. 6d. single. The same situation arises when you want to get back. You double that, and it is over £10. If you can fit in with the public transport service it is considerably less. It costs about 28s. for the return journey. I want to explain what the alternative is. My home happens to be *here*, on a small island. If I want to get home for a weekend I leave London on Friday evening by train for Inverness and fly next day to Shetland, arriving at Lerwick at midday on Saturday. If I continue my journey by public transport I have to spend the night in Lerwick and proceed by the local steamer leaving at 7 a.m. on Monday and reaching my home in the late afternoon. The next steamer back leaves on Wednesday afternoon. After another night in Lerwick, I fly to Inverness and reach London by train on Friday morning. I thus get 48 hours at home, but am involved in 4½ days travelling, the loss of four Parliamentary days, and, under existing regulations, the payment of 24s. return fare on the local steamer. The alternative is to hire motor cars and boats, which enable me, if the weather is not too rough, to reach home on Saturday evening. I leave again about midday Sunday, spend the night in Lerwick, fly to Inverness on Monday and reach London on Tuesday morning. I thus get 18 hours at home, spend 48 hours travelling, lose only one Parliamentary day,

but have to pay a bill of £10 7s., for special hires.

614. Apart from the question you raised of the warrants, how does your warrant serve you on journeys like that?—Warrants are no use to me beyond Sumburgh, or really Lerwick, because your warrant happens to cover your journey up to Lerwick.

Mr. Cobb.

615. After that you have to pay for whatever method of transport you use?—Yes.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

616. You never fly to Inverness?—I would fly to Inverness as soon as a plane is available, but we cannot fly there. We must go by train. There is not really very much in that, because the House is up in the afternoon and you travel up overnight and get your aeroplane next morning.

617. You do not address many protest meetings in your constituency, do you?—It is a terrible constituency to get round, as you can see. That is a point I want to mention, too—the extraordinary cost to a Member in getting about on his ordinary business in a constituency like this. I have a map of Orkney. All *these* are populous islands which you can get at sometimes, and sometimes you cannot. The sort of thing I find I am up against there is this. You cannot overcome this difficulty by keeping your own car. To begin with, these two capitals are 100 miles apart by sea. If you keep a car on the Island of Orkney you have only dealt with half the problem. You have the same problem again on the mainland at Shetland. So if you want to get about your constituency at all you are thrown back to hiring. You cannot make very much use of the rather infrequent bus services which there are. To give you a sort of idea of what one does spend, I have here an expense account of a very ordinary tour I did in August, 1944. I started on the 30th and was touring on the 31st, and on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th September—six days—and I spent £18 7s. 6d. That is for one week.

Mr. Hadyn Davies.

618. Is that car hire?—Yes, car hires.

Mr. Cobb.

619. And hire of a motor boat?—That happened to be in respect of car hires only. You do not have to do much hiring of motor boats in Orkney. You can, to some extent, make use of the steamer services there. Orkney, normally, in peacetime, had an excellent air service round the Islands. All the Orkney Islands are very flat and they have landing grounds on all of them. There, again, one would not want one's warrant journey to end at Kirkwall, but to carry one on any air services that might be available round the Islands.

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[Continued.]

Mr. Leslie.

620. Is there any hope of an air service further north than Lerwick?—Very little. I flew round a little while ago and inspected places. With a small plane there are one or two places where something could be done. We made one or two landings, but it was pretty risky. They could be improved.

621. Apart from that, the only thing would be a motor boat for you to keep at Lerwick?—That would be very expensive. I know this is a special case, and hard cases make bad law. I think probably the fairest way to meet it is possibly by an increase in the amount allowed. As a matter of fact, after a lot of argument with the Treasury—and I kept a note of what my expenses were—I got them to agree, as a special measure, to allow me an extra £100 against travelling.

Mr. Hadyn Davies.

622. That was an allowance on Income Tax?—Free from Income Tax, yes.

(Adjourned till Tuesday next, at 11 a.m.)

TUESDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

## Members present:

Mr. TOM SMITH (Chairman).

Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggar.  
Colonel Dodds-Parker.  
Mr. Horabin.  
Mr. Lang.  
Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Lipson.  
Mr. McKinlay.  
Major Ramsay.  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.  
Earl Winterton.

The Right Hon. WILLIAM WHITELEY (a Member of the House), examined.

Chairman.

625. I think as Chief Whip and with your long experience as a Member of the House, you are conversant with the adequacy or otherwise of what is paid to Members and Ministers?—Yes.

626. Perhaps it would be for the convenience of the Committee if we left it now to you to make a statement on the various points—This matter, of course, was first raised in a larger form probably than at any other time during the Coalition Government, and it was very strongly felt that there should be something done with regard to Members of Parliament and various members of the Ministries, but after long discussion they thought: "Well, it is an old Parliament; we had better wait until there is a new Parliament elected, and see what things are like, and then go thoroughly into the matter". I have had many consultations with people in the House regarding this matter. I have thought about it very carefully, and it seems to me that it could be met on three

Mr. Lipson.

623. Over your £600?—Actually, it happened to come under my £600, because I did not make my cost of living in London and what I was paying in the way of secretarial work came to more than about £450, and the £100 was added on to that, still keeping me within the £600, but I doubt very much if I am within that £600 now.

Chairman.] Does any Member wish to ask Sir Basil any further questions?

Mr. Cobb.

624. You would be in favour of your being able to use a voucher on any form of public transport available?—Yes. Even if there is no actual service on the day on which you wish to use it, you should be allowed, I think, to make the best arrangement you can.

Chairman.] Thank you, Sir Basil. I think your evidence has been most interesting.

12 February, 1946.] The Right Hon. WILLIAM WHITELEY.

[Continued.]

question is gone into properly, it would cost any more, if as much, as is being paid at the present time under the voucher system. The third point is with regard to salaries themselves. I am one of those who feel that we ought not to tinker with postage and private secretaries. I think that is a personal matter for each Member of Parliament himself to deal with, and, therefore, my inclination is to go along straight to the salary, and it is for this Committee to consider whether the present amount is adequate or inadequate. Personally, I think it is inadequate and always has been, from my point of view. But that is a matter for you to decide. The one point I think you should keep in mind, if I may make a suggestion, is that by whatever amount you raise Members' salaries you should not increase the salaries of Under Secretaries or anybody else more than the amount by which you increase Members' salaries. You should keep it to the same amount. Taking a figure, if you say £250, then if you think some of the Under Secretaries and others are not sufficiently paid I would add the same amount, £250, to their salaries. I would not make it proportionately greater because a man has a greater salary. I would treat everybody alike, on the same basis. If you think that the amount is inadequate at the present time, whatever you fix, it ought to apply all round on the same basis.

627. That would be for all those under £5,000, according to our Terms of Reference?—Yes. I think that is your Terms of Reference.

628. You have had experience as to how a junior Minister is situated with regard to no allowance being made for any kind of expenses?—Yes.

629. Even if he became Chief Whip? Yes. Personally, I was in the position that in going into the Government I was in receipt of £3 10s. a week less than I was as a Member of Parliament.

630. On this question of travel and a railway pass which you have in mind, I presume it is one which would permit travelling generally by Members of Parliament?—Yes.

Major Ramsay.

631. I should like to clear up one matter with regard to salaries. I understand the Chief Whip to have said that he does not recommend an allowance for a secretary or an allowance for any other purpose, but would prefer to see the whole matter covered by an increase in a basic salary?—Yes, that is right.

632. Is the Chief Whip prepared to give any figure which he may have in mind on this subject, as to what the salary might be increased to?—I think I would rather leave that with the Committee.

Chairman.

633. I think that is our job?—On general lines I agree; but I think that is a matter really for the Committee itself.

Colonel Dodds-Parker.

634. Have you any ideas on travel outside the United Kingdom?—No. I was confining my remarks to the United Kingdom.

635. You have not any ideas upon whether Members should have extra facilities for travelling outside to the Dominions or the Empire or anywhere like that?—I think that is a matter which has always been in the hands—for the Dominions and that sort of thing—of the Empire Parliamentary Association. Outside journeys of that kind you can do through the Foreign Office and so on. I think for a Member's duties here the pass would be the proper thing, myself.

Lt.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.

636. I think the Patronage Secretary might agree that in present circumstances the term "salary" is an entire misnomer?—I agree.

637. A salary being something upon which one supports oneself and lives. I should like to ask him whether, the Select Committee having arrived at a global figure to cover the cost of doing one's duties (which is one of the chief things we are trying to get at), he would favour superimposing upon that sum a sum that would ease the lot of a man who has to live also without other means of doing so. If we arrived at X as the global figure for the cost of doing the work, would he favour the Select Committee recommending an additional sum on top of that?—To meet what?

638. To meet the man's ordinary cost of living, apart from his outgoings, such as secretarial assistance, stamps, and so on?—Do you now mean to make a difference between a man who is living, say, in London—who has his home here—and a man who has to keep two homes going?

639. No. I am trying to deal with the case of a man who, because of his election to this House, has, for some reason or other, to drop every source of income?—I do not think you can meet that, myself.

Mr. Lipson.

640. May I ask the Chief Whip two questions? Is it his view that being a Member of Parliament should, from our point of view, be considered a full-time job or not?—I have always felt that that was the real thing, but some people have different ideas. I am afraid by the end of this session most people will think it is a full-time job.

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[Continued.]

641. May I ask my second question? Is the Chief Whip in favour of any part of what is being paid to Members being free of Income Tax, or is it his suggestion that there should be a fixed sum given to Members on which they would be allowed to have certain allowances as at present?—Yes.

642. That is your view?—Yes.

643. No part should be of right free of Income Tax?—No.

*Mrs. Wills.*

644. If the Committee make a recommendation for a substantial increase, have you any ideas about ensuring that Members do the job?—Of course, Members of Parliament have always been on their honour in that respect. We could hardly draw a hard and fast line. You might have some people who get in all the divisions but do not attend the House very often, if they judge it fairly well.

645. I am not thinking of that. I am thinking of the Member who does not attend at all?—That is a matter which would have to be considered very carefully.

646. You have not any ideas as to how you can safeguard that position?—No, I have not thought of that very much. The only indication we have are the Division Lists. Some people may be unfortunate and others may be more fortunate. It is just a difficult proposition to balance it rightly. But we are keeping an eye on that to see if there is any suggestion we can make at a little later date. I do not know yet.

*Mr. Leslie.*

647. On the question of the railway pass, would you go further, and take the case of Members representing County Divisions in which it is impossible to use a railway pass, and they would have to have a car or use a bus service?—I do not know, I am sure. That would, of course, depend probably upon whether you would get the transport system more unified. I think I would start first with the railways.

648. You know the County of Durham?—I do.

649. You know my Division?—I do.

650. Mine is supposed to be the Ferry Holme, but the train service is so bad that I generally take a bus from Darlington. For example, last Saturday I had to go to the far end of the Division to open some new houses, and I had to hire a car to get there. There were no other facilities?—Of course, I have to do the same, myself. I do not see how we can overcome that very well.

651. Could it not be overcome by allowing us, if there are no railway facilities, to charge up our expenses?—Is there not now some allowance made for taxis and meeting

rooms in the other expenses on your list? If in future days you find that growing, of course you will be entitled to increase that claim with the Inland Revenue people.

*Mr. Leslie.*

652. That is the only concession you can get, putting it in as against your Income Tax. You do not get the whole amount.

*Major Symonds.*

653. Would the Chief Whip think this travel difficulty could be covered by extending the railway pass to cover all forms of public transport and, where there is no form of public transport, a mileage allowance for a car? I think that would cover practically all cases. Would he support such an idea?—Not as things are. I agree that it is limited in its amount, but still, if the salary is increased there would be opportunities for increasing that amount. I think that that item would drop out of your Income Tax allowance if you had an all-in-travel arrangement. I am not sure there would be a great deal of advantage in it. Probably it would be to the advantage of some people if it were left as it is, for them just to make their applications as they feel they are called upon to pay out-of-pocket expenses in that direction.

654. I was thinking of the idea of trying to get rid of forms to fill in, of which there are far too many?—There are not any forms to fill in if you have a railway pass. If you order a taxi there is no form to fill in.

*Mr. Cobb.*

655. There is one question I should like to ask the Chief Whip. We have been informed that when a Minister is away from the House travelling on public business he is allowed 25s. a night. Do you consider that to be adequate?—I do not know. I have not come into that category. I know nothing about it.

*Mr. Lang.*

656. I would like to test this question of the full-time employment of Members of Parliament which some of us might feel there is a great discrimination against most of us in this way, that Members of the House who, say, are barristers and who have, of course, from time to time to go on circuit and must go on circuit, always seem to be able to be absent to earn their livings. I do not object to that. But other Members who might occasionally want a day off to deliver some lecture have extraordinary difficulty and must get permission. I should like to know why it is that there is this discrimination against some of us. Others can be away for almost three weeks at a time and get away with it. I have been waiting since 1929 to ask that question?—It is true, of course, that barristers come to me occasionally and plead very

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earnestly to be allowed to do this and to be allowed to do the other. I always try to impress upon them that their job is here, that they have been elected by the electors to be at the House of Commons, and it is certainly placing other Members at a disadvantage as compared with them. But I think Members of Parliament have to face this situation, that if everybody just did what they liked, went away when they liked, I do not think we should have a very impressive House of Commons, and the people in the country would want to know something about it then, and then we should be forced to make it full-time, both for barristers and everybody else, if we are not careful. There is that side to it. That has gone on ever since I came here.

Mr. Daggar.

657. Following up that point, I wonder if the Witness would agree that that is primarily a matter for the Members' constituents?—Yes, it is, really.

658. As distinct from any enforcement or measure of discipline here. I take it the Witness would agree with that?—Yes.

659. We are all familiar with the forms that we have at the end of 12 months. I wonder if the Witness has anything in mind that would dispense with the necessity for a Member having any regard to those four separate items; and if an increase is made does he favour an increase in salary or allowance or both?—I certainly agree to an increase of salary, and from my conversation with the Inland Revenue people, of course, if the salary were going up and they had evidence that Members' expenses were above they would probably meet the situation. Of course they cannot allow more than £600 now, because that is the figure, but if the salary were going beyond that, as I understand the Inland Revenue people, they would be prepared to consider any items under those four heads that had been necessarily increased, and which the Member had to meet, and, therefore, the expenses may go from £600 to some other figure.

660. Would you not favour some method that would dispense with those four items being separate; have a payment that would eliminate those four and bring them under the general head, if you like, of allowances?—To have a fixed sum for everybody in allowances, without having to fill the form in?

661. That would cover those four items and eliminate them entirely?—If the Inland Revenue would be prepared to agree to that, I should have no objection to it.

662. The only other point is with regard to an observation made by the Witness that it is possible for a Member to be here, and take part in all the Divisions and yet his number of attendances to be considerably less than those of another Member

who may be here regularly, but unable to attend the Divisions. Is there not a danger of over-stressing that, because it is assumed amongst Members that if there are any persons who know of the possibilities of a division it is the Whips, and there are a number of instances when the Whips have informed Members that there will be no divisions, and after the Members have left the House as many as three divisions have taken place?—That is quite true.

663. So it is very difficult to lay down as a general truth that it is possible for a Member to be here and take part in divisions, but not to have such a regular attendance as the general body of Members of Parliament?—I did not lay it down as a general principle, but I have known exceptional cases where it has happened. It is true that I have always said that this is the most uncertain place in the world. You prepare yourselves for divisions and they do not happen, and then when you say: "We look as if we shall have a clean sheet to-night," divisions occur.

664. Which shows that even the Whips are not safe guides?—They cannot be. The House is in control of itself.

665. Would the Witness agree that it is generally true to assert that if you want to know anything never ask a Whip?—I would not say that.

Mr. McKinlay.

666. I want to follow up the point Mr. Daggar has made on this question of a sum paid to each Member as expenses. Before I was here I was employed at a fixed salary. My employer sent me on many occasions to Inverness, Aberdeen and Dundee. He did not ask me to pay the expenses out of my salary. He paid them. Is not the bogey here this. If you declare a sum paid to Members of Parliament to be a Parliamentary allowance, it is not a salary. If it is an allowance arising out of your duties here it is automatically not taxable?—That is true. As a matter of fact, in the old days when it was £400 it was called an allowance.

667. Why was it altered?—I do not know, I am sure.

668. Because of that difficulty?—As a matter of fact, I do not know why it was altered. When it was fixed at £400 it was called an allowance, and there was no question of Income Tax at all. It was simply said: "There is your allowance. There is no salary," and, as you say, the Inland Revenue people automatically accepted that. Then when it was increased it suddenly became a salary. I do not know why.

669. With regard to the difficulties of transport within a Member's constituency, every Member is not similarly circumstanced?—That is true.

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*Chairman.*] We can look up that point as to how it became a salary as against an allowance. The Clerk says there is a record on the matter.

*Mr. McKinlay.*

670. I am looking for a simple way out of all this fourpenny bus fare business and of fares here and there. It is a sheer impossibility for anyone to tell the truth in making a return of their expenses. Would it not be a much more convenient method if the Committee were to recommend that ~~£~~X be an allowance paid to Members for Parliamentary expenses, and whether a Member used it in taxi fares or bus fares or anything else would not really arise? I am excluding the main established transport on the railways. The salary should either be increased or left as it is and you would be subject to the normal process of Income Tax on what is actually your salary?—I think if the Committee thought fit to recommend a process of that kind it would probably meet the situation as readily as any other.

*Mr. Horabin.*

671. As I understand the Witness, he says his view is that the salary should be increased in order to enable Members to meet their necessary expenses of doing their Parliamentary work, and I would like to know whether he also feels that within that salary there should be included something to enable the Member to live?—Yes. As a matter of fact, I think it would be wrong to fix anything that would prevent a Member living in a reasonable way.

672. Why I want really to press this point is this. It seems to me that the way we are going on at the present time, the possibility of becoming a Member of Parliament is confined to very narrow sections of the community—directors, trade union officials, representations of trade organisations and men with private means. In other words, the ordinary member of the community who is earning his living in the way that the overwhelming majority of the people are earning it, if he comes into this House, will pretty well starve, and I would like to get Mr. Whiteley's view as to what he thinks should be included in that salary for reasonable living expenses?—I think a Committee of this kind could very readily assess that. They have all their own personal experience. They would keep in mind that at least, besides their expenses in regard to living in London, and the

calls that are made upon them, there ought to be a reasonable sum for a man to be able to live in ordinary decency.

*Chairman.*

673. There are two questions I would like to put to you. In the Terms of Reference the last sentence says: "and their conditions of work". I think you will agree, as Chief Whip, that the facilities for Members doing their work are not too good inside this House?—That is true.

674. The second point is that a good many Members must have approached you or your junior Whips with regard to the difficulty of getting decent accommodation at a reasonable price in London?—Yes.

675. Would you favour the establishment of a number of hostels for Members of Parliament?—Yes. I think that is one of the things which has been included in past days—that the Government itself ought to be responsible for providing housing accommodation along those lines in the shape of hostels or even hotels at a reasonable figure, so that people are decently housed when they are here. It is true that we have been living through very stressing times and lots of hotels and so on have been taken over, and the accommodation has been very limited. But I think for the future it would be well if the Government could make a suggestion along those lines, or accept a suggestion from a Committee of this kind.

*Chairman.*] Does any other Member want to ask any questions?

*Earl Winterton.*

676. It would not be fair to ask Mr. Whiteley any questions except arising out of what he has just said, because I have not been here. Arising out of what he said in reply to you a moment ago, when the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury speaks of hostel accommodation, he means, of course, that it would be self-supporting?—Yes.

677. Any charge made to Members would be sufficient to reimburse the Government for the cost of running the hostel?—Yes.

*Chairman.*

678. Does any other Member wish to ask any questions? I know the Committee would desire me to thank you for your evidence?—Thank you.

Captain the Right Hon. JAMES STUART, M.V.O., M.C. (a Member of the House),  
examined.

*Chairman.*

679. Captain Stuart, you have had a good deal of experience, particularly as Chief Whip in the Coalition Government,

and you do know a good deal of what Members think about the adequacy or otherwise of salaries and conditions of work and facilities for doing work, and

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the Committee thought they would like to have your views. Perhaps it would be convenient for you and the Committee if you were to make a statement on the various heads?—I have not prepared a statement

680. Perhaps you would make a statement based on your experience and knowledge of what used to come before you. Just to help you, the Terms of Reference are: "To consider the expenses incurred in connection with their Parliamentary and official duties by Members of this House, including Ministers whose salaries are less than £5,000 per annum, their remuneration and their conditions of work." I think you know the way in which junior Ministers are treated in respect of Income Tax, with no allowances for living in London or anything else?—If I might deal with that point, I know from experience that some of the junior Ministers, particularly I think Lords of the Treasury, who get £1,000 a year, and His Majesty's Household, have suffered very much as a result of their not being able to claim relief from taxation like ordinary Members of Parliament do for Parliamentary expenses. The result has been that in a number of cases junior Ministers have complained, and they were enabled to give up their salaries and take the Members' salary of £600 a year instead, because then they could claim expenses, and it really paid them to do so. As you may be aware, there were deputations on this subject in the past, and during the Coalition Government there was a deputation to the Chancellor on the subject, and I think that the hardship which many of the junior Ministers suffered is recognised and is a perfectly clear case. Do you wish me to say anything as to the methods of meeting such a difficulty?

681. Yes, I think you might give us the benefit of your experience, Captain Stuart?—At that time, it was suggested by a number of junior Ministers that they should be allowed to claim expenses against their ministerial salary; but there were difficulties in connection with that which I need not go into at this moment, I think. It seems to me that there are two ways in which it might be met. I am not expressing a view at all as to the right way. One way would be to allow them to claim expenses, and the other would be to say that as Members of Parliament they should be entitled to draw the salary of a Member of Parliament in addition to the ministerial salary.

682. What is your view about the adequacy, say, of the £600 a year that is paid to honourable Members now, based upon your knowledge of what transpired in the Coalition Government, and your experience in the House?—That, I think, was raised to £600 from £400 in 1937. That was done because it was felt that the

£400 was not adequate, and the ground that I can see for suggesting that there might be a rise is that I think the official cost of living index has risen 30 or 31 per cent. since 1937.

683. I think you will agree that the cost of hotel accommodation in London has gone up considerably more than that?—I am fortunately not living in a hotel. I live only in London. But I believe that. One could argue that the cost of living index was not strictly right, because it is subsidised to a considerable extent.

684. There are two points you might bring out for the benefit of the Committee. One is the question of travel. As you know, up to a short while ago Members were allowed to travel between London and their constituencies and since then it has been extended to travelling between their homes and London. What is your view about altering the present system of travel for Members of the House?—My own view (it is purely a personal view) is that this extension which I think the Chancellor announced recently, providing for travelling between London and one's home as well as Westminster and the constituency, covers any legitimate grievance. If what you are suggesting is that it might be widened to travel anywhere, then I myself would have said that that would be very difficult to control, and to avoid abuse. I would have preferred, I think (and I have, I may say, discussed this with certain Members of my own party, with leaders of the party) to make an increase in this actual allowance or salary, and allow Members to carry out their duties as they think fit, with the aid of that salary, rather than that there should be perquisites of any nature.

Mr. Horabin.

685. I would like to ask the Witness this question. The Parliamentary salary at the present moment covers the cost of the Member doing his job. I would like to ask the Witness whether he believes it should cover also the cost of the Member's living, whether his living expenses should be a part of it, or whether he thinks that Members of Parliament should be paid merely their expenses alone, with no contribution towards the cost of living?—The original £400 was given, I think, solely for expenses. Admittedly, everyone has to live, but I do not think it has ever been looked upon as quite in the nature of a salary, up to date. It is more to assist a Member in carrying out his duties properly and to enable him to deal with the additional costs of living—not the initial cost of living—but the additional costs of living away from his home in order to attend to his Parliamentary duties, or, if he lives in London, in his constituency in order to attend to his Parliamentary duties.

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[Continued.]

686. Would the Witness agree that that does prevent a very large section of the community from becoming Members of Parliament? In other words, that it is only possible to become a Member of Parliament under those conditions if you belong to very narrow groups; for instance, company directors, or if you have private means, or you are a trade union official, or represent a trade organisation, or if you are a member of the legal profession, or something of that kind?—I suppose it is the case that it might prevent certain people from becoming Members of Parliament, but if you take the case of a man standing for Parliament in his own home area, where his home is the same as his constituency, then, as I see it, the present £600 was to enable him to deal with the additional expenses in order to attend in Westminster, for which he receives free travelling, and he would be able to claim against his £600 up to a total of £600 free of tax to enable him to perform his duties. I would not have thought, looking at the House of Commons under present conditions, that it was terribly restricted in the way you suggest—not as much restricted as that.

687. The point I am trying to make is this. In the present House of Commons we all know there are quite a number of cases of people who are suffering the greatest hardship, as the result of these conditions. They had to throw up their jobs the moment they became Members, and they have had no other source of income and are suffering from the greatest hardship at the present moment. What I am trying to get from the witness is whether he feels that the old conditions should obtain, or whether something should be done to enable people of that kind to carry out their Parliamentary duties properly, without suffering very great personal hardships, which also, of course, gravely affect their families?—Certainly I think that the allowance or salary, whichever you choose to call it, should be sufficient to enable them to carry out their duties properly without suffering.

Mr. McKinlay.

688. On this question of travel, being myself a Scottish Member, my experience is that from time to time I have to go from Glasgow to Edinburgh to the various Departments. There are no travel facilities provided for that.—That is quite true. May I say I have thought of that point, my own journey being longer than yours. For that purpose one can legitimately, as I see it, in one's expenses claim an allowance from tax in respect of travelling of that nature.

689. Yes, but I am afraid if you put that as an item of constituency expenses it would require to be a specific item, based on the average number of visits you paid. What sort of reception would the Inland

Revenue people give it? It is really outwith your constituency.—Yes, but it is in connection with Parliamentary work.

690. As I understand it, the item on the form we fill in, the rebate you are permitted, is for expenses within your constituency in respect of travel, etc. Edinburgh, of course, is, strictly speaking, not within my constituency, although it is within the province of my duties as a Scottish Member.—If I may say so, I think there is a point there, because for certain purposes Edinburgh, with us, takes the place of Westminster. That is really the point, is it not? One is allowed to travel to and from Westminster. Edinburgh houses the Scottish Office with its various Departments. I would hesitate to give a ruling as to what view the Inland Revenue would take.

Mr. Lang.

691. I should like to ask Captain Stuart, in view of his experience both on the Government side and now as Opposition Whip, how much time he would think a Member of this House ought to give to his Parliamentary duties—to committees and other duties in the House?—It has really now, I would say, become a five-day week at Westminster, and except for the London and near London Members, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to do any constituency work except at weekends.

692. That would mean, would it not, that unless a Member were possessed of a private income or subsidised, he would not be able to live?—No, he would not be able to carry on a profession apart from those who do so in London or in the immediate vicinity.

Major Symonds.

693. I should like to follow up that last point to make one matter a little clearer. In view of the fact that the work of a Member is now virtually full-time, would the witness say whether he would regard the emoluments as purely an allowance against expenses or as including salary? In other words, what does he imagine is the position of the Member who has had, because of the Parliamentary duties, to give up a former occupation?—Of course, he does it with his eyes open, if I may say so, I think it is rather a matter for the Select Committee to decide. In the first case it was definitely an allowance for expenses. It is not for me to say.

Chairman.] No, I think that is our job.

Mr. Leslie.

694. Would you say whether you think the salary should remain as at present, an allowance being granted free of Income Tax to cover all the additional expenses, such as travel, apart from the railway pass, the



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secretarial allowance, postage, etc.?—I beg your pardon, but I did not quite catch the first part of your question.

695. We have had several suggestions made as to the best way of dealing with this. One is to give an increase in the salary, apart from everything else. The other is for the salary to remain as at present, but to give an allowance free of Income Tax to cover all these additional expenses, such as postage, secretarial assistance, and so forth. Which do you think would be better?—If I might express an opinion, the view which I think I may say I am authorised to express is that we feel that, if a case is made out for an increase, it should be a direct increase in the salary or allowance, whichever you choose to call it.

Mrs. Wills.

696. With regard to travel, you say you think that the present arrangement covers all grievances. You have not thought, I take it, of travel outside the country in the Colonies or Empire?—No, I have not, because in fact we are elected as Members of the Parliament in Great Britain, and I think if you gave unlimited travelling facilities all over the Empire as well as in this country to Members it would be very difficult to scrutinise and control the use that was being made of it. I can think of various reasons which may attract me to go to various parts of the British Empire, perhaps not entirely for business reasons. But, of course, in connection with Parliamentary work to any part of the Empire very regularly Members go as Members of a Parliamentary delegation. Then arrangements are made for that purpose, either by the Government or by the Empire Parliamentary Association.

Mr. Lipson.

697. Is Captain Stuart in favour of any part of the payment which is given to a Member being as of right free of Income Tax, or would he rather have the present system by which a Member receives a certain sum and certain allowances are made under certain heads?—I think, while it is more tiresome to claim under certain heads, it is, to the Exchequer or to the taxpayer who has to foot the bill, the fairest way. Just to give an example of my own, owing to the war I have lived entirely in London and nowhere else during the last few years, which has reduced my claim against the State.

Earl Winterton.

698. I have a number of questions to ask the right honourable gentleman. Would you agree (I think in fact you have stated it in reply to a previous question) that when the £400 a year was first paid, I think in the 1910 Parliament, it was paid as an allowance in aid of expenses, and that the

reason for it was largely because the character of Parliament changed very greatly in 1906? Whereas before 1906 the majority of Members had private means of their own, in the 1906 Parliament and onwards there were a number of Members who were dependent either upon their earnings or their savings for their financial existence. There were in fact, you will agree, a large number of journalists, lawyers and writers in the 1906 Parliament, and also a number of others who, as I say, had not any considerable financial resources of their own?—I think that is correct, although I was not present.

699. But debates on the subject would show that that was the principal argument urged, namely, that the character of Parliament had entirely changed. Therefore, it would not, in your opinion, be wholly true to say that there has been this tremendous change in the last few years. The change really occurred in the 1906 Parliament, and that was the reason for the original proposal by the then Liberal Government?—I agree that, yes.

700. If a Member were to receive, as I think was suggested in the question of one honourable Member, a salary in the sense of a payment for his full-time services, would it not obviously involve, in order to avoid an invidious comparison with other servants of the State, conditions being laid down? That is to say, if a Member of Parliament, although he received a full-time salary, whatever it might be, of £1,000, £1,500 or £2,000 a year, were allowed to be absent from the House when he liked, Civil Servants would naturally say: "I receive a salary and I am not allowed to be absent, but Parliament has now laid down that a Member is entitled to receive and does receive a salary"?—I think there is that difficulty.

700A. It is in fact within your knowledge, no doubt, that in at least one of the Dominion Parliaments—and I think in others—there is an arrangement made by which a Member does not draw the full salary if he is absent from his duties in the House?—Yes.

Mr. Leslie.] That applies in all three.

Earl Winterton.

701. Again, following up the suggestion made by Mr. Horabin, if a Member did receive a salary, if this Committee so recommended to the House, would not the position of honourable Members who were journalists, lawyers and others be very difficult, because there, again, it would be pointed out that a Civil Servant cannot be a practising barrister or solicitor, and he is allowed to write under Civil Service rules only to a very limited extent?—I think various difficulties would arise.

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702. It would in fact mean, would it not, that no lawyer, journalist or company director, or whatever you like, could possibly be a Member of the House and fulfil his duties as a full-time salaried Member of Parliament, and do his work outside?—Depending on the conditions.

703. It might mean, if I may use a phrase which I hope will not be thought offensive, that there would grow up in this country what some of us are accused of being already—that is a type of purely professional politician?—There is that danger.

704. Also if a Member received a full-time salary and was expected to be a full-time worker during the five days he was in Parliament, again, to avoid invidious comparisons with other persons in His Majesty's service drawing salaries and wages such as Civil Servants, it would be necessary to take into account, in assessing that salary, the advantages which Members enjoy in the shape of amenities? For example, it is no doubt your experience of Government offices that Civil Servants do not receive an issue of free notepaper for their private correspondence—even though they may sometimes use official notepaper for the purpose—or a free issue of newspapers, or, except in comparatively rare instances, where there are canteens, do they receive food at what is practically cost price. All those matters, in the interests of Parliament and also in fairness to the public, would have to be taken into account?—Yes, I agree.

705. The next point I wanted to ask you about is this. I think you said that the official cost of living figure between September 2nd, 1939, and to-day has gone up something like 31 per cent.?—That is what I said. I believe that is correct.

706. The cost of living figures, of course, include not merely food, but rent and other accommodation? I think that is so, Mr. Chairman. They include the general cost of living?—I forget for the moment what they do include.

707. If I may interpolate a point, Mr. Chairman, possibly the Clerk would obtain information for us on this subject. I think that the salaries and wages have gone up slightly, but only slightly, more than 31 per cent.; I think it is a few points above. Perhaps we could have those figures. The actual increase from £400 to £600 was made in the year 1937. So that assuming (and of course it would be most improper (and suggest what would be the recommendation of the Committee) that the Committee did have regard to the increase in the cost of living, and also to the fact that there had been an increase in salaries and allowances, the additional sum to be paid (assuming that were so) would be in the neighbourhood of £900 to £1,000 a year. That would mean a 33½ per cent. increase—the total sum. That would mean, in the case of £900 a year 33½ per cent. and slightly more if it were £1,000?—33½ per cent. on £600 is £200.

Earl Winterton.] I beg your pardon. £800 to £900.

Mr. Lipson.] £900 would be 50 per cent.

Colonel Dodds-Parker.

708. May I ask if you have any idea to what extent the correspondence has increased since, say, 1937?—I can speak only from personal experience. I think certainly it has increased. I think it should also be borne in mind—and senior Members would bear me out—that at the end of the last war there was a very great increase. It is due to some extent—not entirely—to the dislocation of normal life, and I personally hope that it will not go on as severely as it is at the moment. I hope it will settle down again some day, although I think the tendency has certainly been towards an increase.

Chairman.

709. I think you deserve our thanks, if I may say so, Captain Stuart?—Thank you. I hope I have done what is required of me not too inadequately.

(Adjourned till tomorrow at 11 a.m.)

WEDNESDAY, 13TH FEBRUARY, 1946.

Members present:

MR. TOM SMITH (*Chairman*).

Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.  
Mr. Cobb.  
Mr. Daggar.  
Mr. Haydn Davies.  
Colonel Dodds-Parker.  
Mr. Horabin.  
Mr. Lang.  
Mr. Leslie.

Mr. Lipson.  
Mr. McKinlay.  
Major Ramsay.  
Captain Charles Smith.  
Major Symonds.  
Mrs. Wills.  
Earl Winterton.

Captain GEOFFREY H. C. BING, Mr. S. P. VIANT and Mr. J. BINNS  
(Members of the House), examined.

*Chairman.*

710. Captain Bing, you were good enough, on behalf of the Home Counties Group of Labour Members, to submit for the Committee's consideration a memorandum of your views.\* I do not know whether you would like to amplify that memorandum, or comment upon it or emphasise it, or make a statement in your own way on the different points?—(Captain *Bing*.) Perhaps it would be worth while saying a word or two about the group, because the views on expenses probably vary with the area one comes from and various other factors. First of all, this group is composed of all the Labour Members in Kent, Surrey, Hertfordshire, Middlesex and Essex. Generally speaking, I think it is fair to say that the size of the constituencies is large. We have one or two small constituencies, but the mean size would be somewhere in the neighbourhood, I should think, of 65,000 electors. The average size is somewhere about a 57,000 electorate, as compared with the average size of London constituencies of, I think I am right in saying, 32,000. Most of the Members of the group are new Members. Of the total of 53 in the group, 40 are new Members; of the remaining 13 only eight were in the last Parliament. What we did was, first of all, to submit a draft memorandum together with a questionnaire. After that we had a discussion on the basis of the memorandum, and altered it, and finally we submitted this document which is before the Committee. Mr. Viant, who has been in the House since 1923, Mr. Binns of Gillingham and myself, who am a new Member, came along just to deal with any points which you thought might not be clear in it. In the discussions we had I think the really fundamental point we came down to was the impracticability of at any rate the Members of our group obtaining any satisfactory part-time employment. That, I think, is reflected in two ways. First of all, obviously, you cannot increase your salary by part-time work, but, secondly—and I think this is equally important—if you have a part-time job it does provide you with quite con-

siderable secretarial assistance. You have an office where you can put your papers; you have probably a secretary whom you can employ on your work. There is in that respect a point which I think I ought to mention here, which is not in the memorandum, but which did come up in the discussion at the group, and that is this, that it was very strongly felt that as things stood at the moment there was a grave danger of Members becoming professional politicians in a most undesirable sense. In order to carry out their duties they might have to seek some outside employment, and that outside employment might be something which was not really consistent with their dignity as Members of the House or really consistent with their political obligations. There is no doubt that it is possible for people to become political advisers and to hold posts of that sort to organisations, but we felt that it was most undesirable that any Member should be placed in a position in which he was tempted to undertake such employment. In regard to that I was reminded by Mr. Viant that when the increase of salaries was discussed Mr. Baldwin, in introducing the motion, did say something very much of the same sort—that the importance of the increase of the salary was to make certain that the Member was independent of outside influences. If you would be good enough to look at paragraph 5 of the memorandum, I might say a word about how we approached the problem. We thought the simplest way was, first of all, to try to get an idea of what we thought were the duties of Members as Members, quite apart from their duties as politicians, and then to try to find some sum which we thought would enable them to carry out those duties and provide facilities. We sent out a questionnaire to try to get the general views of the group, and if you will look at paragraph 5, at the various heads, together with the appendix, you will see, roughly speaking, what the questions are. On the first point, point A, the question of secretarial assistance, the general view of the group was that the sum needed was somewhere in the neighbourhood of £250, and that, we reckoned, represented between a half and two-thirds time of a secretary.

\* See Appendix IX.

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[Continued.]

We did get some figures out, but I will not burden you with them at the moment; perhaps you would like to deal with them later on. Secondly, on the question of telephones, telegrams and postage, the amounts varied very much. Of course, they vary in proportion to the size of Members' constituencies. We have one constituency, for example, Silvertown, in our group, which has only 15,000 electors. In a case like that the postage bill is much less than, say, at Watford, where there are 95,000 electors. The general figure we fixed on for postage is about £100. That seemed to be the general experience of Members.

711. Would that include telephones?—That includes telephones and telegrams. Then with regard to office accommodation, I might say that a point which was made very strongly was the need for somewhere to store papers, somewhere to keep files and somewhere where it was possible, if you had a secretary, for her to be reached on the telephone.

712. That would be somewhere near to Westminster rather than in the constituency?—Either one or the other, depending on the distance between the constituency and here. Then, visiting the constituency: here you will see the figures given us in answer to our questionnaire. The highest figure was £1,000, but that was one exceptional answer. The sums varied very much. The lowest was £6. Again, that was an exceptional answer. The general figure seemed to be around £100. Then, attendance at the House of Commons: here the things we considered were, roughly speaking, that a Member is put to extra expense as compared with an ordinary job, in that he has to take an evening meal here. These items may seem small in themselves, but if you consider that the House sits for, shall we say, 200 days or so, 2s. for an evening meal in itself amounts to some £20 over and above what anybody would pay if they were taking their meal in the normal course at home. Members of our group either live at home in their constituencies, in which case, if the House sits late they are not able to get back home and are involved in extra expenses of various sorts for staying here, or else, in order to make certain that they get back home on every occasion, they have to take some flat or lodging near to the House, and are therefore involved in extra expenses of that sort. We came to the conclusion that £100 per annum was the minimum that we could fix for that purpose. There is just one point perhaps I should mention in regard to that, which I think particularly affects us. Our area is sufficiently close for various people to come and see us. If I could give you one example, I have had certain questions arising in regard to food in my constituency, and the local food officer has been up once or twice to see me in the evenings after

he has closed his food office. It is an hour's journey for him to come here. He has then to spend perhaps 1½ hours in discussion with me, and then he has one hour's journey to return. Obviously, on those occasions one must offer him some refreshment. One cannot say, in those circumstances, that he could go out and seek something. Those items, while small, do involve one in a certain very definite expense. Then you will see that we have mentioned travel for attending to matters as a Member outside the constituency. While we consider that to be a legitimate expense, we have not made in our estimate of £600 for expenses—the global total—any estimate in regard to that; nor, as you will see if you look over the page, have we made any estimate in regard to the other expenses. The point which was made very strongly at the group was the great importance of treating these expenses as expenses, and, to our minds, making certain that there was the distinction drawn which is normally drawn in any business between what is money which, while it passes through the Member's hands, is really devoted to carrying out the duties of his office and money which is paid to him as remuneration, honorarium, or something of that sort. Then we deal in paragraph 7 with limited facilities in kind; I think there is nothing I need say there. In paragraph 8 we mention the view that was taken at the group that perhaps the Committee might consider questions quite apart from remuneration—facilities for Members which do not depend on money at all, but which would enable them to carry out their work in a more efficient and easier manner. Then in paragraph 9 we deal with Members' remuneration. I think I have explained the principles on which we have worked there. In paragraph 10 we produce two suggestions. The first is that there should be some contributory pension scheme, which should not be like the present scheme, dependent on means, but should be a national scheme, a special scheme; it should be a definite superannuation scheme. Various Members have different sorts of difficulties. A teacher who is already in a scheme comes into the House and has to leave that scheme. If he returns subsequently to teaching if there were a Government scheme which would fit in with the other one, he would not lose the value of his benefits over that period. Then, Members retiring from the House we thought were entitled to a pension. Another suggestion is that we thought it very desirable for it to be considered whether it was possible to pay a Member who was defeated his salary for a certain period of time. In our view it does give a Member a greater independence if immediately on a dissolution he is not at once in such a position that he has no funds at all the next day. Of course it is particularly in our group a matter of some importance—

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[Continued.]

Earl *Winterton*.] May I suggest it is out of order? Under our terms of reference we are concerned only with the salaries of Members of Parliament. Therefore, if a Member ceases to be a Member of the House I suggest the consideration of his difficulties is outside the scope of this Committee.

*Chairman*.] I was going to let Captain Bing round off his sentence and then point out that there is a pension scheme which is already in existence, which is outside the terms of our reference altogether, and is a matter which would have to be dealt with elsewhere. I wanted to be sure how far he was going before I pulled him up; I did not want to be discourteous. You will have to leave that side of it, Captain Bing. What happens to a man after he is defeated is not our business as a Select Committee.

Earl *Winterton*.] With respect, it is outside our terms of reference, I submit.

*Chairman*.] Yes, there is no doubt about it.

Earl *Winterton*.] Therefore it is out of order to discuss it.

*Chairman*.

713. Yes. Leave it there. Perhaps you might comment on paragraph (d) on page 2, which I think is very interesting. I should like to ascertain what you have in mind about a Member of Parliament informing himself on matters before Parliament. You go on to make a suggestion about Members informing themselves about Colonial and Dominion affairs, and you make suggestions with regard to travel. I think you might like to amplify that a little?—We found it difficult, when coming to work out any actual expenses, to suggest that it was proper to allow a Member a definite sum for foreign travel each year, because quite clearly it may depend on the political situation at the moment whether it is necessary, or a Member feels it is necessary, for him to go abroad; but what we felt was that the global total which was paid by way of expenses and by way of salary should be sufficient to enable a Member in certain circumstances to make a visit abroad, and the view was very strongly expressed that very definite duties did devolve on Members of Parliament, particularly in regard to areas which have no direct representation in the House, but which are under the control of the House, to inform themselves of conditions there.

714. What have you in mind about any control of that? Would you leave it to each Member to decide whether he wanted to go to, say, Ceylon, or somewhere else?—We thought there were difficulties in Government-sponsored trips in certain circumstances—that if a Member is carried at Government expense there must be some choice by the Government or by somebody as to whom to select, and that possibly, quite wrongly, the people he sees there

might feel, if his expenses were met by this Government or by the foreign Government, or, indeed, by some foreign organisation, that his views might be biased by the party that pays his fare.

*Chairman*.

715. That is, of course, a matter of opinion?—Yes, it is a matter of opinion, but that was the view which was expressed.

715A. Would you care to make any comment at all on the difficulties you have experienced as Members in this area with regard to travel and travel facilities? You do mention it in your memorandum?—The question which we have taken up is a small one, but of some practical importance—that, generally speaking, Members of our group have comparatively long journeys to make, involving fares of 5s. and 6s., but they very often live at their homes, so they make these journeys each night. Quite often their homes are in their constituencies. While the ordinary travel vouchers are available it involves a great deal of time and trouble filling in the vouchers, and when you present them at the booking-office you have a hold-up, and also a hold-up when people are perhaps engaged on more important things if you are bothering Mr. Buchanan for a 2s. 6d. fare to somewhere or other. We were very much in favour of season tickets being issued for Members who are living at their homes, and who have to pass backwards and forwards each day to and from the House. The other question which was raised, which was not contained in the memorandum but which we did discuss, was whether, in the same way as County Councils pay a mileage rate to their members for travel, Members of Parliament who are using their own cars and who require their cars in their constituencies, and who travel backwards and forwards in their cars, might be paid some mileage rate in the event of their not using the rail travel facilities.

716. I do not know whether the other Members who are with you would care to make any comments before we ask questions?—(Mr. *Viani*.) I do not think I have anything to add. If there are any questions put I will endeavour to answer them.

717. Does the same apply to you, Mr. Binns?—(Mr. *Binns*.) Yes.

*Major Ramsay*.

718. I understood the witness to say that in his opinion for a Member to take employment outside this House was undesirable, because the work might not be consistent with the dignity of a Member of Parliament. In saying this I take it he means that a Member of Parliament should consider his work in this House a full-time employment. Does the Witness realise what a very fundamental change this view would bring about? Does he realise that it would

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[Continued.]

bring a Member of Parliament on to the same level as a Civil Servant, and would he care to comment any further on that subject?—(Captain *Bing*.) Yes, if I may. First of all, what we considered was that, whether it was desirable or not, it was certainly, within our group, impracticable in the great majority of cases for people to obtain part-time employment, however much they wished to do so. Many people have followed trades which are quite incompatible with working part-time. Though it does not apply to my group, if I may say so, there is no coal mine where you can work half-time in the vicinity of the House; but that is a trade that a great number of Members of this House follow normally. It goes even further than that. While, for example, if you are a medical specialist it may well be possible for you to follow your profession in the morning and have your consultations then, if you are a general practitioner somebody cannot postpone a confinement or something of that sort in order to fit in with the time of the House. A barrister practising in London may combine his practice with attending the House, but a country solicitor who is running his own practice cannot. Added to which we have in our group a high proportion of people who have come out of the Services, many of whom have had no employment before at all in civil life. It is impossible for them to set out to obtain any job other than one which very often might be unsatisfactory. I do not want, if I give an example, to appear to be making an attack, but shall we say there is some organisation like the Greyhound Racing Association, or something of that sort, which feels that every now and then, if some Question were put down dealing with greyhound problems, it would be desirable and they might well make an offer to a Member to be their political adviser for a certain sum.

*Chairman*.] I think what Major Ramsay was trying to bring out was whether you meant that being a Member of Parliament should be a full-time job. I do not think there is any need to give too many illustrations of that kind.

Major *Ramsay*.

719. Yes, that really was the point I wanted to bring out. I wondered if the Witness realised what a very fundamental change such an outlook would bring about with regard to the nature of the work of a Member of Parliament and the status of a Member of Parliament?—Perhaps I may just say that, irrespective of whether it is a good thing or not, the view we held—we may be mistaken about it—was that in practice the work was such that one had to devote one's full time to it, whether one thought that was desirable for a Member of Parliament to do or not.

Earl *Winterton*.

720. Arising out of that, may I ask a question which will save asking about this again. I am not quite clear whether the Witness means that in the event of his proposal being accepted there would be some prohibition upon Members accepting outside employment?—No. We do not intend to prohibit Members from accepting outside employment. We do want to put Members who have an opportunity of outside employment and those who have not on an equality in dealing with their constituencies and dealing with their Parliamentary problems.

*Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite*.] I take it, Mr. Chairman, you have ruled that questions arising out of the suggestion in paragraph 10 are out of order?

*Chairman*.] Yes. I must keep to that ruling.

*Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite*.

721. May I ask a further question, arising out of what the Witness has just said with regard to full-time employment? Would he agree that the gentlemen he represents here, who are here for the first time, the new Members, were well aware of the emoluments and conditions of work when they were adopted as candidates, and, therefore, this is no sudden crisis which has descended upon them? They stood for Parliament with their eyes open, realising what the rates of pay and conditions were?—Yes. I think our group would take the view that it was undesirable that the choice of any political body should be limited to those people who were in fact able to find out of their own pockets a sum to subsidise their employment.

722. These gentlemen knew the facts before they stood?—(Mr. *Binns*.) Could I intervene there by saying that we did not really know all the facts, because the facts, as they are now known to this Parliament, are quite different from the facts as they were known to any previous Parliament of which I have any knowledge. By that I mean that the number of hours one has to spend on various Committees of the House is very much greater than most of us expected would be the case. Moreover, the amount of correspondence that we have to deal with is very much greater than we expected and much greater, I believe—many times greater—than has previously been customary. Furthermore, the amount of money one has to spend, not upon plain entertaining, but upon hospitality in relation to one's business dealings concerning the House is much greater than was anticipated by those of us whose acquaintance with Parliament necessarily was not as close as it might have been.

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[Continued.]

Earl Winterton.

723. I would like to draw the Witness's attention to paragraph (c) on page 2, which refers to expenses for entertainment. Is the Witness aware that until the 1906 Parliament there were practically no facilities for entertaining Members' guests in the House? It was only in that year that what was then known as the Harcourt Room—the Strangers' Dining Room—was instituted?—(Captain Bing.) Perhaps I may say—

724. Would you mind answering the question? I am merely asking you whether you were aware that until the 1906 Parliament there were no facilities for entertaining Members' guests in the House of Commons?—No, I was not aware of that, but—

725. May I ask you if you are aware that it was only in recent years that the idea that Members should have reasonable facilities, if they so desired, to entertain "strangers," as they are technically termed, has grown up?—Yes. If I may just comment on that—

Earl Winterton.] I should prefer an answer to my question, if I may be allowed to say so. I am asking the Witness a question.

Chairman.] Yes.

Earl Winterton.

726. If my question is not clear perhaps I may put it in a more succinct form. Are you aware that it is only in recent years that facilities have existed for Members to give strangers refreshments?—Yes.

727. Is it your contention in this paragraph (c) that an obligation rests upon Members of Parliament to entertain their constituents at the House of Commons?—No. The view we took was this, that in the present difficult circumstances whether it is a good thing or not, if somebody comes to see you from your constituency on some official business, or, indeed, a constituent who has travelled a long way, the circumstances are such that whether it is desirable or not you have in fact to incur these expenses. It may be undesirable that Members should do so, and it may indeed be improper that one should consider any payment in connection with it, but it is in fact an expense that does fall on Members.

728. Might I ask the Witness to explain a little more fully what he means. Does he mean that owing to the existing food shortage a Member feels, from, shall we say, humanitarian motives, that he has to give a cup of tea or a drink to a constituent who calls to see him?—If I might take again the actual case I quoted before: on two occasions I have discussed with the local food officer the food situation in my own constituency. His office closes at

6 o'clock. He has then an hour's journey from Hornchurch to come up here. He and I talk for an hour or so, and he has an hour's journey back. In those circumstances I feel there is a certain obligation to offer him something to eat. In other circumstances, perhaps, when restaurants were more available, he could say: "I will slip out to Lyons across the road and get something to eat and I will come back." In the present circumstances that is in fact impossible.

729. In fact the answer to my question is yes, that it is because of the present food shortage that you feel that a special obligation is placed upon Members of Parliament?—Both shortage of good and shortage of time.

730. You do not suggest that would be a permanent state of affairs, or that it would be desirable that this Committee should suggest, in its recommendations, that any obligation rests upon Members of Parliament to entertain their constituents at the House, otherwise there might be a most dangerous impression created?—I quite agree. If I may say so, I am indebted to you for making the point, because we did not intend to suggest that it was a proper obligation on Members that they should entertain their constituents.

Mr. Lipson.

731. I have two questions, one arising out of the point raised with regard to Members' full-time employment. Is it the Witnesses' view that the remuneration which a Member of Parliament receives should be such that it ought not to be financially necessary for him to seek any other kind of employment?—Yes.

732. That is your view?—Yes.

733. The other question is this. Is it the view of your group that the allowance for what you have described as necessary expenses (we will leave out the controversial one), such as secretarial assistance, postage, and so on, should be a global sum to a Member, free of Income Tax, and that it should not be necessary for a Member to make any return to the Inland Revenue authorities whether he has actually spent up to that sum?—Well, we thought that was really a matter, if I may say so with respect, for your Committee, and it is not really proper for us to make suggestions in such detail. Our general view was that certain expenses certainly were not really susceptible to acute accounting, but that possibly you might take the view that other expenses were. If I might just express the sense of the meeting, they were on the whole in favour of the sum being available for expenses without inquiry.

734. And free of Income Tax?—Treated as expenses, and free of Income Tax.

Chairman.] Yes, I think the memorandum implies that.

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[Continued.]

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

735. Following upon that, the global figure you suggest which would cover all those expenses is £600?—That was the minimum figure.

736. The minimum expenses figure?—Yes.

737. That would be given on top of remuneration?—Yes.

738. In paragraph 9 on page 4 you say that the remuneration should be sufficient to enable the Member—and so on?—Yes.

739. Did your Committee or your Group have in mind any figure of what they would regard as adequate remuneration?—We had in mind the present figure of £600, which we thought was at any rate sufficient to enable a Member to live reasonably. We thought it was not proper really to make comparisons with other professions where the remuneration paid is much higher but where obviously different conditions obtain. So we thought that we should only suggest that a sum is paid which is sufficient to enable a Member to live reasonably in the circumstances.

740. So summing up your proposals, they are, on a cash basis, £600 salary and £600 expenses?—Yes.

741. That is roughly what you suggest?—Yes.

742. There is one other point. In paragraph 7 (b) you are suggesting, I take it from the memorandum, that Members should be given free travel on all long distance transport except air. Could I ask you what you mean by "all long distance transport excluding air." What is left, apart from buses?—We do not want to be in the position of saying that every Member should have a pass which enabled him to travel on any municipal tram free of charge, but may I say, in answer to your question, that we are not putting that forward as a positive proposal. What we are suggesting to the Committee is that possibly it might be worth while inquiring

what the extra cost would be. If the extra cost to the State of giving a free pass were very great, then there would be factors weighing against it.

743. I was anxious to find out what was in your mind. Do you mean a badge one carries in the pocket for free travel on the railways or free travel for special journeys?—Our view was that there should be free travel on long distance railways, but not free travel on local railways such as the tube railways and railways of that description.

744. Then you go on to make a very interesting suggestion that the present Parliamentary warrants should be made available on London Transport. I take it that means the tubes, buses, Green Line coaches and everything in London Transport?—That is in place of the vouchers, and that deals, of course, particularly with Members of this group who have to travel by these means.

745. Exactly?—A Member of this group can, perhaps, go to the House more quickly on a bus, but he has, in that case, to pay his fare, while, if he takes an extra hour going by tube, he can obtain his fare on a voucher.

*Chairman*.

746. The point being that it is between his home and Westminster?—Yes.

747. If he jumped on a bus and went to Hammersmith that would be his own liability?—Yes, exactly.

Mr. *Haydn Davies*.

748. So that you are in favour of a season ticket for use within the London Transport area on any form of London Transport services?—As an alternative, if it is impossible to grant free travel.

*Chairman*. I think, Captain Bing and your two colleagues, you are entitled to our thanks.

Mr. W. S. DUTHIE (a Member of the House), examined.

*Chairman*.

749. Mr. Duthie, you indicated your willingness to come and give evidence before this Select Committee. You did not indicate clearly the point you wished to put before us. I think you do know the terms of reference of this Committee. Our terms of reference cover Members' expenses, travel, conditions of work, and so on. Perhaps it would be for the convenience both of yourself and of the Committee if you made a statement in your own way?—These are entirely my own personal views. In my opinion this is not the time for considering the raising of Members' salaries. The matter might be considered a year hence. If any consideration is going to be

given to this by Members of the House of Commons during this Parliament I think at least a year should elapse in the interests of good taste, if nothing else.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite*.] On a point of order, the House having appointed the Select Committee, are these observations in order?

*Chairman*.] I take it that Mr. Duthie was rather making them as an introduction to what he was going to say. I did not want to pull him up too abruptly. He will appreciate the House has set up a Select Committee for the definite purpose of considering various matters. You must take it for granted that we are here for that purpose. If you were discussing in the



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Mr. W. S. DUTHIE.

[Continued.]

House whether the Select Committee should be set up or not, then perhaps your point would be more relevant than it is here.

Mr. Daggar.] It means that the question of taste is not involved at all.

*Chairman.*

750. Yes. I think Mr. Duthie will appreciate that restriction?—I agree the Committee has been set up, and I stand corrected. In my view the Committee should give some thought, before considering the emoluments of Members of Parliament, to the condition of public servants outside, to such people as Ministers of the Gospel, and certain employees of local authorities.

751. I am sorry, but I am afraid we have no power, under our terms of reference, to consider that?—Well, at all events, when we took on this job as Members of Parliament we all knew what we were letting ourselves in for, and in my view it is the duty of Members of Parliament to think of the needs of the electorate before thinking of themselves. If I may make an observation—I do not know whether I am in order or not—I would say that it is within the power of every constituency in the country to provide for its Member of Parliament if the Member of Parliament requires any financial provision outside the existing salary. I may mention that the price of one visit to the pictures on the part of the electors who return a Member to the House of Commons could remove from him all financial worry, and, I venture to say, provide the wherewithal to obtain good secretarial assistance and even run a car. I would suggest that in the case of a constituency that was really up against it, then some consideration might be given to the question of the provision from a fund of a grant in aid, where the help of the constituency fell short. I feel very strongly that now is not the time at all events to recommend an increase in Members' salaries.

752. Would you regard the present payment to Members of Parliament of £600, less the contribution for pension purposes, as being an adequate figure in these days to enable them to carry out efficiently and conscientiously their duties?—Most assuredly not, but we all knew what we were letting ourselves in for before we came here. It is not news to us. We should have known.

753. So while admitting that the £600 may not be adequate, your point at the moment is that it is not expedient to alter that figure?—I do not think it is expedient to alter that figure. I will accept the word "expedient." That is my view.

754. Your suggestion that the resources of a man with little of this world's goods and with big family responsibilities could be made up from his constituency is rather unusual, to put it no higher than that?

—I think you will agree that it is within the power of any constituency to make it possible for any individual, irrespective of his financial status, to come into the House of Commons.

*Chairman.*] Some Members may care to ask you a question or two, but they must be within the limits of what is in order.

*Mr. McKinlay.*

755. I think you said that anybody who stood for Parliament knew, before they stood, what they were letting themselves in for. You said that?—Yes.

756. Were you aware of it?—Yes.

757. Have you discovered, since you became a Member of Parliament, that, unless you have private resources, it is impossible for you, on £600 a year, to meet your commitments and expenditure arising out of your office, and to live both in Banff and London?—I knew that before.

758. Did you know before you came here that if you had to travel from Banff to the Scottish Office in Edinburgh on constituency business there was the possibility that, before you could do so, a public subscription would have to be taken to clear your expenses?—In accepting the invitation of my Unionist Association in Banffshire I was already aware that I was able to make that provision myself.

759. If you were not in possession of other resources, could you live and function as a Member of Parliament on the emoluments attached to the office?—Definitely not.

760. Would you suggest that if everybody were aware of what they were letting themselves in for, the only people who could have come to a decision to accept the responsibility of citizenship by becoming Members of Parliament were the people who had other resources?—I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the answer to that question is that when a candidate or candidates come forward before an election, the selective body, backed by the wider committee that created the selective body, should consider all these financial matters with the candidate or candidates at the time the selection is made.

761. You are missing the point I want to make. To take your Banff Unionist Association, if they had two men of outstanding merit, one of whom was yourself and the other someone who possibly had a greater knowledge of the wider sphere of political implications but was not in the fortunate position you were in of having other resources, do I take it that it would be a free choice of the Association if they chose the man who was taking the road to the workhouse?—It is curious that you should have raised that point about Banffshire, because we have a precedent. There was a working-man Conservative Member of

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Parliament who represented the Division and received a very substantial amount from the Unionist Association.

762. I happen to have known that working-man Member of Parliament. The point we are trying to satisfy ourselves on is that the remuneration paid to a Member of Parliament is such that it leaves constituencies with a free choice and does not impose a disability on brilliant men and women because they have not financial resources of their own?—I still submit that the answer to that is to be found in the constituency itself.

763. I am afraid the implications of a Member of Parliament go far beyond the geographical bounds of his own constituency. I will put it in another way. I will quote my own constituency. I represent the County of Dumbarton. Do you think, if the Farmers' Union branch in my constituency asked me to go to Edinburgh with them on a question affecting agriculture, that I ought to be mulcted for 10s. 6d. railway fare and the cost of a mid-day meal for visiting a Government office?—I would at once agree that that expense should be met.

764. By whom?—It should be an expense devolving upon the House of Commons.

*Chairman.*

765. Through the Scottish Office?—Through the Scottish Office. It is not a question of expenses that I am worrying about. It is a question of salary.

*Mr. McKinlay.*

766. Might I put it to the Witness that the purpose of this Select Committee is to determine whether the salary is in reality a salary or whether it is a grant in aid to cover expenses arising out of one's work as a Member of Parliament?—It is sufficient to call it a salary, is it not?

767. I am not so much concerned with what it is called, but it brings us back to the original point. If it is called a salary, and the State makes calls upon a man's time to such an extent that he has to devote almost his whole time to his Parliamentary duties, which precludes him supplementing his income, you would still believe that that should be imposed on anybody in any constituency throughout the country?—If any candidate felt so strongly as that I would suggest it is a matter which should have been at least mentioned to the electorate, and they should have had the electorate's mandate or the electorate's decision on a matter of that sort.

768. Let me put it in this other way. Supposing I were to say that as far as I personally am concerned it is immaterial to me whether there is an increase in the emoluments or not, and as far as you are

personally concerned it is immaterial, are you still of the view that a man who accepts nomination for public office should be placed under the handicap that, because he has no financial resources at all, he should not accept nomination?—I do not think that cuts into my argument at all. I say that if any body is empowered to invite anyone to become a candidate, that body should at least know the candidate's circumstances, and I suggest to you that it is within the power of that body, as representative of a political organisation within a constituency, to make it possible for any individual, irrespective of his circumstances, to come into the House of Commons.

769. Let us assume for a moment that he is not associated with a political body. Could I put the case of the honourable Member who represents Cheltenham, who is an Independent in this House, and who is not sponsored by any political organisation? There are any number of aspirants who desire to serve their country who are not associated with a political organisation. Do I understand that a prerequisite to becoming a candidate for membership of this House is that one must become attached to a political organisation?—My interrogator is mentioning an extreme case which, I grant you, I have not given a great deal of thought to; but it does not in any way set aside my main contention that this is not the time for increasing Members' salaries.

*Mr. Daggart.*

770. I would like to know if the Witness still adheres to his previous statement that it is incumbent upon a prospective candidate to have some idea as to the conditions that exist in the House of Commons? Do I gather from that that a candidate should be expected to know the number of letters, which amount to hundreds per week, and also the high cost of living in a place like London? Does he still adhere to the view that they should have known or should have been familiar with those facts before?—It would appear to be only commonsense that a candidate would at least know about the living conditions in London that he is likely to meet.

771. And the number of letters he is likely to receive?—I am informed that the mail in this Parliament is very much heavier than in former Parliaments. That is perhaps an unknown factor.

772. If that is true—and I am not contesting the point with the Witness—his argument does not apply to all Members. He is probably aware that Members had an increase some years ago, but if they realise now that an increase is necessary, does that mean that they ought to resign rather than press for the increase in the amount of payments made to Members? In other words, does he agree that because we received an increase in our salaries of £200

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quite recently without a decision by the electorate, we should refund that money to the Treasury?—No. We have a *status quo* here and we accept that as the standard of emolument. I think it is generally accepted by the public at large as the standard.

773. If we are justified in being in receipt of that additional £200 which we had not as the result of any decision by the electorate, what is wrong in the principle that we should still ask for a further increase, in view of the change in the circumstances of the older Members of the House?—Because if I had been taking on a job where I was going to increase my own salary, I would at least have consulted the electorate beforehand. That is my own view.

774. That is not the point I am putting. What I am saying is that we receive, and the Witness is also in receipt of, an additional £200. It is paid to him without any regard to the decision of the electorate, and if it is wrong in principle to press for a further increase upon the same grounds, and he does not favour that, ought he not to appreciate the need for being consistent and volunteer to return the £200 which he is now receiving? That is the point I want to put?—I think that point is irrelevant. At least I was not a Member of Parliament at that time. When I was invited to contest the constituency which I have the honour to represent here I knew that the emolument of a Member was £600 and that was the standard at which I accepted nomination. What I might have done if the salary had been £400 is beside the point entirely. I accepted nomination at £600.

775. I want to raise the question of this grant in aid. Would not the Witness reconsider that suggestion and agree that it should be relief in kind?—It is a matter of terminology. You can call it what you like. It means the same.

[Mr. Leslie.] There would be a means test, of course.

Mr. Lang.

776. I would like to ask the Witness one or two questions, because his evidence impresses me very much as a most definite point of view. It is very quietly given but it is something which we may hear a great deal of presently, so I should like to know exactly where we are. I understand that the Witness has no objection to increased salaries as such, but feels that the increase ought not to be recommended or carried out without specific consultation with the electorate?—That is substantially my view.

777. And that in the meantime Members who come here and are not able to live upon such receipts as are now awarded should be assisted either by their constituents, knowing the case, or by private means? Am I right in assuming that?—Yes, with the third provision, that, in the event of a man being unable to meet his

necessary outgoings from his own pocket, and his constituency being a poor one and unable to supply the wherewithal, in circumstances of that kind it should be possible for that man to obtain a grant in aid.

778. Would the Witness agree with me that the receipt of financial assistance from his constituency might be open to the gravest of abuses—that there are all kinds of bodies, industries, and so on, in a constituency who might pay one and would expect certain services for payment given?—Surely that condition exists today? Every Member of Parliament here surely could come under the same stigma today, that there are outside bodies, no doubt, that would like, in other words, to corrupt him somewhat, and he must withstand that. Surely that is a matter of personal probity.

779. That is exactly the point I am putting to the Witness, with great respect. That is why some of us have no outside assistance at all. What I am asking him is whether it would not be likely that if some of his constituents were to augment his salary, they would require a *quid pro quo*? I must press this because it has been suggested that cups of tea given to constituents might set up a dangerous precedent, but pounds, shillings and pence given by constituents to Members, surely, the Witness would think might set up a much more dangerous precedent? I am putting that to the Witness because I take his evidence very seriously?—There is always that chance of malpractice arising. On the other hand, I have a profound belief in personal rectitude, and I think that is a danger which there is a tendency to over-emphasise.

Captain Charles Smith.

780. There are a great number of questions I should like to ask the Witness, but I will try to confine myself to one or two. I understand his general point of view to be that the constituency should make itself responsible, in cases of need, for the maintenance of the Member of Parliament, and he quoted a most interesting example from his own constituency of a previous Member of Parliament. Am I to understand that if the election had gone in a different way at that time and a Labour Member of Parliament, also of inadequate means, had been elected the Banff Unionist Association, because he was the Member for that constituency, would have contributed towards his subsistence?—I do not suppose they would, in the same way that the Banff Labour organisation did not contribute to the Conservative Member's subsistence.

781. That reinforces the point, does it not, that such a course would place an individual who wished to become a Member of Parliament and who had inadequate means in the position of being tied completely to a party organisation? Would

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not that be the case?—One is almost inclined to quote Scripture here. I do not think so, because I believe that all Members of Parliament once elected, irrespective of any assistance they may receive from their constituencies or otherwise, fully appreciate the fact that they are Members for the whole constituency and not for one party.

782. That is precisely the point I am making. That is surely the point which apparently would not have commended itself to the Banff Unionist Association, if I may say so, with the greatest respect?—I do not know anything about what they did, but I do not think they asked the Labour Party for any assistance. I think they met it out of their own current funds. They made an annual allowance to the Member out of their funds. I do not think they asked the Labour people.

783. Had this gentleman ceased to be a Member of the Conservative Party and decided to become a Member of the Labour Party?—The gentleman is dead, I believe.

Mr. *McKinlay*.] The gentleman is dead.

*Chairman*.] Leave him out of consideration now.

*Captain Charles Smith*.] Such a course, it is fairly clearly shown, would inevitably tie a Member to a particular party organisation. That is the point I wished to bring out.

*Chairman*.] I think the Witness has made perfectly clear what his point of view is on this point.

*Major Symonds*.

784. Would the Witness agree that it is essential that a Member should be put in a position efficiently to carry out his duties?—Yes, granted.

785. If at this moment, therefore, it were shown that on his existing emoluments a Member could not efficiently carry out his duties towards his constituents, would the Witness, even at this moment, be prepared to consider a change in the interests of making a Member more efficient in carrying out his duties towards his constituents?—That comes back to a point which I made before: Are candidates for Parliament so deficient in foresight—are they more so than the ordinary run of business people? Do they look before they leap or do they not? I submit that in at least 95 per cent. of the cases of Members coming to this House of Commons (I will grant you perhaps there are five exceptional cases out of a hundred) Members should have had a very shrewd idea of what they were letting themselves in for.

*Chairman*.

786. You have made that point very clear before, in my opinion?—That is the answer. I would have no objection to a certain reconsideration of expenses such as my friend who has just left the room indicated with regard to travelling between Glasgow and Edinburgh, and things of that sort. Expenses which are right and reasonable by all means should be allowed. My quarrel is with the raising of the salary.

*Mr. Leslie*.

787. You are opposed to an increase in salary, but you would not be opposed to anything in the way of expenses?—I would not be opposed to reasonable expenses—expenses which by right should devolve upon this House.

*Major Symonds*.

788. Over and above the present salary?—Over and above the present salary. We have had certain advantages given to us recently with regard to travelling between our homes and Westminster, and I think that is reasonable.

*Chairman*.] You will appreciate that what reasonable expenses should be given is a matter for this Committee. That is why we are here.

*Mr. Lipson*.

789. You made the point that the candidate knew what he was letting himself in for when he offered himself as a candidate. May I ask you whether you have found in practice that your expenses as a Member of Parliament are, so far as the major expenses are concerned, approximately what you anticipated?—Yes. I had this advantage, that I had done a considerable amount of work in and about the House of Commons, not as a Member, but in connection with committees and so on, and I had a lot of friends. My estimate and my actual realisation of expenses were identical.

790. Your personal experience is that it is costing you approximately what you had anticipated it would?—Yes.

791. Just one more question. Are you satisfied that what you lay down—that there should be no increase in salary, but that somehow, through the constituency if need be, a Member's resources should be added to—would not deprive the constituency of the best candidate, generally speaking—that it would not necessarily limit the choice of candidate?—On the contrary I think it would widen the choice.

*Lt.-Commander Braithwaite*.

792. I should like the Witness to give us two figures, for the purpose of record on our minutes. This arises out of the same point my honourable friend on the other side has raised about knowing what we

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were letting ourselves in for, not only at the last election, but, of course, at every other. Members who have fought more than one election are in the same position every time. I would like the Witness to tell us what average daily number of letters he knew he would receive when he was adopted as a candidate, and, secondly, what average daily expenditure on stamps did he know would be necessary when he got here?—I could not tie myself down to an estimate. I expected to receive about 20 or 30 letters in a day and to have to reply to about 60 per cent. of them.

*Chairman.*

793. When you got in, you knew that it was going to cost you a certain amount of money?—I did.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite.*

794. And on the stamps?—Yes.

795. Those estimates have been exceeded?—Yes, a little.

796. So it is not quite true to say that you knew what you were letting yourself in for?—Generally, within a few shillings, yes.

*Chairman.*] I know a good many Members of Parliament who did not know what they were letting themselves in for when they got in.

Lieut.-Commander *Gurney Braithwaite.*] Old Members, too.

Sir WILLIAM DARLING, C.B.E., M.C. (a Member of the House), examined.

*Chairman.*

799. You have had a good deal of experience in public affairs?—Yes.

800. You indicated your readiness and willingness to come and give evidence before this Select Committee. You are aware, of course, that the House of Commons did appoint this Select Committee for various purposes—to consider the expenses of Members, and of Ministers under £5,000, and also their conditions of work, their remuneration, etc. So we must accept it as a fact that the House did appoint this Select Committee for the purpose for which we are here, and you rightly, in your opinion, took a certain line, which you are entitled to do as a Member of Parliament, and I think it would be as well if you were to tell the Committee just what you have in mind?—Yes. I appreciate very much indeed the invitation you have given me to come and express what views I have on the subject. I have to say that when the proposal to set up a Select Committee came before the House of Commons I received it with a sense of shock because I was not aware that it had been a major matter which had been placed before the electors. There were, of course, many more important matters that might be justified. I have been at some pains to look at election ad-

*Chairman.*] Yes.

Colonel *Dodds-Parker.*

797. I should like to have the Witness's view clear. Does he not feel that the principle was accepted in 1911 that there should be some payment to a Member for expenses, and from then onwards it has been a question of some committee such as this re-adjusting that amount, taking into account certain factors, such as the increased cost of living, and the increased amount of work involving more postage? We are not really considering the question of principle, in other words; we are considering a readjustment in view of these new circumstances?—Is that an actual fact or a hypothesis you are giving me now—the principle being established in 1911, does the country at large realise that this was subject to adjustment from time to time, as Members thought fit?

798. That is what I am asking the Witness. Does he not feel that the principle having been accepted by the country since 1911, Parliament, or a Committee like this, has a right to readjust, if it sees fit, that amount, as it readjusted it in 1937?—That does not square with my own views on this matter at all, that it is a matter for periodic adjustment.

*Chairman.*] I think we can say thank you, Mr. Duthie, for your evidence.

dresses, of which I have a considerable number, and in none of these have I seen any indication—

*Chairman.*

801. May I help you at this point? In making your case before the House as to whether a Select Committee should be set up or not, all those arguments were absolutely legitimate and to the point; but the fact is that the House did appoint this Select Committee for a particular purpose. We must accept the appointment of the Committee as a fact. All the reasons as to whether it was right or wrong to appoint the Committee were for the House rather than for this Select Committee. I think I am entitled to make that clear to the Witness?—Yes, and I accept that. That decision having been made, it can evoke, as it did, a general favourable reaction, or it may, in a single instance, provoke an unfavourable one, and while you have received the evidence of those to whom it seemed a desirable one, it is not without moment that even one may have found it less acceptable. I will leave it with just another sentence, and that is to say that I received some score of letters from the public indicating the view that this was hardly a timely occasion for this purpose. I will

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address myself, however, to the business of the Committee, which is to hear evidence, I take it, as to whether Members of Parliament are adequately remunerated at the present time. I look at what the actual costs are in fact. We live in a very severely rationed society. The possession of ample means gives one little command over the luxuries or the advantages which money formerly did command. So that to raise salaries in a community where purchasing power is severely limited by law is not a very practical proposition, but it carries with it the disadvantage of irritating others who are not receiving similar advances. Members of Parliament—I speak with the fresh impressions of a newcomer—have a great many advantages which are not paid for in money. We have a subsidised luncheon at 1s. 6d.—a luncheon which cannot be bought in any other restaurant of which I am aware, and I have some experience, at such a price. Dinners are subsidised at 2s. Members have, as the Committee are aware, free travel on duty to their constituencies. I adduce these, because they are part of the advantages of being a Member of Parliament, outside the actual monetary remuneration. They have the membership of an excellent club—a select club—with a first-class library. They have adequate staff and attendance which does not exist in any other first-class club or library that I know of. They have heating, lavatories, baths, telephone facilities and ample stationery. You have also an office address. These, in my judgment, are not equalled by clubs which charge 25 guineas a year for membership. Members of Parliament also have the advantage of opportunities for foreign travel, and educational advantages in that they meet persons of unusual distinction. They receive in their mail bag literature ranging from the “Jewish Standard” to the “Soviet News.” Subscriptions to such journals, if I were likely to embark upon them, would take a considerable part of my income. Members have on occasion sleeping accommodation made available. There are a number of uncovenanted benefits which go with the £600 a year. In general, I would say that Members (this is a personal view and perhaps may not be strictly relevant) in my view should not be merely politicians. They should not live by politics. They should have or find some other gainful calling. In my submission it is to the advantage of the House that a man is a miner as well as a Member, a barrister as well as a Member, or a journalist as well as a Member, because these activities keep him in close, intimate touch with the common affairs of life without which he cannot be an effective public representative. I think to legislate for other people's earnings while oneself is not an earner is unreal. I think it a little unseemly. I have in mind, too, that there is no compulsion to be a Member of Parliament; there is no Essential Work Order placed upon any of us. All of us offered

ourselves; some with great difficulty offered themselves for this job. We can resign. No Member has publicly stated that he cannot afford to be a Member of Parliament, as far as I have observed or heard, and although it is true that bankruptcy has appeared among Members of Parliament, when you consider their numbers and the precarious character of their livelihood, the number is really fewer than in almost any other industry—indeed, than in any other industry I know of. The number of bankruptcies amongst greengrocers and fashion experts is greater than among Members of the House of Commons. I am told that over a period of five years there were three, and in one Parliament, in an equal period, there were none. That indicates that the economic pressure which the Select Committee have to take into account is perhaps more imaginary than real. In any case, this is a period in which austerity is enjoined upon us, and I do not see why plain living and high thinking should not be the characteristic of the representatives of the people. I have gone to the trouble to collect a few details; they are not very precise; they may be a little haphazard, but they are in accordance with experience. You can get, in a London club, your bed and breakfast for 10s. 6d. That is in several London clubs. It is true you have to be a member of the club, but most of those who have become members of clubs during the last 12 years came in without entrance fee, and although the entrance fee has been restored very generally, I think some Members must be aware that many London clubs were accepting membership without entrance fee.

*Chairman.*

802. On that point I have been down here all during the war and I was a member of a club, but I could never get a bed in that club, because there was never any available accommodation?—I am speaking of the Constitutional Club in Northumberland Avenue.

803. That is a political club?—I have not noticed very much the political atmosphere.

*Chairman.*] I think the condition of membership is that you must be a Member of a certain political party. I could not stay there.

*Mr. Lipson.*

804. Is the charge 10s. 6d. at the Constitutional Club?—You can have a bedroom there for from 7s. 6d. to 12s. 6d.

*Chairman.*

805. That is all right on cost?—Your breakfast, if you have a cup of tea, would cost you 6d. or 1s. I think the full breakfast is 2s. 6d. if you have porridge, a kipper, if you can get it, but, again, these regulations of austerity have had their effect: they have compelled you to be

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economical, even if you do not desire to be; so I say it is the case that in certain clubs which charged no admission for membership during the years before the war, although they do now, it is possible to get bed and breakfast for 10s. 6d. I proceed, having bathed myself and corrected myself, to the House of Commons, where I lunch for 1s. 6d. I have tea which costs me 1s. I have a dinner (I have never had it, as a matter of fact, but I have read it on the back of the menu) for 2s. I do a little walking, but I may have to take a bus, and that costs me 1s. That leaves me with a balance of 4s. out of my £1. So I visualise, in this rough and ready estimate, that I shall be in London 300 days at £1 on these details, which gives me £300. For 65 days I shall be at home, and I reckon that at home, with my establishment, I would be right in saying that as it costs me £1 a day in London it costs me 10s. a day at home. That gives me £350. I find myself with £50 for clothes and other circumstances. You cannot spend £50 on clothes, because if you place the orders you cannot get the goods; but I give you £50 for those other circumstances, and I leave you £200, which is either extinguished in tax, or can be extinguished in expenses if expenses are incurred—expenses on secretarial services or in whatever way they may further arise. These figures (I admit they are very sketchy and they are one man's figures) seem to indicate that although it may be difficult to live on £600—and I agree it is difficult; it may be difficult, at any rate, but why should it not be difficult? Are we here to provide ourselves with ease and comfort first, before we can provide that for others? I submit it is not impossible to live as a Member of Parliament on £600 a year, and I make this emphatic statement that none of us have tried it. None of us have been in this House for a year and none of us can say whether we can live or not until the year has elapsed. I would, in conclusion, say that I do beg the Committee to consider the timeliness, whatever the merits of the proposals before them may be, of such proposals, and with timeliness I would also have in mind the seemliness of such proposals. There is also this repercussion—and I speak having spent many years in local authorities—that the House of Commons, in such a matter as this, will surely take into account the attitude of these thousands of other persons who give voluntary unpaid public service, particularly in local authorities and public bodies of a similar character. I think it would be unfortunate if what has been an English tradition for many centuries should be struck down or even weakened from the top. The House of Commons should set an example of doing public service at some personal sacrifice and without a substantial increment of personal gain. These are, I think, very general arguments—*argumentum ad*

*hominem*—rather than logical or very rational, but they express the views of a great many people who are interested in the House of Commons, and who would feel that the relation of the House of Commons to a more gainful calling and not a great public duty would be to its disadvantage and their detriment.

*Chairman.*] There are about 10 minutes left. You have made your points perfectly clear, and now some Members of the Select Committee would like to ask you questions.

*Colonel Dodds-Parker.*

806. May I ask whether the Witness does not feel that as in principle it has been accepted that there should be an expenses allowance (that was accepted in 1911), it is not open to the House to readjust it, in view of such factors as a rise in expenses, in the increase in the amount of work, and, therefore, in postage, and so forth?—I do not admit that the costs have increased.

807. You do not think they have increased since 1937?—I could not say that. The secretarial services I get are covered by this expenditure, and I have from 20 to 30 letters a day and I use a typewriting bureau.

*Lieut.-Commander Gurney Braithwaite.*

808. May I ask a question arising out of that point? You have gone into this matter with great care, and you have doubtless studied the debate which took place in 1937, when this matter was dealt with at that time, under a Government led by Mr. Baldwin. Have you read those debates?—No, I have not studied them.

809. Perhaps I may be permitted to mention, in passing, then, that it was established to the satisfaction of the then House of Commons that the existing allowance of £400 per annum was inadequate, in view of the conditions prevailing in 1937, and the figure was raised to £600, the present figure without any reference to the electorate but simply by Resolution of the House of Commons. Would you agree, Sir William, that the official figures we have show that today, although we are living in this rationed economy, the cost of living has risen by 31 per cent. since 1937?—I understand that is the figure, but it has this qualifying factor, that you cannot buy a suit of clothes a year even if you want to. Although the cost of living has risen, availability of money cannot secure the goods; and from another point of view, you are prevented from enjoying the fruits of a larger income. At least, that is my experience.

*Mr. Lipson.*

810. Does Sir William agree that the club amenities which a Member of Parliament enjoys do not help him to meet his necessary expenses?—They do, to this extent: they enable him, if he has a gift for writing—and almost anybody can write a book; I have written five or six myself—ta

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develop that literary or journalistic gift. They add to the amenity of his life rather than to his income, I agree.

811. May I ask one more question? Is Sir William satisfied that it is really practicable for a large proportion of Members of Parliament to add to their income by part-time employment of some kind or another?—I think so. Obviously, you could not be a miner, I take it, and knock off and come up to the House of Commons for a division, but there are a lot of other occupations. If you look at the Directory of Directors you will find an extraordinary range of opportunity for persons who can really assist industry, with the knowledge they get in the House of Commons, in the direction of business, and these directorships are very much wider now than they used to be. The extension of the Co-operative movement in this country, for example, has given business opportunities to persons who are not normally in that class—very extensive and expanding business opportunities.

812. Sir William does not see any danger to the duties which a Member of Parliament has to fulfil to the nation as a whole in accepting a necessary source of livelihood from some outside body of that kind?—None. On the contrary I believe it is an advantage. I believe it is a distinct advantage that I should know something about distribution, as director of a distribution company, or something about the mining of coal. There are services which a politician, because of his temperament and his wide range of knowledge, can render to industry, especially in these days, when politics more and more enter into industry, which cannot be overrated, and I should like to see a closer integration on all social levels between the House of Commons and the practical management of business affairs.

Mr. Haydn Davies.] You have been extolling the virtues of living on 16s. a day. Would you regard living in London on 16s. a day and being in this House as well as a normal rational way of life?—It is not very comfortable. It has a degree of strain and discomfort. I know what cockroaches are, and an unpleasant bedroom and a lack of decent conditions in which to sleep, but the House of Commons is a very great privilege, and one should pay for privileges. They should not be freely conceded.

813. Surely, that was not the point at issue. The point at issue was an economic one of how much it costs per day to live in London, and, in spite of all your figures, speaking as one who has lived in London the greater part of my life, quite frankly, it is impossible to live in London on 16s. a day. What I wanted to challenge was the basis of all your calculations, namely, the minimum amount one need spend in London per day. I do not see how it

could be done?—I have given you the details and I could confirm them by presenting to the Committee such receipts as I can get; and when I say I know something about these matters I will tell the Committee that I, too, have lived in London for a great part of my life. I have lived in London at 7d. a night; I have lived in Covent Garden, for 9d., and I have lived in Rowton House, Hammersmith Road at 1s. a night. I am familiar with a wide range, from boarding houses in London to the Savoy Hotel, and I do say it is possible—

814. You are not recommending that as the kind of life a Member should live?—No.

815. —if he is to be an efficient Member?—He could live on ½1 a day.

Chairman.

816. You would not expect a Member efficiently to carry out his duties and live in one of the houses you have mentioned?—It might not be unstimulating to a Member to know how the poor live.

Mr. Haydn Davies.

817. Most of us know it already?—Quite seriously, I would like to know some challenge about the figure of ½1 a day.

818. It cannot be done unless you belong to a club which provides cheap bed and breakfast. If one has to go into Bloomsbury to-day it cannot be done?—Bed and breakfast in Bloomsbury I am told is 13s. 6d.

819. You might get one for 13s. 6d.?—I know a Member of the House who pays 13s. 6d. It is true that he is a Scotsman with a certain fortitude which is unusual in the English.

Mr. Leslie.

820. You said there were very few bankruptcies amongst Members; but that was in the past, when it was not so much a full-time job. Probably, the reason that there were few bankruptcies was because they had jobs outside. Would not that be the case?—I think that would be probably so, and I hope it will continue.

821. In your estimate for the £600, have you taken into consideration what it means to a Member who lives in a County constituency?—No.

Chairman.

822. I think the Witness has given his own personal experience?—You mean the expenses you would have to meet in order to live adequately in your constituency?

823. Yes?—I do not consider that any part of a Member's salary should be spent on electioneering or the maintenance of contacts with his constituency in that intimate sense.



13 February, 1946.]

Sir WILLIAM DARLING, C.B.E., M.C.

[Continued.]

*Mr. Leslie.*

824. Surely it is the duty of a Member to visit his constituency, to give an account of his stewardship?—Yes, and you get your fare for that purpose.

825. Only to a point. I have 63 villages and I have to hire a car?—I think you did not ask my advice, but you must find another source to support you. I do not think your Parliamentary salary should do that.

*Mr. Cobb.*

826. You are a business man as well as being a Member, are you not?—Yes.

827. You are a successful one, too, I believe?—No, Sir; I have been fortunate.

*Chairman.*

828. There is a difference?—Yes; I believe that luck is the principal factor in life.

*Mr. Cobb.*

829. Do you agree that to be efficient you must have up-to-date methods?—Not very much. There is a great deal spoken about so-called efficient methods. You will not get me on that. There is a great deal of lip service paid to efficiency which is very unreal.

830. You would agree that one should have a method in conducting business?—I think one should organise one's life.

831. Do you think a Member could be efficient without a certain amount of secretarial assistance?—Yes. James Hyde was. Lesser men cannot be so effective without secretarial assistance, but he could be.

832. Do you think you could be effective under these conditions without a secretary?—Yes. The letters I write are really a waste of my time and an indication of the ignorance of the public.

833. You said Members ought to augment their emoluments by other work?—I think they should have an intimate knowledge of the affairs of the country which they represent.

834. Supposing one of your senior executives had been successful in standing as a Member instead of yourself, and had been elected, knowing the conditions here, would you have given him the necessary leave of absence?—Yes. I would have given him £200 a year. I would have stopped his salary, but have given him about £200 a year. It would have been a good advertisement, and I believe his contact with the House of Commons would be a testimonial. In about two years' time he would probably become a junior Minister and say good-bye to me. I would be quite willing to have members of my staff associated with the House of Commons, because of its practical advantages.

*Chairman.*] I would like to point out to the Committee that we have gone beyond our time.

*Major Symonds.*

835. I will limit myself to one question. In Sir William's figures he gave £300 a year for himself living in London, £50 a year for himself living at home, a further £50 for clothes—that is £400, leaving £200 to cover secretarial assistance, postage, telephones and so on. I assume that most of that £200 would be absorbed by such things as secretarial assistance, postage, telephones, telegrams and so on. That is all very well, but what would Sir William suggest should happen in the case of a man who, in addition to having to keep himself personally on £400 a year and pay a secretary and so on on £200, has a wife and children?—He should sharpen his wits and find another job.

*Chairman.*] That is the answer the Witness gives all the way through. He has made that point perfectly clear, that a Member should earn money somewhere else.

*Mrs. Wills.*

836. He suggests £50 for expenses at home. Could expenses at home be covered by £50? What happens to the home all the rest of the time when he is not there?—Mrs. Wills's question is quite a proper one, but I am assuming that a Member comes to Parliament with a degree of establishment in life, and, in this particular instance, that the house has been bought and the wife has some money, so it is really probably not a general example. If I were 23 years of age these figures are nonsense, with a wife and two children. But they are accurate figures for the man of 50 or 55, who has established himself to some extent in life.

*Mr. McKinlay.*

837. Could you maintain anything like the same standard of life if you had no other resources as a Member of Parliament?—No.

838. You are aware that I have had considerable experience in local government as well?—Yes.

839. Do you really think that, taking Sir William Darling on the one hand, ex-Provost of Edinburgh, and McKinlay, the ex-Convenor of Glasgow, all things being equal as a choice between two candidates—I say this with modesty, of course—that Sir William Darling should be chosen because he had resources behind him, and that I could not accept nomination because I had no resources?—I will not look at McKinlay and Darling but I will look at A and B, and the community would be wiser to choose people who have managed to manage their own affairs with some success than rely upon persons who had given no such proof.

13 February, 1946.]

Sir WILLIAM DARLING, C.B.E., M.C.

[Continued.]

840. Let me put it to you in another way. I am a woodworker or was a woodworker. Are you suggesting that all craftsmen (and it takes brains, sometimes, more brains, to be a craftsman than a business man) should throw in their hand and find some other more remunerative occupation, so that at some future occasion they may be able to offer themselves to serve the country and give the country the benefit of whatever knowledge they have in its Government?—I can give evidence before this Committee but I cannot offer advice to the National Union of Woodworkers. Mr. McKinlay can give better advice than I can.

841. Do you suggest one gets the proper slant one should in very early life by living in dosshouses in order to know exactly how the poor live?—Your point is that the House of Commons would be richer if it had craftsmen as part of its membership, and that craftsmen cannot carry out their craft and be Members of Parliament? I agree. That can be me; and it has been met by a choice among the craftsmen of a

practical man whom they subsidise or finance to represent them in the House of Commons; and I think that should continue.

842. I was elected in 1929 as a Member of this House, as the nominee of a Craftsmen's organisation, and there was no subsidy attached to it at all. Do you think it is right that a cross-section of the community should be prevented from entering into the service of their country, simply because they are employed in their craft?—Certainly not. I commend your disinterested public service. You got over it; I do not know by what means you are now a Member, but the very difficulties you have had to overcome make you an infinitely more valuable Member than if you had been pushed in easily.

843. Would I not possibly have been a more valuable Member if I had not had to shed so many tears on the road?—I do not know. One has to suffer to become strong.

*Chairman.*] Sir William, on behalf of the Committee I should like to thank you.

*(Adjourned till Tuesday next at 11 a.m.)*

## LIST OF APPENDICES

NOTE.—The Memoranda upon which witnesses were examined are given in Appendices V to IX. A letter and two memoranda upon which the Committee did not hear oral evidence are given in Appendix X.

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## APPENDIX I

*Circular letter from the Chairman to all Members of the House*

HOUSE OF COMMONS,  
S.W.I.

14th December, 1945.

DEAR SIR,

MADAM,

As you are aware, the House has appointed a Select Committee "To consider the expenses incurred in connection with their parliamentary and official duties by Members of this House, including Ministers whose salary is less than £5,000 per annum; their remuneration; and their conditions of work".

The principal items of expenses which are allowable for Income Tax purposes are:—

- (a) the additional cost of living away from home when engaged in Parliamentary duties *either* at Westminster *or* in the constituency (one place only);
- (b) secretarial and clerical assistance; and
- (c) such items as stationery, postage, telegrams, etc.

The sum of £100 is allowed to all Members of Parliament in respect of the allowable expenses, but if any Member can show that his expenditure exceeds that figure the actual amount is allowed up to a maximum of £600. These allowances do not apply to those receiving salaries as Ministers.

Should there be any points under the above headings which you wish to bring to the notice of the Committee, I should be obliged if you would be good enough to let me have them in writing. Would you please address your reply to the Clerk of the Committee?

I should also be glad to know if you would be willing to give evidence before the Committee if invited to do so.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) TOM SMITH,  
Chairman.

## APPENDIX II

EMOLUMENTS GRANTED TO MEMBERS OF THE CENTRAL  
LEGISLATURES OF THE DOMINIONS

*Compiled from information obtained by the Dominions Office*

## CANADA

**Salary**

Senate: Sessional Allowance: \$6,000 for Session of 65 days or over.

House of Commons: Sessional Allowance: \$6,000 for Session of 65 days or over.

For Sessions under 65 days, \$25 a day is paid for each day's attendance. A deduction from the allowance of \$25 a day is made for every day over fifteen on which a Member is absent from a sitting of the House, unless he is away sick but in Ottawa.

A Member elected during a Session draws the full allowance for the Session less \$25 for each day of the Session before his election, and can be away for fifteen days without being penalised.

**Travel**

Transportation and reasonable living expenses are paid for the journey between a Member's residence and Ottawa, once each way for each Session. A free pass on the railways is provided for a Member and his immediate family.

**Residence in Capital**

There is no allowance for the cost of residence in the Capital.

**Expenses in constituency**

There is no allowance for expenses in the constituency.

**Secretarial expenses**

A secretary is provided. Local telephone calls and postage are free.

## NEW ZEALAND

**Salary**

Member of Legislative Council : £375 per annum.

Member of House of Representatives : £500 per annum.

Deductions for absence for more than fourteen sitting days in a Session are 25s. for each sitting day in the case of a Member of the Council, and £2 in the case of a Member of the House of Representatives. No deduction is made if absence is caused by illness, or by a cause stated by the Speaker of the Council or of the House to be unavoidable.

If a Member of the Council obtains, and avails himself of, leave of absence from the Governor General for a whole Session, he does not receive payment from the date of the Proclamation convening the General Assembly for that Session until the date of the Proclamation convening the Assembly for the next Session.

**Travel**

A Member is given a railway medallion which entitles him to free first class travel on railways and railway omnibuses, including sleepers and free reservations. He receives steamer passages at any time between the port most convenient to his home and any other port in New Zealand for the purpose of travel to or from Wellington. He may travel by service motor car on any part of a route not served by railway or steamer. He also has a first class steamer pass for travel between Wellington and Picton, or Wellington and Lyttleton.

He receives travelling allowance at the rate of £1 a day.

For concessions for travel to families see Note 1 below.

**Residence in Capital**

An allowance of £250 a year is given to cover expenses in connection with a Member's parliamentary duties.

**Expenses in constituency**

See above.

**Secretarial Expenses**

There is no specific allowance for a secretary.

During a Session, correspondence may be franked at the House. Members receive vouchers for official stamps to the value of £3 a month, available for the payment of postage, toll calls, telegrams and telephone rental. Half the cost of a telephone at a Member's residence and half the cost of toll calls are borne by the Legislative Department. Members' telegrams are sent at a special rate of 36 words for 6d.

Members may nominate 75 persons for a Hansard Free List.

**Note 1**

Members' wives (or daughter, sister, etc., where a widower) receive a free first-class railway pass available rail or railway bus, with free reservations, also sleeper berth orders as required. South Island wives (except Nelson district) receive twelve single first-class passages (including deck accommodation) Wellington-Lyttelton or Wellington-Picton. North Island wives receive six such passages. Wives of Members in Nelson district receive twelve orders Wellington-Nelson only.

## AUSTRALIA

**Salary**

Senate : Senators £1,000 per annum.

House of Representatives : Members £1,000 per annum.

There is no deduction of salary for absence, but a Senator vacates his place if he fails to attend the Senate for two consecutive months in any Session without permission.

**Travel**

A Member is issued with a gold railway pass for Government railways in the various States, the cost of which is £160 per annum. Travel over the Commonwealth railways and over any privately owned railways is paid for in addition.

Life gold passes are issued to Members after three years as a Minister, President of the Senate or Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to private Members after twenty-five years' service in the aggregate.

Members may have free air travel between their homes and Canberra at the beginning and end of a Session. Tasmanian Members are granted air travel between Tasmania and the mainland on parliamentary or urgent public duties within the constituencies; Members representing Kalgoorlie, Grey and Bass are allowed a limited number of air journeys, while the Member for the Northern Territory is granted special privileges for air travel.

Travel by steamer from Adelaide to Albany, or *vice versa* is allowed once a year but in one direction only; and from Brisbane to places in North Australia not accessible by rail.

Certain motor coach facilities are allowed.

For the concessions to families see Note 2 below.

### Residence in Capital

There is no allowance for the cost of residence in the Capital.

### Expenses in Constituency

There is no allowance for expenses in the constituency.

### Secretarial Expenses

No allowance is made for a Secretary.

Stamps to the value of £26 per annum are issued to Senators, and to Members of the House of Representatives. These can be used for official correspondence, telegrams, trunk telephone calls and telephone rental.

### Note 2

*Wives of Members.* Where a Member's home is not in Canberra and he does not remove his family to Canberra for Sessions, orders for return passes may be issued in favour of his wife:

- (a) from her home to Canberra four times per year,
- (b) from her home to some place in the same State twice yearly,
- (c) as an alternative to (b), once per year from her home to some other place in the State and once per year from her home to the capital city in one other State,
- (d) if her home is not in the Member's electorate, from her home to any part of his electorate twice per calendar year,
- (e) from her home to any place in the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending any official Federal Government function to which she has been invited.

Where a Member's home is not in Canberra and he moves his family to Canberra for the Session, an order for a return pass may be issued in favour of his wife.

Where a Member's wife is travelling and is in such a state of health as to require the help of an attendant, a pass may be issued for such an attendant:

- (a) from her home in Canberra once each year or once per Session if there is more than one Session in the year,
- (b) From Canberra, or her home, to the capital city in any other State once per year,
- (c) from her home, or from Canberra, to any part of his electorate twice per year where her home is outside Member's electorate,
- (d) from her home, or from Canberra, to any place in the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending any official Federal Government function to which she has been invited.

Where a Member's home is in Canberra, an order for return pass may be issued in favour of his wife:

- (a) from her home to some other place in New South Wales twice yearly, or as an alternative, once from her home to the capital city in any State other than New South Wales,
- (b) from Canberra to any part of his electorate twice a year,
- (c) from Canberra to any place in the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending any official Federal Government function to which she has been invited.

*Children of Members.*—Where a Member's home is not in Canberra, an order for a return pass will be issued in favour of the children of a Member who usually reside at home and are not earning their own living:

- (a) from his home to Canberra once per year or per Session if there be more than one Session in the year,
- (b) from his home to his electorate once a year.

Where a Member's home is in Canberra, a return pass will be issued in favour of children who usually reside at home and are not earning their own living.

**SOUTH AFRICA****Allowance**

Senate : Members, £700 per annum.

House of Assembly : Members, £700 per annum.

Members of both Houses are also at present in receipt of a cost of living allowance of £84 per annum.

A deduction of £6 is made for each day of absence from a meeting of the House, except where the absence is due to attendance at a Select Committee ; to illness ; to summons or subpoena of a competent Court (unless the summons is on a criminal charge upon which the Member is convicted) ; to the death or serious illness of his wife and the absence is condoned by the Committee on Standing Rules and Orders ; to service with Forces while the Union is at war ; in respect of a further period not exceeding 25 days during a Session at which estimates of expenditure of the financial year are considered.

**Travel**

A Member is entitled to a free pass over lines controlled by the South African Railways. He is allowed to rail his motor car to Cape Town and return once during a Session.

Air Travel was suspended early in the war.

For concessions to families see Note 3 below.

**Residence in Capital**

There is no allowance for the cost of residence in the Capital.

**Expenses in Constituency**

There is no allowance for expenses in the constituency.

**Secretarial expenses**

One shorthand typist, paid from the Vote of the Clerk of the Senate, is the only clerical assistance for all Senators.

For Members of the House of Assembly, expenditure is reimbursed at a rate fixed by the Committee on Standing Rules and Orders and allotted to the political parties in proportion to their membership. During Sessions franked envelopes are provided for Members' correspondence on Parliamentary and public business. A Member is allowed free local telephone calls, and one trunk call of six minutes (or two of three minutes) once a week home or to a place in his constituency.

**Note 3**

Members of his household residing with and dependent upon him are entitled to free transport by rail from place of residence to seat of Legislature and return once in respect of every Session. A Member's wife is normally entitled to a second return journey by rail during a Session between a Member's place of residence and Cape Town.

**APPENDIX III****HISTORICAL RETROSPECT***Changes in the payments to Members and concessions for travel since 1911*

1. Payment to Members, at the rate of £400 a year, was first introduced in the Session of 1911 by a Resolution of the House of 10th August, and a Supplementary Estimate to defray the cost was passed on 14th August. Since that year the requisite amount has appeared in the Annual Estimates, and the Vote of the Amount is the Paymaster General's authority for issue. By Section 3 of the Finance Act, 1913, the Treasury was empowered to fix an annual average sum

for expenses incurred by Members in the performance of their Parliamentary duties which would be free of income tax, and, by a Minute of 23rd October, 1913, fixed this sum at £100, a sum which had in fact been allowed in the previous year.

2. In the Session of 1920, a Select Committee was appointed to consider the Salary allotted to Members of the House, the travelling and other expenses incurred by them in connection with their Parliamentary duties. This Committee refrained from making a specific recommendation for an increase of salary though satisfied that the matter should be given further consideration, but recommended that free first class travel between the London terminus and a Member's constituency should be granted, and that facilities for free postage of Members' letters should be provided. The House never approved the recommendation for free postage, and, as will be seen below, did not approve the travelling concession until 1924.

3. During the financial stringency of 1931, the payment to Members was reduced to £360 a year from 1st October 1931; it was raised again to £380 from 1st July 1934, and to the full £400 from 1st July 1935.

4. On 1st July 1937 payment to Members was increased to £600. In moving the increase, the Prime Minister, the late Mr. Neville Chamberlain, asked the House to take into consideration the difficulties in which many Members found themselves, and pointed out that not only had there been a fifty per cent. rise in the cost of living, but that demands on Members had risen due to the extension of the electorate and the increase of Parliamentary business.

5. The House did not approve the Estimate in 1921 which allowed for the cost of the travelling concessions recommended by the Select Committee of 1920, and it was not until 1924 that free 1st class travel between London and a station within the constituency was granted to Members. In 1926, this concession was extended to cover a convenient station short of the constituency. In 1931, during the financial stringency, the railway vouchers were made available for 3rd class fares. In 1932, a Member was allowed the cost of a 3rd class sleeping berth, provided that the cost of the 3rd class fare and the berth did not exceed the 1st class fare. In 1936, Members were granted the cost of 1st class sleeping berths, and of the additional charge on special trains such as the "Coronation Scot". In 1939 Members serving in the Forces were granted free travel between their war stations in the United Kingdom and London, and, in 1942, between their war stations in the United Kingdom and the constituency. These two concessions are still in force. In 1935, travel by air between London and the constituency was authorised, any excess over the 1st class fare for the corresponding journey by rail or sea being borne by the Member.

6. On 15th November 1945, on the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, free travel by rail or sea for a Member was extended to cover journeys between his ordinary residence and London, and between his ordinary residence and the constituency; and free travel by air was authorised for these journeys and for the journey between London and the constituency.

#### APPENDIX IV

##### STATISTICAL TABLE OF THE INCIDENCE OF THE CLAIMS FOR EXPENSES BY MEMBERS

*Memorandum by Board of Inland Revenue showing the Expenses as allowed against the Income Tax assessments on Members' Salaries*

*(Handed in by Sir Cornelius Gregg, K.C.B., K.B.E.)*

The following Table gives a statistical classification of the annual rate of expenses allowances made for Income Tax purposes for the current year 1945-46 ending 5th April, 1946, against the Income Tax assessments upon Members' Salaries. The Table covers all Members of the present House of Commons from whom claim



for allowance had been received by 31st December, 1945; in the case of new Members the allowance made is provisional. The Table covers 534 Members and as to the balance of 106 Members it should be borne in mind that Ministers and others in receipt of payment in respect of office are not eligible for payment as Members and accordingly do not come under review for allowance for expenses.

*Analysis of Expenses Claims allowed up to  
31st December, 1945*

<i>Expenses allowed</i>	<i>Number of Members</i>
At £100 per annum ... ..	22
„ £101 — £150 „ „ ... ..	10
„ £151 — £200 „ „ ... ..	11
„ £201 — £250 „ „ ... ..	9
„ £251 — £300 „ „ ... ..	18
„ £301 — £350 „ „ ... ..	23
„ £351 — £400 „ „ ... ..	37
„ £401 — £450 „ „ ... ..	35
„ £451 — £500 „ „ ... ..	60
„ £501 — £550 „ „ ... ..	40
„ £551 — £599 „ „ ... ..	41
„ £600 „ „ ... ..	228
Total claims received ... ..	534

Board of Inland Revenue,  
Somerset House.

2nd January, 1946.

APPENDIX V.

MEMORANDUM BY THE BOARD OF INLAND REVENUE.

*The Memorandum was handed in by Sir Cornelius Gregg as follows:*

EXPENSES OF MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

STATISTICS OF AMOUNTS ALLOWED FOR INCOME TAX PURPOSES.

1. Under the Income Tax law the holder of any office is entitled to an allowance of the expenses wholly, exclusively and necessarily incurred in the performance of that office against the Income Tax assessment on the emoluments of the office. The law further provides that in the case of persons in receipt of emoluments paid out of the public revenue the Treasury may fix a sum, that in their opinion represents a fair equivalent of the average annual expenses, to be allowed to all such persons in respect of expenses of the office.

2. The principal items of expenses which are allowable for Income Tax purposes are the additional cost of living away from home when engaged in Parliamentary duties *either* at Westminster *or* in the constituency (one place only), secretarial and clerical assistance, and such items as stationery, postage, telegrams, etc. By Treasury Order the sum of £100 is allowed to all Members of Parliament in respect of the allowable expenses, but if any Member can show that his actual expenditure exceeds that figure, the law provides that the actual expenditure is to be allowed.

3. *Expenses allowed in the year 1941-42.* The following table shows the distribution of the expenses allowances made in the Income Tax assessment for the year 1941-42 for 493 Members of Parliament.

<i>Annual rate of expense.</i>	<i>Number of cases.</i>	<i>Approximate percentage of total.</i>
£100 ... ..	55	11
£101-199 ... ..	26	5
£200-299 ... ..	33	7
£300-399 ... ..	70	14
£400-549 ... ..	136	28
£550-599 ... ..	43	9
£600 ... ..	130	26
	493	

4. *Expenses allowance for the year 1945-46.* The following table of allowances for the current year, 1945-46 relates only to new Members and the total of 277 cases covered by the table represents the cases dealt with up to the end of September. In the case of new Members the allowances are, of course, provisional and will be open to revision at the end of the year, in the light of the expenses then shown to have been actually incurred.

<i>Annual rate of expense.</i>	<i>Number of claims.</i>	<i>Approximate percentage of total.</i>
£100 ... ..	7	2
£101-199 ... ..	10	3
£200-299 ... ..	19	7
£300-399 ... ..	35	13
£400-449 ... ..	23	8
£450-499 ... ..	27	10
£500-549 ... ..	27	10
£550-599 ... ..	16	6
£600 ... ..	113	41
	277	

Inland Revenue,  
12th December, 1945.

#### APPENDIX VI.

#### MEMORANDUM FROM THE LONDON GROUP OF LABOUR MEMBERS.

1. *Income Tax.*—We desire to draw the attention of the Select Committee to the difference in the position of London Members and other Members for Income Tax purposes.

A deputation saw the Financial Secretary to the Treasury who explained that the difference existed in fact.

This difference places London Members at a serious financial disadvantage.

The Board of Inland Revenue will allow living expenses for a provincial Member attending Westminster but nothing for a London Member. Apart from bed and breakfast, a London Member has the same cost of living expenses as any other Member, i.e. lunch, tea, and dinner. The provincial Member can charge these as legitimate expenses for Income Tax purposes but the London Member cannot. He is, therefore, in an invidious position. The Board of Inland Revenue disallow any cost of living allowance merely because he represents an area adjacent to Westminster, without reference to where he may live. We would like to know—and only this Committee has the power to find out—who

defines what is a "London M.P.", e.g. Woolwich, which is a Metropolitan Borough, is farther from Westminster than Willesden which is outside the Metropolitan Area. Does the Board of Inland Revenue take Metropolitan London only into account or is there some arbitrary decision based upon distance from Westminster.

London Members obviously receive more visitors than other Members. The cost of entertainment of these constituents is high, but the Board of Inland Revenue refuses to recognise this as a Parliamentary allowance. We therefore lose both ways: we are granted no cost of living allowance from Income Tax as are other Members, and we have to spend more on constituents than any other body of Members.

2. *Travelling Facilities.*—In our opinion, the travel voucher arrangements are extremely unsatisfactory. The presentation of a voucher every time a journey has to be made is causing delay, annoyance and unnecessary work, not to mention the extra cost to the Exchequer. A simple analysis would prove that in the majority of cases a monthly season ticket would avoid all this and cost less.

We desire to raise with the Committee two specific points concerning a London Member who lives outside London. He may have to spend the night out because of a late sitting of the House. As things stand, any cost incurred thereby cannot be claimed as an Income Tax Allowance; similarly, a London Member cannot claim for the hire of a taxi or a private-car to take him either to his home or to a Main line Terminus.

It often happens that because of a London Member's nearness to the House he is expected to be in his constituency when the House is sitting. More often than not this means taxi both ways, especially if divisions are likely to occur. He can claim nothing because in theory he could use a railway voucher. A bus would often be more convenient and a taxi certainly quicker.

In our view the whole question of travelling facilities needs examination. The voucher system is more irritating to the London Members than it is an advantage.

We ask the Select Committee to give consideration to these points, not with the object of giving London Members any special preference but merely to put them on a par with other Members.

#### APPENDIX VII.

##### MEMORANDUM FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MEMBERS' EXPENSES

by Mr. Quintin Hogg (a Member of the House).

1. I have been a Member of Parliament since 1938. During this time I have never failed to satisfy the Income Tax Inspectors that my expenses as a Member of Parliament exclusive of Election expenses and of charitable donations amounted to something more than £600 a year. They now amount to a figure which I have not precisely calculated but which I estimate at £750. From 13th April, 1945, until the fall of the Caretaker Government I was Under-Secretary of State for Air with a salary of £1,500. During this period none of my expenses as a Member of Parliament which remained constant were deductible from my salary as Minister. In the result, regarding salary and emoluments only it was a net gain to me of about £150 a year to have been appointed Minister, but in fact I lost a net sum of about £1,400 a year, since I was debarred from earning money as a Journalist and an Author during that time.

2. During the period for which I have been a Member of Parliament the cost of living has risen by a sum which so far as Members of Parliament is concerned is certainly in excess of the increase in the official cost of living figure. For instance, when I became a Member I was able to employ a Secretary at not more than £2 10s. per week. The salary now for a good Secretary is £5 5s. a week. Other expenses have not all risen in proportion but they have risen by a figure which I do not estimate at less than 50 per cent.

3. I have made some enquiries as to the salaries of Members of Parliament outside this country—in the British Dominions and in America. It is well known that Congressmen receive 10,000 dollars a year with allowances for Offices and two Secretaries. I understand it is proposed to increase this salary by something like 50 per cent. The position of a congressman is not completely analogous to that of a British Member of Parliament since he has a larger number of Constituents and Washington is further from his Constituency as compared with any British Constituency. His expenses are therefore greater and his inability to earn his living as a result of his Membership to Congress may be more complete. I do not therefore regard the high salary payable to Congressmen as a precedent for putting up the salary of British Members of Parliament or Junior Ministers by a comparable sum. On the other hand it is a good precedent for paying them reasonably. So far as I can make out the British House of Commons is the worst paid in all the Dominions, including I understand the provincial legislatures of Canada.

4. So far as the average expenses of Members of Parliament are concerned, I should direct the attention of the Committee to a recent Book "Parliamentary Representation" by Mr. J. F. S. Ross at Chapter 15. So far as I understand the matter the facts are generally correctly stated in this Book. The only criticism I offer is that he has estimated the cost of a conscientious membership of the House of Commons at rather too low a figure for an active member. His conclusion was:—

"It may therefore be estimated that, in normal circumstances a man needs a private income of from, say, £900 to £2,000 a year to be a Liberal Member of Parliament."

"A man cannot normally be a Conservative Member of Parliament unless he possesses a private income of from £1,500 to £5,000 a year."

"An Independent Member can hardly hope to pay his way without a private income of at least £1,200 a year."

"A working class Member (of the Labour Party) may need roughly £350 a year in addition to his salary of £600."

All these figures are presumably at 1938 prices.

I do not think the differences between the parties are as great as the author represents, and if they are I feel certain that the differences will tend to level themselves out to a great extent since the figure required by a Labour Member will tend to become greater and the figure possessed by a Conservative will tend to become less. What does emerge from this extraordinary position is that anybody who does not belong to one or two or three chosen professions (Journalism, the Law or Trade Union Officialdom) cannot hope to be a Member of Parliament and bring up a family unless he has substantial private means.

5. In my opinion the situation revealed by the above facts is wholly unsatisfactory. The work done by Members of Parliament has multiplied three or four times since the beginning of the Century owing to the vast increase of Constituency work brought about by the development of the modern administrative state and owing to the greatly increased length of the sittings. Whereas in 1900 a Membership of Parliament could be carried on efficiently as at best a half time job, in modern times conscientious Members of Parliament must put in at least as much work as the ordinary member of a profession not in the busiest practice. In addition to this he must somehow possess or earn an income of (I estimate) anything up to £1,000 a year.

I should draw the attention of the Committee to the judgment of Lord Snell quoted in "Our Parliament" by S. Gordon (Hansard Society, 1945) as follows:—

"As a result of seven years' experience, I am convinced that the average Member of Parliament works at greater pressure and for longer hours than nine-tenths of those who elected him, and that if the factory worker, miner, or engineer had the same strain put upon him he would drop tools within a month and demand better conditions of work."

6. It is said against a substantial increase of salary that thereby a professional class of Politicians will arise. The fact is of course that one has already arisen and has existed for some time. The great majority of Members of Parliament have perforce to treat their interest in politics as a part-time employment, but it would be difficult to see what other occupation Pitt, Disraeli, or Mr. Gladstone had during their lives or Mr. Churchill at the present time. In the case of Disraeli the greater part of his life was in opposition and unpaid. In old days it was possible for such men to draw their livelihood from substantial personal wealth, but this is not now the case and it is a pure matter of accident that a man in Mr. Churchill's position happens also to be a writer and lecturer of genius. As a matter of fact many Members of Parliament are indirectly subsidised in respect of their political activities, but they draw their emoluments from sources other than the State. Members in the Labour Party frequently, perhaps usually, receive emoluments from organisations affiliated to their Party which they happen to serve, sometimes directly increased by reason of their representing them in Parliament. But this is not confined to Party or to the back benches. Ministers in recent Governments, after their resignation, have clearly begun to receive salaries from various sources which it is doubtful if they would have been offered in all cases were they not Statesmen of high standing. If they had not received these salaries they could not have continued their public work.

The number of members who after a period of membership of Parliament can return on competitive terms to a profession or trade and still carry on their membership of Parliament is extremely limited.

7. Before making my recommendations on this matter I feel I should point out that my own interest is less than the average of a Member of Parliament. I am the heir to a peerage and cannot hope to benefit for a very long period from any improvements in the status of Members of the House of Commons. Moreover I have been in some respects fortunate in that I have never found it difficult to earn money in journalism or from the exercise of my profession at the Bar. These advantageous facts enable me to take a somewhat more detached point of view than some others who are less fortunately placed than myself. I therefore recommend:—

(1) That the salaries of Junior Ministers should be made up to not less than £2,500 a year and their expenses as Members of Parliament deductible from them for the purpose of Income Tax. This might be done either by permitting a small increased salary to be drawn in addition to the salary of a Member of Parliament or by increasing the salary of the Minister by a greater amount.

(2) I consider that the salary of Members of Parliament should not be less than £1,500 a year. I arrive at this figure by the following considerations. Allowing for the increase in expenses the figure of £900 per annum would simply put the position where it was in 1938 and I consider that this position was unsatisfactory. I consider that a further £600 per annum at least is necessary for a Member of Parliament to live at all respectably and do his work conscientiously with the Secretarial assistance which he requires. I do not consider that he should be debarred from earning additional sums by part-time work in other spheres. It is impossible to assess in terms of money at all the value of the public functions of a Member of Parliament, but the work which a good Member of Parliament does for individuals in his Constituency would amount in the open market, in my judgment, to not less

than £2,000 a year. I do not consider that a Member of Parliament should be paid at the market rate. The figure of £1,500 in my own case would work out at £750 expenses and £750 taxable income.

(3) I do not consider that Members of Parliament should be given any allowances in respect of expenses in addition to their travelling as at present as I consider that these are either an inducement to inefficiency or an inducement to dishonesty according as to whether an account has to be given or the money can be drawn in any event. The only solution is to put the salary of Members of Parliament at a reasonable figure and leave them to pay their own expenses out of this sum. They will then have an inducement to efficiency in so far that they will share in any savings they can reasonably make, and an inducement to spend the money which the work requires in so far that they can claim a refund of Income Tax if they do so.

8. It may be said that these proposals are somewhat revolutionary in their scope. My answer is that the situation requires a radical solution. The position and functions of a Member of Parliament have changed radically from the time when it was assumed that any Member of the House of Commons would have a sufficiency of income to live independently of his public functions, and when it was also assumed that membership of the House of Commons required comparatively small part of a Member's time. I should point out that from the early part of the 18th century until about the middle of the 19th a Member of Parliament had to subscribe a statutory declaration that he was in possession of an income of not less than £600 a year derived from land at a time when taxation was negligible and the value of money very much greater than it is now.

In these circumstances it is, in my judgment, completely and absolutely certain that unless a radical solution is achieved of this extraordinary complicated and difficult problem one of two and possibly both of two serious evils will inevitably arise sooner or later. Either the House of Commons will be deprived of an adequate supply of men of sufficient quality to undertake its duties or the standard of morality which is now of the highest, and which has been built up by centuries of struggle will diminish, as I already detect some signs that it is beginning to do.

9. On a slightly more pedestrian level may I put in a humble plea for season tickets on the Underground, between home and Westminster or Constituency and Westminster? The expense would be negligible, and it is not a popular move to ask for a 1½d. fare to be given one in return for a green form fully made out!

29th December, 1945.

QUINTIN HOGG.

#### APPENDIX VIII.

##### STATEMENT OF OPINION OF A NUMBER OF CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE SENT TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MEMBERS' EXPENSES.

On the subject of the emoluments and expenses of Members of Parliament.

1. This statement expresses the views of the following Conservative Members of Parliament:

Lt.-Col. Heathcote Amery, Capt. Astor, Mr. A. E. Baldwin, Major Beamish, The Hon. E. Carson, Lt.-Col. Corbett, Col. Gomm-Duncan, Col. Erroll, Mr. W. Fletcher, Maj. Hugh Fraser, Lt.-Col. Kingsmill, Maj. Legg-Bourke, Mr. Martin Lindsay, Col. Mackeson, Brig. Maclean, Maj. Maude, Cdr. Noble, Brig. Price-Palmer, Major the Hon. S. Ramsay, Col. Stoddart-Scott, Mr. W. M. F. Vane, Gp.-Capt. the Hon. G. R. Ward.

2. No general canvas has been made for support of this statement, all those who have subscribed to it being the personal friends of the instigators.

3. We consider that Parliament should enact legislation to raise the emoluments of Members to a level sufficiently high not only to defray all legitimate expenses, but also to enable him or her to live on the salary.

4. We base the necessity for the changes we recommend upon two grounds:
- (a) That nobody should be precluded from becoming a Member of Parliament merely because of lack of means, and
  - (b) That Members should neither be prevented from attending to their Parliamentary duties by the necessity of earning a living, nor hampered in the execution of those duties by being unable to afford the expenses that efficiency dictates.

5. It is a well-known fact that many good potential candidates are at the present time prevented by lack of means from entering Parliament. By way of example, the Chairman of the Labour Party in a Midlands Constituency, an Assistant Director of Education, felt obliged by financial consideration to decline several invitations to stand at the last General Election, having a wife and three children. There must be a great number of other excellent potential Members who, for the same reason, never appear before Selection Committees. The consequence is that the nation does not at the present time have as good a choice of Members as is desirable.

6. It is also well known that a large number of Members spend a great part of each week earning a living, many of whom would no doubt prefer to be able to concentrate entirely upon their Parliamentary duties and Constituency interests. We are of the opinion that the complexity and volume of modern legislation and the increasing claims of the constituencies make it more and more difficult for Members to fulfil their duties.

7. We have heard three considerations advanced in argument against our proposals. These are:

- (a) That Members should have interests outside Parliament in order to be able to contribute their quota of specialist knowledge.
- (b) That such measures would result in a new and undesirable type of "professional politician", and
- (c) That it is morally indefensible for Members to increase their own salaries at a time when there is poverty among sections of the community.

These three considerations are now examined in some detail.

8. The "outside interests" argument has already been partly dealt with in para. 6 above.

We are emphatically of the opinion that Members should have a firm background of knowledge of one or more aspects of our national life, but we consider that this should have been acquired before entering Parliament.

9. It is said that a living wage for Members of Parliament would result in Members being in a position of having too much to lose in addition to their seats. But professional politicians have been a feature of this and every other legislature at least since the time of Disraeli. And since the necessity of incrementing emoluments exists, it is surely more desirable that this should be done by the State than by sectional interests.

10. In our judgment the only serious objection to an increase in emoluments is the natural disinclination of Members to vote for an increase in their own perquisites, and the public prejudice that may be aroused by such a course of action.

Because of these considerations we are of the opinion that legislation for a substantial increase in emoluments should only take effect from after the next General Election. But we would not wish this to preclude any short term measure, such as would be based on the increased cost of living since 1937.

11. We are also of the opinion that the reasons for an increase in the emoluments of Members should be most carefully explained to the public.

12. It will have been noticed that the word " emoluments " rather than " salary " has been used throughout this memorandum. This is because we do not wish to exclude expenses allowances from consideration.

13. In our judgment two aspects of the life of a Member of Parliament have to be taken into account:

(a) The expenses resulting from Parliament and constituency duties, e.g. secretarial, postage, trunk calls, the essential maintenance of a car for most constituencies, the double expense of living in two places, etc., and

(b) the income a man requires to live upon, including the maintenance of a family life and provision for old age.

While we are not unanimous, we are broadly in agreement that (a) might well be covered by an expenses allowance, not subject to tax, and (b) by a salary wholly or partly subject to tax.

14. The argument in favour of an expenses allowance in addition to a salary is twofold.

Firstly, the expenses of Members vary considerably. For example, those of a Member living in a rural constituency may well be twice that of the representative of a central London division, who need not live in two places and probably can manage without a car and with reduced secretarial and postage expenses.

Secondly, if expenses are not to be covered by an allowance the salary must be correspondingly inflated. The general public cannot be expected fully to understand the necessary and unavoidable expenses of the occupation, therefore in our opinion consideration should be given to an expenses allowance in addition to salary.

15. It has been said that there should be no " hidden perquisites " attached to membership of the House of Commons. With this contention we fully concur, but repayment of necessary expenses cannot properly be so classified. It has never been suggested that travelling allowances or O.H.M.S. postage of Government departments are hidden perquisites of Civil Servants.

16. In conclusion we would repeat that while we are not all in agreement as to the best methods of effecting it, we are in no doubt whatever that a considerable increase in the emoluments of Members is in the national interest, and that this increase is a matter of urgent public importance.

(Signed) MARTIN LINDSAY,  
JOHN MAUDE.

#### APPENDIX IX.

#### WRITTEN EVIDENCE SUBMITTED TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MEMBERS' EXPENSES BY A GROUP OF LABOUR MEMBERS FROM THE HOME COUNTIES AREA.

1. This Memorandum is presented by the Greater London and Home Counties Group of Labour Members. The total number of Members in the Group is 53 and the Memorandum represents a general consensus of their views.

2. The Group presenting this Memorandum submit:—

(a) That the efficiency of Parliament is gravely impaired if Members have not sufficient Secretarial assistance and facilities to provide an adequate service to their constituents, or to undertake the drafting and circulation of memoranda and documents which may be necessary in their Parliamentary work.

(b) That the efficiency of Parliament is likewise impaired if Members are prevented by lack of money or facilities from personally investigating matters before Parliament, and questions with which, as Members, they may have to deal.

3. The provisions of a cash allowance to enable the Member to make arrangements to provide these facilities and assistance, is, it is submitted, entirely



independent of the remuneration which should be paid to the Member and is the more important aspect of the matter. This Memorandum, therefore, deals largely with expenses, as opposed to remuneration (though some aspects of the question of remuneration are mentioned in paragraph 9 below).

4. Expenses, it is suggested, should be calculated by determining first what are the Members' responsibilities and then upon this basis, what are the expenses which must be incurred in carrying out these responsibilities.

5. In the opinion of the Group, the responsibilities of a Member are:—

(a) *Dealing with the problems of constituents and the consultation with other Members and interests in regard to matters before Parliament.*

It is suggested that this must involve a considerable amount of Secretarial work, the cost of which should be borne by the State.

While at present many Members cannot afford Secretarial assistance, this reduces their efficiency by occupying the Members personally in transcribing letters, by preventing the Member very often making the full enquiries he could if he had a Secretary to pursue the matter on his behalf. From the Ministers' point of view, it is believed it is unsatisfactory that Members are forced through want of Secretarial help, merely to direct correspondence to Ministries, instead of themselves exploring and elucidating the question. It is suggested the calculation of Secretarial expenses should include:—

(i) Salary of Secretary,

(ii) Postage, telephones and telegrams,

(iii) In view of the absence of accommodation in the House of Commons, some allowance for office accommodation.

(b) *Visiting the constituency and dealing there with Parliamentary questions.*

This is already admitted by the Income Tax authorities as legitimate expenses and may involve a Member in heavy expenses. Many of the Members of this Group have constituencies where transport arrangements are difficult and where a car is required, if a Member is to make a regular practise of visiting all parts of his constituency. Since petrol coupons are issued to Members on the grounds that the use of a car by them is necessary in their work as Members, it is submitted that some contribution towards the cost of running a car might be legitimately included in a Member's expenses.

(c) *Attendance at the House of Commons.*

Owing to the hours worked, Members incur expenses which the normal citizen does not. For example, the Member must take his evening meal out and not in his home. He may have, on occasion, to take a taxi to his lodging when the House sits late. The fact that a Member must be in attendance at the House of Commons means in practice, that he must receive visitors there and however careful he may be, this must involve him in some expense for entertainment. Owing to the proximity of the constituencies of Members of the Group to the House of Commons visitors from the constituencies are frequent. The scarcity of accommodation alone may compel the Member to receive his guest in the tea room or restaurant, and the fact that the constituent has probably an hour's journey or so before he can return to his home, means that the Member must, on many occasions, offer him some refreshment. Some Members of the Group have had to take accommodation in London in order to attend the House of Commons and though this problem is not so acute as perhaps it is for the other Members whose homes are situated further than London, the question of the upkeep of two homes does arise in certain cases with the Greater London and Home Counties Group.

(d) *Informing himself about matters which are before Parliament.*

If the constitutional theory is accepted that a Member represents the whole country and not merely his own constituency, there must be a number of occasions when it is proper and necessary for him to travel to other

parts of the country. While there is clearly a line to be drawn between party work and work as a Member of the House, a Member may well incur expenses attending conferences and enquiries, which he attends as a Member of Parliament rather than as a Party politician. So long as a direct responsibility for government in the Colonies and in India rests upon the British Parliament, it is desirable that Members should occasionally be able to visit the Colonial and Indian Empires to investigate problems upon which they may be called to legislate. In the same way a Member may consider it his duty to go abroad in order to inform himself in regard to some matter before Parliament, and his independence may be restricted if some organisation or foreign Government pays the cost of his visit.

6. *Provision of facilities in kind considered not generally practicable.*—The view of the Group is that these needs cannot in the main be made by service in kind. The Group considered carefully the possibility of a pool of shorthand-typists and a centralised State-run Secretarial service, but they were strongly of the opinion that this plan was quite impracticable for a variety of reasons. The Group therefore submits that a money allowance should be paid to enable Members themselves to employ Secretarial help, pay telephone, telegram and postage bills and constituency expenses, and meet travel and other costs.

7. *Limited facilities in kind.* It is suggested, however, that the provision of the following services in kind should be considered—

(a) *Secretarial.* A central duplicating office which would prepare free of charge, up to a fixed maximum, copies of memoranda.

(b) *Travel.* It is suggested that the additional cost of granting Members a free pass on all long distance transport (except air, where the present voucher system might be continued) should be investigated. In any event, the Group was strongly of opinion that season tickets should be made available for Members between their homes and Westminster. This question particularly affects Members of this Group, since many of them live in the outer London area and return to their homes each night. The filling in of warrants for single short journeys appears merely to be a waste of time which involves considerable unnecessary accountancy charges.

The Group further suggests that Parliamentary warrants should be made available for use on all London transport services in the same way as it is understood military travel warrants are now available.

8. *Other facilities.* Quite apart from any question of payment, there are certain priorities and facilities which, it is suggested, should be granted to Members to enable them to carry out their work:—

(a) It is suggested that it is desirable that it should be established that Members are entitled to all reasonable facilities to enable them to visit civilian and military areas overseas in regard to which there arise questions before Parliament. It is suggested, that the Committee might examine the privileges granted to Members of the legislature of other countries in regard to the issue of diplomatic passports and should consider what practicable steps could be taken to ensure that Members receive, at least, the same facilities for travel abroad as are at present accorded to journalists and business men.

(b) Since Members will be restricted in the time of their travel abroad to the periods of the recess, it should be established that they are entitled to such priorities and facilities as will enable them to carry out these visits in these periods.

9. *Members' remuneration.* It is believed that when Members' salaries were instituted, it was thought that normally Members would have some other source of income, or could easily obtain part time employment. If Standing Committees are to meet regularly in the morning this will involve the whole time attendance of Members. The Group gave careful consideration to the possibility of Members obtaining part time employment. Their view was that in the great majority of cases, this was quite impracticable under present conditions. In these circumstances, the Group submits that Members' remuneration should

be sufficient to enable the Member to give his whole time to his Parliamentary duties, without becoming personally financially embarrassed.

10. The Group suggests that consideration might be given to the payment of an adequate pension to Members who have served for a long period in the House and to the continuation for a certain period of a Member's salary after an electoral defeat. This last provision would give greater independence to Members by removing the threat of an immediate loss of income in the event of a dissolution and would remove the anomaly by which a Member, unlike the holder of another job, has no period of notice. The tentative suggestions that are made are:—

(a) There should be a contributory pension scheme for Members retiring at 65 and above, calculated on their length of service in the House, and paid without any test as to means.

(b) That in the event of a Member being defeated, but not retiring, his salary should be continued for a period of six months.

#### ANNEXURE.

A questionnaire was submitted to the Members of the Group in an effort to estimate the cost of the expenses incurred by Members in the course of their duties. The following is an analysis of the returns:—

##### *Secretarial expenses.*

*Salary of Secretary and Secretarial Expenses (stationery, files, typewriter upkeep, stencils, etc.).* Twelve Members of the Group are already paying more than £100 p.a. for secretarial assistance. Only one Member of the Group considered that this item ought to cost less than £100 p.a. and the general estimate made by Members of what the item ought to be was £250 p.a. Only four Members suggested that a smaller sum might be sufficient.

*Telephone, Telegrams and Postage.* The amounts here estimated by Members as at present spent varied from £25 p.a. to £250 p.a. The mean figure given was around £100 p.a.

##### *Office accommodation.*

Eleven Members of the Group at present pay for office accommodation used in connection with their Parliamentary work, and the sums paid vary from £26 p.a. to £100 p.a. The majority of those at present not paying for office accommodation considered that it was necessary and their estimates ran from £26 p.a. to £150 p.a.

##### *Visiting the constituency.*

Under this head Members were asked for all constituency expenses falling on themselves. In almost every case in the Group, it appeared that the majority of constituency expenses were borne by the local Party, but one Member estimated that his present constituency expenses, which included a car, an agent, and office and a typist, were £1,000 p.a. In other cases, the estimates were much lower and varied from £6 p.a. to £150. The higher figures appeared generally to be accounted for by the expenses occasioned by running a car in the constituency.

##### *Attendance at the House of Commons.*

The estimates made of the extra expense involved in attending the House varied very considerably. Of the 23 Members answering this query in detail, 10 estimated their expenses at less than £100 and 13 at over £100, but of those estimating it at under £100, 5 considered that they should in fact spend more in order to do their work with the fullest efficiency. The mean figure was around £150, which included expenses of living in London, where applicable, and other extra costs.

*Travel and attending to matters as a Member outside the constituency.*

Very few Members of the Group stated that they were able to afford anything under this head at present, although seven estimated actual annual expenses ranging from £50 to £100, and Members found it difficult to make any estimate of what sum would be likely to be spent under this head. When the matter was discussed at the Group, it was thought that a journey abroad to the Colonial Empire or to India undertaken at the Member's own expense might, even if carried out with the greatest economy, well involve the expenditure of £100. The cost of travel at home was considered more difficult to estimate but clearly must amount to a certain sum.

*Other expenses.*

One or two Members of the Group, who were interested in special subjects, at present incur certain expenses in regard to the purchase of books and periodicals. Members also incur some expenses in regard to membership of such bodies as the Empire Parliamentary Association.

At the Group meeting, the question of expenses was discussed with a view to determining if possible a global total, which would cover all of the items set out above, and the decision was reached that the minimum sum required to cover these expenses would be £600 p.a.

## APPENDIX X.

## LETTER AND TWO MEMORANDA UPON WHICH THE COMMITTEE DID NOT HEAR ORAL EVIDENCE.

## (1)

LETTER TO THE CHAIRMAN FROM MR. C. E. DAVIES (a Member of the House).

7th February, 1946.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN,

Referring to your letter, I understand that you do not now require me to give verbal evidence before the Committee but you would like me to state very shortly the suggestions I would make with regard to payment of expenses and amenities that should be given to Members of Parliament. If you consider it necessary for me to give my reasons for these suggestions, I will be only too ready to give them, but my suggestions are:—

1. That there should be free travel on all railways and not merely between London and the constituency;
2. That the Member of Parliament should be entitled to frank his letters;
3. That he should be allowed a sum of £250, to cover his Secretarial and other expenses;
4. That his salary should be raised to £1,000 which will of course, be subject to taxation;
5. That there should be available for Members small furnished flats within a short distance of the House. The flats should provide him with a sitting room, bedroom, bath-room and small kitchenette, but there should also be available for all the occupants of the flats, a common dining room.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) CLEMENT DAVIES.

TOM SMITH, Esq., M.P.

(2)

## MEMORANDUM ON MEMBERS' SALARIES AND EXPENSES SUBMITTED BY THE EASTERN AND WESSEX GROUP OF THE PARLIAMENTARY LABOUR PARTY

## SELECT COMMITTEE ON MEMBERS' EXPENSES

The Eastern and Wessex Group of the Parliamentary Labour Party has given comprehensive consideration to the matters under review by the Select Committee on Members' expenses and salaries. This consideration included, in addition to facilities at present provided:—secretarial assistance; stationery; post-ages, telegrams and telephone calls; cost of subsistence and lodgings either in London or in the constituency; necessary entertainment of constituents at the House. The Group has agreed that the following arrangements are necessary and desirable:—

(1) The salary of a member to remain as at present, namely, £600 per annum. This salary would be subject to tax in the same way as all other salaries.

(2) A Member should receive an allowance to cover all expenses (other than those set out in paragraph (3) below) incurred as a result of his duties, of £600 per annum, which, being an expense allowance, will of course not be subject to tax. This amount to be increased by 10 per cent. for constituencies whose electorate exceeds 50,000, and by 25 per cent. for county constituencies. Thus, the expense allowance will be as follows:—

For boroughs not exceeding 50,000 electorate ... ..	£600
For boroughs exceeding 50,000 electorate ... ..	£660
For counties not exceeding 50,000 electorate ... ..	£750
For counties exceeding 50,000 electorate ... ..	£810

(3) This allowance shall be deemed to cover the whole of the expenses incurred by the member, except only the following, which shall be supplied to him free of charge:—

(a) a pass entitling him to travel free anywhere within Great Britain on all forms of public transport;

(b) all inland telephone calls and telegrams made from the members' telephones in the House of Commons, whether local, toll or trunk;

(c) free delivery of all mail posted in the House and addressed to any Government Department, any member or officer of the House of Commons or the House of Lords; and

(d) stationery used within the premises of the House.

(4) In addition, it is considered that a private office should be provided for every member who desires one, either within the building, or so near as to be within call of the division bell. Any member who wishes to have such an office to take it on a quarterly tenancy, and to pay for it a reasonable rent out of the expense allowance allocated as per paragraph (2).

LUCY NOEL-BUXTON (*Chairman*).

JOHN HAIRE (*Secretary*).

(3)

## WRITTEN EVIDENCE SUBMITTED TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON MEMBERS' EXPENSES BY A GROUP OF NORTHERN LABOUR MEMBERS.

1. This Memorandum is presented by the Northern Labour Group of Members of Parliament. The Group consists of thirty-one Members, and this Memorandum represents their general views.

2. In our opinion, the present salary of a Member of Parliament is inadequate and not commensurate with his work and responsibilities. We believe that owing to their inadequate remuneration many Members find it difficult efficiently and fully to perform their duties.

3. In considering Members' salaries, we consider that due allowance should be made for the following factors:—

(a) the expenses incidental to the work of a Member, such as the entertainment of constituents and, in the case of Members whose constituencies are not situate near London, the provision of two homes;

(b) the increasing cost of secretarial assistance, postage and similar expenses;

(c) the insecurity of tenure of a Member and the necessity of making some provision for the contingency of electoral defeat.

4. In our opinion, the salary of a Member should be based on the assumption that the work of a Member constitutes full-time employment.

5. Bearing these factors in mind, we submit that the salary of a Member of Parliament should not be less than £1,000 a year, the present arrangements for tax relief being continued.

6. We do not suggest that specific allowances of salary should be made for secretarial or other assistance. The assistance required varies with the needs of the individual Member, and whilst we urge that the provision of such assistance should be considered in deciding the amount of a Member's salary, we consider it inadvisable to allocate any specific portion of the Member's salary for that purpose. We believe that the provision of such assistance other than by the Member himself is impracticable.

7. We propose that Members be granted free travel on all journeys arising out of their public duties.

8. If the provision of general free travel is impracticable, then we submit that Members of county constituencies should be allowed free travel within their constituencies. Where it is more convenient for a Member of such a constituency to travel by car and he does so, we suggest that a travelling allowance should be made.

9. We suggest that free telephone calls be extended to include calls made by a Member to his constituency on Parliamentary business.

10. We are not satisfied that the present provisions regarding pensions for Members are sufficient, and we suggest that the matter be reviewed in order to provide pensions as of right and without inquiry into means.

11. The Group further believes that Junior Ministers are inadequately remunerated, and that their salaries should be reviewed and increased.