



Parliament RH
Members
CC CDL
CSD

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

17 July 1980

Dear Edward,

I last wrote to you about the Review Body's Thirteenth Report on 14 February 1980 to tell you that we intended to propose acceptance of the recommendations contained in the Report subject to certain modifications.

Since then the Report has been debated in the House and, as you will be aware, a number of amendments to the Government motions on the secretarial allowance, and on severance pay, and an amendment which introduces free travel in the UK were passed. The amendment on the secretarial allowance provides for a further sum of £675 to be available solely for payment into an approved scheme for a secretary's pension; and that on severance pay doubled the improved payments which the Review Body had recommended. The amendment on free travel accords with your recommendations but, as I explained, the Government was reluctant to propose its acceptance because of the potentially very high costs involved.

Given the strength of feeling on these matters we have decided to accept the will of the House on the amendments. However we are mindful of your statement that it is important that Parliament should be seen to apply the standards of accountability it would expect to see elsewhere. We therefore propose to introduce measures to enable rather closer monitoring by the Fees Office in the House of Commons of the secretarial allowance and Members' travel.

Yours ever

The Rt Honourable Lord Boyle of Handsworth

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