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Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,  
Prime Minister,  
House of Commons,  
London, S.W.1.

*Dear Margaret,*

MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES

When Tom King announced the allowances package on Monday I had already left the meeting, but from what my officers tell me it is again a total let-down.

What is now proposed still amounts to less in money terms than was agreed between Richard Crossman and the then Labour GLC (we concurred) in 1965. Nearly fifteen years have gone by, the tangle of government is thicker, the responsibilities weightier, the value of money has declined and yet we are still to be treated as naughty schoolchildren who, left alone, might squander our pennies in the tuck shop.

What makes it the more unpalatable is the facility with which the Commons attended to its own financial interest. I know that you personally are to be excepted from this criticism (just as you know that I personally can scarcely benefit from any improvements in the allowances) but the disparity between the self-indulgence of MPs and the treatment of Councillors, if along the lines indicated by Tom King, is scandalous.

There is growing pressure for justice to be done and in this matter I have a responsibility to all Members here, of both parties. I must therefore ask you to bring some sense into the present thinking. Despite the pressures in public expenditure it is surely not asking too much for the authorities to be allowed to make up their own minds - and take the local flak if need be - within very general expenditure guidelines. We are, after all, rolling back the spread of central control - are we not?

*With best wishes*

*Yours ever  
Horace.*