

Orchard House,
Lower Dunsforth,
York,
North Yorkshire YO26 9RZ
Tel: (01423) 324 951

RECEIVED
05 MAY 2006

1 May 2006

Ms. Gemma Craigan,
Committee on Standards in Public Life,
35 Great Smith Street,
London SW1P 3BQ

Dear Ms. Craigan,

Thank you for your letter of 13 April 2006. I very much appreciate the care you took in providing such a detailed reply to my letter of 20 March. Given the quality of your reply I feel that I can now let the matters I raised rest, and simply await the publication of the various reports that will no doubt be issued. That to be published by Scotland Yard will be of particular interest.

There is one issue on which I would appreciate your help, and that involves the proposed reform of the funding of political parties. Would you be kind enough either to forward my views to Sir Hayden Phillips or to let me have his address so that I may write to him directly.

I strongly oppose the proposal that political parties should be funded by the state, which, of course, means the taxpayer. The present system has the great advantage of linking the donation to a party to the party's performance. If the donor, be it a trade union, business or individual, does not like that performance it can simply withdraw the next donation. The problem with the present system has been the willingness of various politicians to bend the rules and to behave in a manner that has sufficient evidence of corruption for Scotland Yard to be involved. What evidence is there to suggest that, should there be a different source of money, these politicians would suddenly behave in a proper manner?

I see several additional problems. Who would decide on what constitutes a political party? Why should the taxpayer subsidise fringe, protest parties who have no hope of getting more than a handful of votes? Why should the taxpayer pay thousands of pounds for the cost of hairdressers, makeup artists, fancy dress outfits, suits etc. during an election campaign? Should a fund be established out of taxation, there will be the inevitable rules. Each candidate's wife may spend x thousand pounds on hair dressing. Each candidate may buy y suits, and so on. How does the taxpayer protest if he or she sees their money being spent irresponsibly?

I very much hope that the proposal to have state funding for political parties will be rejected. With a permanent source of money available no matter what, politicians will be less inclined to worry about the essential relationship between performance and pay.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Calvin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "G" and a trailing flourish.

Dr. George Calvin