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13 JUL 2009

Solihull

Sir Christopher Kelly KCB  
Chairman  
The Committee on Standards in Public Life  
Council Chamber  
Broadway House  
Tothill Street  
London  
SW1H 9NQ

RECEIVED  
20 JUL 2009

July 6<sup>th</sup> 2009

Dear Sir Christopher,

It seems to me that over the last 10 to 20 years Parliament has lost its sense of propriety both within its MPs and its Officers. Whether this is due to a greater number of members coming into politics from a legal background or training I can't say, but it does appear that an expense claim being within the rules, is more important than whether it is appropriate.

Recently, almost to a man and woman, accused MPs have argued a defence that their action was within the rules and their contentions are largely supported by the Fees Office. As far as I know adultery is not against the law, but is quite unacceptable in most circumstances and is normally not encouraged much less approved. But it would appear that today Parliament would not frown on such a matter.

My conclusion is that we need to encourage a different type of person to take up politics: people who enjoy a shared sense of appropriateness in their personal behaviour regardless of their political party. To assist in bringing about this change, I suggest that if voting papers also had a place to record the vote "None of the above", voters at the local level, who could spot a self-serving candidate, would be able to record their concern. This might increase voter turnout by offering the disenchanting, not to say disgusted non-voters an opportunity to express their opinion.

Wishing you every success in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

A Erskine