



Prime Minister

You will remember that you asked me to get advice on this.

Ref. A084/711

MR BUTLER

This minute suggests that it would be all right for Mr. Gummer to receive his salary, or part of it, from the Party.

The Chief Whip has been pressing for this matter to be resolved.

You asked about payment of a salary to Mr Gummer, if he was appointed as Paymaster General and continued as Chairman of the Conservative Party. Shall I arrange a further meeting with him, the Lord President and Michael Atkin?

2. As you know, the Paymaster General can be either in or outside the Cabinet. If he is a member of the Cabinet, he is entitled to Cabinet-rank salary. FERB Yes and 5.3.

3. The official duties of the Paymaster General as such are of course negligible. Nonetheless there is no constitutional requirement that, to qualify for a Ministerial salary, a Paymaster General should spend a certain amount of time on Ministerial work. It is really a question of vulnerability to political criticism.

4. Previous Party Chairmen since the War who have been in the Government have all been in the Cabinet. All except Lord Hailsham and Lord Blakenham combined the Party Chairmanship with another substantial Ministerial post. Lord Hailsham and Lord Blakenham held the sinecure posts of Lord President and Chancellor of the Duchy respectively, but also had duties as Deputy Leader of the House of Lords.

5. There was some critical comment when Mr Gummer took over the Party Chairmanship, dropped some of his Ministerial duties, but retained his salary as a Minister of State, Department of Employment. Even then he did not drop all his Ministerial duties, and I suppose that an increase in salary from public funds (or even retaining the same salary) combined with a further loss of Ministerial responsibilities would attract renewed comment. I do not know if there are duties which Mr Gummer could be given as Paymaster General: could he, for example, be asked to assist Lord Whitelaw in advising on the presentation of Government policies? Would that be sufficiently convincing to enable the Prime Minister to meet unfavourable comment?



6. Mr Gummer could of course be Paymaster General, either inside or outside the Cabinet, but receive no Ministerial salary (or some amount less than the maximum salary set by a Statutory Order). If he was then to receive some outside remuneration in respect of his duties as Chairman of the Conservative Party, I think that it would be preferable for the payment to him to be made by the Party (rather than by any individual), so that there could be no question of improper influences.

REA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

5 March 1984

Econ Pol: TSPB pt. 6.



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