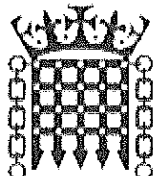


**DISMORE, Andrew**

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**From:** WOJNILKO, Anna  
**Sent:** 26 June 2009 17:45  
**To:** 'ehutchings@london.newsquest.co.uk'  
**Subject:** Letter from Andrew Dismore MP

**Andrew Dismore MP**  
**Labour Member of Parliament for Hendon**



**[www.AndrewDismoreMP.com](http://www.AndrewDismoreMP.com)**  
**[AndrewDismoreMP@parliament.uk](mailto:AndrewDismoreMP@parliament.uk)**

Our Reference: G/10/07/0001

**Please quote reference on all related correspondence**

Letter for publication

I refer to the letter attacking me in last week's "Times", over my allowances.

Dealing firstly with "food" claims, nobody has subsidized my supermarket bills. The reason this was permitted to be claimed is that unlike most people, who can go home for an evening meal, we have to eat in Parliament, due to the sitting hours well into the evening. Equally, the hours that I work at weekends in the constituency, on which my claims are based, reflect a similar problem. Nevertheless, I gave up my right to claim this allowance (which I consistently underclaimed) long before the recent reports arose.

As far as the accountant is concerned, if all I had to complete was a simple tax return with my income, then I would not need assistance to complete it. However, MPs are subject to a very peculiar tax regime, because we are, in the end, employees paying tax under schedule E (the easy part), but also employers, running what is effectively a small business at the same time. This is what makes the tax return complicated, and requires accountancy assistance to complete. We have to do a very complicated form of "double entry", of the allowances we receive for staffing, office costs and so on, and the amounts spent out of them, as well as having to account separately for capital items including depreciation from previous years. This is all difficult for a non-accountant to do, far more complicated than many small business accounts that I have seen. This is why an accountant is needed, to make sure that we are paying the correct amount of tax. It is certainly nothing to do with tax avoidance.

In fact, the cost of accountancy is treated as a benefit in kind, and we are taxed on it, as though it was part of our income. I do not know many small businesspeople who are in the position of having to

26/06/2009