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The Speaker of the House

House of Commons

London

via: hillyardm@parliament.uk

Dear Mr Speaker

ROLL A PARLIAMENTARY AGENT – Absolute Prohibition for Professional Misconduct

I am a Roll B Parliamentary Agent in the matter of Bournemouth & Manchester Private Bills and Pedlars (Regulation) Bill currently before the house with four other similar Bills.

I have studied ‘Rules relating to Parliamentary Agents and Petitioners’ and draw my grave concern to your attention for direction.

Sharpe Pritchard as Roll A Agents are responsible for bringing seven private bills before Parliament since 1999 which have achieved Assent. In the current session there are a further six bills and we are informed that a further fifty to seventy are seeking passage in the next session.

The direct cost to the charge paying public varies from £100,000 to £200,000 each bill, and to the tax payer considerably more for Government time. A lucrative business opportunity of some £12 million for “pedlars” of private legislation, and whereas presumably there is no direct law against such profit, my concern is to the method of promoting such bills through private business whilst relying on the public domain to benefit some Regulators but which causes direct harm to the Regulated (and others also).

I have requested minutes of all meetings from the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Town Centre Management and have asked to be invited to all meetings but have not yet received reply.

My colleague Mr McGerr has requested the same from the NABMA also without reply. The stated objective of the NABMA is “the repeal of the Pedlars Acts” [exhibit 1].

I attach copy of a flier [exhibit 2] which joins several vested interests in a promotional ploy (£20) with gratuity (wine & canapés).

This contravenes Rule 20.

Sharpe Pritchard sought to influence Parliament in the Select Committee Hearing on Opposed Bills in the House of Lords on 3rd July 2007 by circulating ‘legal framework’ to the bill [exhibit 3] without the name of the Parliamentary Agent attached to it.

This contravenes Rule 18.

Sharpe Pritchard are reliant upon seven Acts as precedent for the current batch of six bills and Lord Harrison's HL Paper 147 gives recognition to the previously unconsidered Regulated whom he has named "genuine pedlars".

This group who are wholly lawful has never been heard nor consulted until Lord Harrison's committee, but who failed to appreciate the extent that the bills catch not only these innocent victims but all citizens of voting age.

His committee also failed in the Government's direction to consider the justification for infringing human rights and that issue remains outstanding. Consideration of genuine pedlars has been flagrantly and repeatedly dismissed by the promoters' Agents through their divisive 'limited control' & double negative arguments.

The bill itself does not constitute a private bill because the issues are public and forty eight million citizens are affected (anyone above 17). Charge payers who have paid for previous Acts were never consulted about their local authority paying Parliamentary Agents for the permanent removal of the liberty that they each have - to become a pedlar and trade "anywhere" in the United Kingdom. Few take up the trade but once that liberty is removed by these bills it is likely to be a permanent removal.

The bills fail to state the Pedlars Act 1881 which extends the jurisdiction of the Pedlars Act 1871 to "anywhere" and that includes the streets in which the bills seek to prohibit the exemption of the pedlar and cause abuse to Human Rights.

Meddling by using an innocuous interpretation of words in a private bill, with the intent to repeal an original and effective Statute goes against Parliament and the "general interest" because a perfectly lawful activity in one jurisdiction is a crime in another and the Reverse Burden brought upon a pedlar to bring matters of interpretation and/or construction before the judiciary is practically insurmountable.

The bills cannot be framed in "the general interest" nor as "private bills" and I seek your direction that such attempt by the promoters is at least unprofessional and is misconduct - contravening Rule 22.

I seek your discretion to dismiss Sharpe Pritchard as Parliamentary Agents for breach of Rules 18, 20 & 22.

The Government through its department of BERR is seeking evidence of need for Dr Iddon's Private Members bill because to date no evidence capable of proof exists other than the anecdotal evidence being submitted in support of all these bills since Westminster Act 1999.

Analysis of an evidence base will determine the Government's position in the Autumn.

MP's Ian Liddell-Grainger and Christopher Chope maintain a blocking motion whilst evidence is gathered and I urge your direction to dismiss the current batch of bills in favour of a more carefully considered public bill procedure with Parliamentary Guidance on existing legislation, fit for the purpose, and in the general interest.

Erskine May notes that the Portsmouth City Council Bill was rejected on the basis that it simply 'shifted the burden' and in support of this point raised by Mr Liddell-Grainger in the Commons debate last Thursday, once again I urge your direction to dismiss this batch of bills.

Yours sincerely

R Campbell-Lloyd
and joined by N J McGerr

