

SIXTEENTH REPORT OF THE SALARIES REVIEW COMMISSION

The President of the Republic has conveyed his approval for the Salaries Review Commission to review the question of leave pay and overseas travel for Parliamentarians.

2. The Commission is of the view that the matter of leave pay and overseas travel for Parliamentarians must be examined within the context of the entire package of leave facilities available to Parliamentarians and the rationale for providing these benefits.

3. At present, the only Parliamentarians who are eligible for leave facilities are the Prime Minister, Ministers of Government and Parliamentary Secretaries. During their term of office, the Prime Minister and Ministers are entitled to 45 calendar days per annum while Parliamentary Secretaries qualify for 30 calendar days per annum. In the case of both Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries the grant of such leave is subject to the approval of the Prime Minister. Where a Minister of Government or a Parliamentary Secretary cannot be granted all or any part of his leave entitlement in any given year, provision is made for such leave to be preserved and taken at a convenient time. Alternatively, the Minister or Parliamentary Secretary concerned is given the option to receive an amount equivalent to salary in lieu of the unutilized leave.

4. In addition, Overseas Travel Facilities are afforded to the Prime Minister and Ministers. Provision is made that at the end of each "Full Parliamentary Term", there will be granted a maximum of four first class passages on the national airline to any point on its existing scheduled route structure to meet the cost of travel for the incumbent, spouse and dependent children. The term "Full Parliamentary Term" means the period commencing on the date of the first sitting of Parliament after a general election and expiring at the date of the next ensuing dissolution of Parliament. The Overseas Travel Facilities may also be preserved for the incumbent.

5. The Commission has examined the matter of leave for Parliamentarians in the context of the nature of their duties and functions.

6. Given the demands and complexity of the offices of Prime Minister and Minister of Government and to a somewhat lesser extent, that of Parliamentary Secretary, we are of the view that the provision of leave facilities is justified. Moreover, in the light of the onerous nature of the duties and functions associated with these offices, as well as the need to function in a complex international atmosphere, we consider that holders of these offices should be encouraged to take a minimum period of leave each year. Consideration should also be given to associating leave with official assignments, wherever possible. It is recognized, however, that it

may not be possible for these incumbents to proceed on leave each year, and as such we consider that the existing arrangement whereby unutilized annual vacation leave may be preserved to be taken at a convenient time, or alternatively, an amount equivalent to salary be paid in lieu of such leave, should continue to apply. The Commission recommends further, that such payment should be made at the end of the full parliamentary term to which the leave relates.

7. The Commission is of the view that there is no justification for introducing leave benefits for Parliamentarians other than the Prime Minister, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries.

8. Our recommendations in respect of annual vacation leave and Overseas Travel Facilities are as follows: -

Annual Vacation Leave

The offices of Prime Minister, Minister and Parliamentary Secretary should each be provided with 30 calendar days leave per annum.

In the event that it is not possible for the incumbent to proceed on all or a part of his annual leave, there should continue to apply the existing arrangement for the preservation of unutilized leave to be taken at a convenient time or alternatively for the payment of an amount equivalent to salary in lieu of such leave. Such payment should be made at the end of the full parliamentary term to which the leave relates.

Overseas Travel Facilities

The Prime Minister and Ministers of Government should continue to be eligible for Overseas Travel Facilities, viz., a maximum of four first-class passages on the national airline to any point on its existing scheduled route structure to meet the cost of travel for the incumbent, spouse and dependent children, at the end of each full Parliamentary Term.

“Full Parliamentary Term” means that the period commencing on the date of the first sitting of Parliament after a general election and expiring on the date of the ensuing dissolution of Parliament.

In addition, “dependent children” should refer to children who are under the age of eighteen and unmarried.

The arrangement for the preservation of the leave passages earned in respect of a parliamentary term should continue to apply. However, that facility should not be extended beyond the end of the succeeding full parliamentary term.

It is recommended that the revised arrangements in respect of Annual Vacation Leave and Overseas Travel Facilities should take effect from July 1, 1989.

Dated this 3rd day of August, 1989.

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Leonard Williams(Chairman)

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Edward Collier

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Rowell Debysingh

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Clive Forgenie

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Michael Namsoo