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MP rapped over "rude" blog

Paul Flynn stripped of parliamentary comms allowance

by Katie Scott published on 19 November 2008

A Labour MP has been thoroughly told off after he used his blog to make fun of other MPs.

Labour MP Paul Flynn is claiming that he has now been stripped of part of his communications allowance removed after he refused to take down posts including ones calling ex-Labour minister Peter Hain a "shapeshifter" and Lib Dem MP Lembit Opik a "clown".

Flynn's award winning blog included the comparison between Hain and a Star Trek character "who liquefies at the end of each day and sleeps in a bucket to emerge in another chosen shape the following morning".

Opik, who recently failed in his bid to be elected Lib Dem president, is described as a "clown" and "turkey" whose speciality is "mindless political populism over intelligence".

The allowance Flynn has now lost is part of a £10,000 pot MPs awarded themselves last year "to spend on boosting the public understanding of Parliament through websites and other publicity material", says the Beeb.

Since then, MPs have complained that their blogs are being censored whilst the authorities have hit back saying that there are rules on using public money for "propaganda".

Flynn has now vowed he will not tone down the content of his blog and will pay the £250 a year needed to run it out of his own pocket.

He told the Beeb: "Imagine how boring it would be if the only thing you could say about other MPs were nice things. What the hell is the point of that?"

