

**THE LEVESON INQUIRY INTO THE CULTURE, PRACTICE  
AND ETHICS OF THE PRESS**

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**PUBLIC INTEREST STORIES FROM  
TELEGRAPH MEDIA GROUP LIMITED ('TMG')**

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**Introduction**

1. At the Directions Hearing for Module 3, held on Tuesday 3 April 2012, the Chairman asked Core Participant media organisations to submit their top five public interest stories from the past few years. We hope the Inquiry will forgive us for pointing out that one of them, the MPs expenses investigation, is in fact, several hundred separate public interest stories all published at the same time and all of which were worthy of individual mention.
  
2. We set out below a summary of the articles. We are also providing in hard copy the articles themselves, including for the MPs expenses scandal, a supplement called *The Complete Expenses Files*. The Inquiry already has a copy of *No Expenses Spared*, the published account of how the investigation was conducted.

**Summary of articles**

3. The articles chosen are about (in date order with the most recent first):
  - a. The illegal abortion of fetuses in abortion clinics;
  - b. How examiners cheat the education system by tipping off teachers about the content of exams;
  - c. The conduct of a stem cell clinic;
  - d. The abuse of public money by Members of both Houses of Parliament, the MPs expenses scandal;

- e. How a chronic lack of equipment put the lives of British soldiers at risk.

### The Articles

#### 'Baby girls aborted, no questions asked'

*February 2012 and various articles and dates thereafter*

4. An undercover investigation by *The Daily Telegraph* disclosed that women were being offered illegal sex selection abortions. Doctors were secretly filmed offering to abort fetuses purely because they are either male or female, even though it is illegal to carry out a termination for this reason.
5. One doctor, a consultant who works for both private clinics and NHS hospitals in Manchester, told a pregnant woman who said she wanted to abort a female foetus, "*I don't ask questions. If you want a termination, you want a termination*". She later telephoned a colleague to book the procedure, explaining that it was for "*social reasons*" and the woman "*doesn't want questions asked*".
6. *The Daily Telegraph's* investigation also recorded several other doctors at clinics in other parts of the country offering similar terminations based on the unborn baby's gender.
7. There are now three separate and ongoing police investigations by the Metropolitan, Greater Manchester and West Midlands Police Forces; General Medical Council investigations into those involved; an Inquiry by the Nursery and Midwifery Council; and unannounced inspections at more than 250 abortion clinics by the Care Quality Commission.

#### 'Cheating the system: how examiners tip off teachers'

*December 2011 and various articles and dates thereafter*

8. An undercover investigation disclosed that teachers were paying to attend seminars with chief examiners where they were advised on exam questions. One examiner was recorded telling the teachers what exam questions to expect and admitted "*we're cheating*".

9. The investigation exposed a system in which exam boards aggressively compete for “business” from schools. Evidence that standards of exams had been driven down to encourage them to sign up for them was uncovered. The Chief Examiner of one exam board told one of our undercover reporters that “*there’s so little content we don’t know how we got it through’ and in an attempt to win new business told “you don’t have to teach a lot”*.”
10. This investigation had an impact on millions of children across the country, and the teaching profession. The Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove MP, welcomed The Telegraph’s investigation and there is now a fundamental review of the exam system, and an inquiry being conducted by the Education Select Committee in the House of Commons.

‘Inquiry into stem cell clinic that offers hope to sick and disabled’

*October 2010*

11. This was a *Sunday Telegraph* undercover investigation at Europe’s largest stem cell clinic, which was taking tens of thousands of pounds from the most vulnerable in society, for unproven clinical treatments.
12. The XCell-Center clinic, in Germany, became the centre of a scandal following the revelation that it was conducting stem cell transplants which are illegal in Britain and most of Europe. Hundreds of British patients travelled there each year.
13. A *Sunday Telegraph* reporter was told that if he underwent treatment there, there was a chance he could walk again. The paper also uncovered that an 18 month old baby died and another was seriously injured following transplants of stem cells into their brains.
14. *The Sunday Telegraph* investigation led to the clinic being closed by the German authorities. However, further investigations reported in the paper only weeks ago revealed that the Chief Executive, and founder, has now established another clinic in Lebanon.

MP's expenses

2009

15. The revelations contained within *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Sunday Telegraph* dominated the news agenda in Britain and abroad for weeks. We believe our investigation continues to make parliamentary democracy stronger and healthier in Britain and abroad.
16. This unprecedented newspaper investigation involved scrutinising more than 4m documents. A team of more than 10 reporters were backed up by dozens of support staff. The expose was only possible because the company had the resources and expertise to carry out an investigation of this scope and magnitude.
17. As a direct result of *Telegraph's* expose:
  - a. Four MPs and two peers have been imprisoned; some peers have been excluded from the Lords' chamber until repayment of their claims; and one former MP's criminal trial currently remains in doubt over health concerns.
  - b. Several other MPs are still under police investigation.
  - c. There was the biggest shift in the composition of Parliament for a generation with more than 100 MPs announcing their intention to retire or leave the House of Commons. A new generation of MPs committed to transparency and serving the public were elected to the House of Commons.
  - d. Six ministers resigned or were reshuffled amid controversy over their expense claims. These included David Laws, the Liberal Democrat Chief Secretary to the Treasury, who was forced to resign within weeks of the 2010 general election after *The Daily Telegraph* published new details of his expense claims.
  - e. The first resignation of the Speaker of the House of Commons in generations occurred. Michael Martin was blamed for the disastrous decision by Parliament not to publish details of expense claims despite being ordered to do so under Freedom of Information laws.

- f. More than £1m of taxpayers' money returned to Parliamentary authorities by MPs.
  - g. A new transparent expenses system with an independent regulator was established, which will ultimately lead to tens of millions of pounds of taxpayers' money being saved in future. For example, in its first year, the new system led to a reduction in the cost of the MPs expenses scheme of more than £15 million.
18. In addition, the investigation led to wide areas of Government expenditure being opened up to public scrutiny and the acceptance that, as David Cameron put it, "*sunlight is the best disinfectant*". For example,
- a. It led to the publication of expenditure on Government credit cards and other moves which have led to millions of pounds of taxpayer savings throughout the public sector.
  - b. The British Government now spearheads attempts for more Open Government around the world and recently urged other world leaders from the developing world to open up their books.
  - c. Throughout the world, politicians' expense claims have now been made public with resulting savings for other country's taxpayers.

'Chronic lack of equipment puts soldiers' lives at risk'

*Various articles and dates*

19. In June 2007 *The Daily Telegraph* first disclosed worrying information about the lives of servicemen being at risk due to "woefully inadequate" resources. The paper highlighted serious supply problems and failures of equipment such as the fact that only 70% of Chinook helicopters were available for use, only 50% of Apache helicopters were working and soldiers were buying their own binoculars as the Army supplied ones were inadequate.
20. The Telegraph papers continue to inform of worrying problems of this kind. Under David Cameron's Government, Telegraph revelations included a private letter sent by the Defence Secretary warning the Prime Minister that "*draconian*" cuts

to the defence budget cannot be carried out without "*grave consequences*".  
There continues to be strong Parliamentary and public interest in these issues.

Dated 2 May 2012