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Dated: 12th December 2011

**IN THE MATTER OF :
THE LEVESON ENQUIRY**

STATEMENT OF ROBERT CROW

1. I am Robert Crow and I am the General Secretary of the National Union of Rail Maritime and Transport Workers, known as the RMT.
2. I have been General Secretary since 13th February 2002 following election for that position. I was subsequently re-elected unopposed in December 2006 and 2011.
3. As a result of reports from various sources arising out of investigations carried out by Labour MP Tom Watson, I became aware that my name appeared on a list of victims who had been placed under surveillance. For example an item from *The Telegraph* dated 8th November 2011 entitled "The News of the World Surveillance Victim" included my name on the list.
4. I have also discovered that I am on a surveillance list operated by an undercover surveillance operator called Derek Webb. I understand that he was instructed by persons unknown from within the News International titles to carry out these covert operations on me to make negative articles about me and my Union. I know this as I have been told by another General Secretary of a Union that he has seen a case file on me personally from Derek Webb.
5. During the course of my office I, and members of my family and my Union, have come under surveillance operations from certain sections of the press; in particular, but not exclusively from, those newspapers associated with the News Group and News International, which have been very intrusive into my public and private life and interfered in my right to enjoy a quiet family life. The reports have been negative and hostile and none have been in the public interest. As the union's General Secretary, I expect a certain amount of negative publicity, especially around the times of industrial unrest; however the publicity that I have attracted goes beyond what can be described as being in the public interest.
6. I set out below by way of example some of the intrusions into my private life and Union affairs.
7. On the 2nd February 2003 there appeared an article in *The Mail on Sunday* written by Christopher Leake which showed a photograph of me going to work on the back of a scooter owned by my Personal Assistant Adrian Scott. The article criticised me for taking this form of transport at a time when the Central Line was closed after a derailment at Chancery Lane. The article reveals that I had been picked up from my home in Woodford Green and transported to the Union headquarters in Kings Cross. Mr. Scott's details also appear in the article. At the time that the article appeared, both Adrian and I did not know

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true

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- 8. how the reporter knew about my mode of transport that day and also how they obtained Adrian Scott's details; as neither I nor Adrian told anyone. However it subsequently was revealed to me as a result of a Court case involving a Mr. S. Whittaker and others around police corruption. The Court proceedings revealed that two National Newspapers paid to receive police confidential information from police computers. I believe that the only way the reporter could have linked the driver to Adrian was by the registration number of his motor scooter which would only have been revealed by doing a search of the DVLA sources which is information only available to the police; and how they knew that Adrian would be collecting me that day would be by hacking into our telephones. I believe that following the Court Case, the Information Commissioner took action against the police officers, however no action was taken against the newspaper who had commissioned the information.

- 9. On 13th June 2009 *The Sun* news paper reporters *unlawfully* obstructed me while I was on my way to work. There followed a blog on their website written by Lee Thompson, who I understand was the photographer working with *The Sun* on that day; these show me outside my home address and close by is a large Double Decker bus with the Sun logo on it. This bus had been parked outside my front door and created an obstruction of the road way not only to myself and members of my family, but also to my neighbours. The obstruction caused inconvenience to members of my family and also more importantly inconvenience for my neighbours who were unable to use the roadway properly. I can only assume this was to antagonise my neighbours against me. The photographs also show two reporters preventing me from walking along the road and directly confronting me and preventing me advancing along the road. In fact, the blog states that the reporters were deliberately and provocatively doing this to give me "a taste of his own medicine". The article states, "We parked our Sun bus outside his house in Woodford, East London, and walked in front of him as he tried to get to the Underground. We then stood in front of the entrance and asked him how it felt to be stopped from using the Tube". This proved to me that not only was I under surveillance, but that the surveillance was also unlawful and with the specific intention to annoy and provoke me; which I do not consider to be at all in the public interest. When I exercised my right and complained to the police the reporter called me a "coward". I did not wish to be confrontational faced with such aggression and so complained to the police who were nearby. *The Sun* reporter failed to recognise that this surveillance obstructed my access along a public highway, and that of my family and neighbours, and was in all probability unlawful.

- 10. Another example of surveillance and potential phone hacking occurred to me in January 2011. I and my long time partner Nicola Hoarau, along with two friends, went on a package holiday cruise organised through the travel firm Thomson. Only close friends and family knew we were going on holiday as we wanted to keep it quiet so that she and I could have a long awaited break. On the 14th January at one of the designated stop offs in Grenada I overheard a person, whom I latter discovered was a man called Byron Matthews, asking questions to one of Thomson security staff upon the ships gangway, asking whether I was aboard the ship. The security man confirmed that I was. I confronted

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Mr Matthews and asked why he was following us and why he wanted to know my whereabouts. I could not get a proper explanation and fearing for my safety and that of my friends and partner, I complained to the ships Head of Security who confirmed that there had been a breach of security. To my complete shock on the 23rd January 2011, the *News of the World* ran an article by Neville Thurlbeck, their chief reporter, which showed photographs of me in holiday clothes and one with my finger up my nose; all were taken with a telephoto lens. It is also clear from the article that the reporter had followed Nicola and I around shops. In my opinion the details of our holiday which was a Caribbean cruise could only have come from either hacking phones or buying information from the tour operator. This clearly demonstrated to me that I was under surveillance and my private details were being obtained illegally.

11. In June 2011 at the Unions AGM held at the Nevis Centre, I discovered that conference material had been leaked to *The Sunday Times*. I know this as I have in my possession CCTV footage which shows an individual trawling through garbage bins. Shortly after this incident, a Mr Gadher, the Deputy News Editor at *The Sunday Times*, telephoned my Press Officer Mr Geoff Martin quoting directly from the Agenda. I believe that this shows that Mr Gadher had this documentation in his possession and that this was part of a wider blogging operation by News International titles to obtain private and confidential Union documents to write negative articles about me and my Union. We investigated this breach in our security and I believe that Conference documentation had been put into the bins in error, possibly by a Cleaner. Each of the Union's Delegates would have had an individual copy of the Conference Agenda, which they would have needed throughout the Conference, for the purposes of conducting Conference business and, therefore, would not have disposed of the papers. At first I assumed that an error was made and a Delegate's copy was picked up from inside of the Centre. However it was only after being approached by Gadher from *The Sunday Times* did I suspect that the person rummaging in the bins was sent by the newspaper to get material against the Union in an attempt to discredit us or that the person on the CCTV footage sold the information to Gadher.

12. I confirm that I am willing to give evidence on these matters which I consider to be of public interest. All the acts that I have described above are not in the public interest and have all affected me and my family. While I accept that the Press has an important watchdog role to play in putting public figures under scrutiny, News Group Newspapers/News International have become too powerful and have crossed a line by unlawfully intruding into peoples' lives like myself to obtain information that has no legitimate public interest so far as I can see and I hope the above examples illustrate this.

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