

D Neesom
9 July 2012
2nd
Exhibit: "DN2"

IN THE MATTER OF THE LEVESON INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF DAWN NEESOM

I, **DAWN NEESOM**, of Express Newspapers, The Northern & Shell Building, Number 10 Lower Thames Street, London, EC3R 6EN, **WILL SAY AS FOLLOWS:**

- A. I am the editor of The Daily Star Newspaper. I make this statement in response to a request of the Leveson Inquiry ("the Inquiry") pursuant to a letter dated 2 July 2012. A copy of this letter can be found at pages 1 - 3 of Exhibit "DN2".
- B. I confirm that all matters in this statement are true and, unless I specify to the contrary, are based upon my own knowledge and a review of the relevant documents. Where matters are not within my own knowledge, I state the source and believe the same to be true.
- C. For convenience, I have reproduced as subheadings the questions asked of me in the 2 July letter.

Question 1: Who you are and your current job title?

1. I am the Editor of The Daily Star Newspaper, a role I have held since December 2003.

Question 2: To what extent were you personally involved in drawing up this proposal for a new system of self-regulation based on contractual obligations, as now set out by Lord Black ["the Proposals"]?

2. On 15 December 2011 I attended a meeting the offices of The Daily Telegraph. The meeting was led by Lords Black and Hunt. The meeting was also attended by the editors of most of the national newspapers and some regional newspapers. At this meeting Lord Hunt presented a broad outline of the Proposals and explained the importance of maintaining a system of self-regulation in order to avoid the alternative of the introduction of stringent legislation by the Government.

Question 3: How far would you personally, in your capacity as editor, expect to be involved in the final decision as to whether your publication signed up to the contractual obligations envisaged by this system? Please explain in full how that decision would be taken.

3. I would expect that my views on any further proposals would be sought and the matter would be discussed internally amongst my fellow editors and the board members. Indeed my deputy editor, Kieron Saunders, has attended an internal meeting about this matter in my absence. However the final decision will be taken at board level.

Question 4: In so far as you are able to do so, please indicate whether your publication is at present fully ready and committed to enter into these contractual obligations. If it is not at present fully ready and committed, please explain why, and detail any changes that would need to be made to the proposal, any further development to proposal required, or any preparatory steps that would need to be taken at your publication, in order to put it in the position of being fully ready and committed to enter into these obligations. If there are no circumstances in which it would be prepared to enter into obligations of this nature, please explain why not.

4. The Daily Star Newspaper is not ready or committed to sign up to the Proposals in their current form and in any event, this commitment can only be made at board level.
5. Certainly any decision to sign up to a contract under which there is the potential for incurring fines of up to £1,000,000 is a decision which would be taken by the board of the Company.
6. In addition, I personally have concerns in respect of who will be selected to run the new regulatory body, how the decision will be made as to who runs it, and how decisions are made more generally in terms of how the body will be run.

Question 5: What specific differences would membership of a system of the kind set out by Lord Black, underpinned by contractual obligations, make to the culture, practices and ethics of your publication?

7. I would not expect that membership of a system based on contractual obligations would have a material impact on the running of the Daily Star newspaper. The Daily Star Newspaper has always and already abides by the PCC and the Editors' Code of Conduct, despite the Company withdrawing from the PCC.

Question 6: Is there any other comment you wish to make on the proposal put forward by Lord Black, or on the proposals put forward by others, that are now published on the inquiry website?

8. I have nothing further to add at this time to the comments I make above.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this Witness Statement are true.

DAWN NEESOM

D Neesom
9 July 2012
2nd
Exhibit: "DN2"

IN THE MATTER OF THE LEVESON INQUIRY

SECOND WITNESS STATEMENT OF
DAWN NEESOM

rosenblattsolicitors

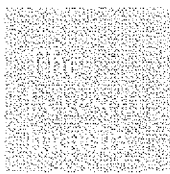
9-13 St Andrew Street
London EC4A 3AF
DX: LDE 493
Tel: (020) 7955 0880
Fax: (020) 7955 0888
Ref: AFEXP9-95

D Neesom
9 July 2012
2nd
Exhibit: "DN2"

IN THE MATTER OF THE LEVESON INQUIRY

EXHIBIT "DN2"

This is the exhibit marked "DN2" referred to in the Second Witness Statement of
Dawn Neesom
dated this 9th day of July 2012.



Office of the
Registrar of the Press

Royal Courts of Justice
Strand, London
WC2A 2LL

Solicitor to the Inquiry
Tel: 020 7947 7361

Solicitors.team@levesoninquiry.gsi.gov.uk
www.levesoninquiry.org.uk

Ms Dawn Neesom
The Daily Star

By email only c/o:

2 July 2012

Dear Ms Neesom

Leveson Inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press

The Inquiry is grateful to you for the time and thought that you have already given to the Inquiry by providing evidence.

There are a number of further issues on which your assistance would be appreciated. Lord Justice Leveson's expectation is that witnesses will be willing to assist his Inquiry by providing both a statement and documents voluntarily and in the public interest. However, given the timescales within which the Inquiry is operating, and the desirability of ensuring, with very limited exceptions, consistency of approach to potential witnesses, Lord Justice Leveson has decided to proceed in a formal manner using the powers conferred upon him by statute in relation to these issues. No discourtesy is of course intended by this.

Notice under section 21(2) of the Inquiries Act 2005

Under section 21(2) of the Inquiries Act 2005¹, read in conjunction with the Inquiry Rules 2006 (S.I. 2006 No 1838)², Lord Justice Leveson, as Chairman of the Inquiry, has power to require a person, within such period as appears to him to be reasonable, to provide evidence to the Inquiry panel in the form of a written statement, and/or to provide any documents in his custody or under his control that relate to a matter in question at the Inquiry.

Lord Justice Leveson has determined that it is appropriate, in view of his Terms of Reference and his investigatory obligations, that you should at this stage be required to provide evidence to the Inquiry Panel in the form of a witness statement as more specified below.

It is not the Inquiry's current expectation that you will be invited to amplify your response by giving oral evidence. It should be understood that your statement will enter the public domain

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/12/contents>

² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1838/contents/made>

in the form in which you provide it to the Inquiry, subject to redaction of your personal details, and it should therefore be prepared with that in mind.

Please respond to this notice in writing by 4.30pm on 9th July 2012.

Your witness statement should cover at least the following matters or issues:-

(1) Who you are and your current job title.

Proposal for Self Regulation

Lord Black has submitted to the Inquiry a proposal for "a New and Effective System of Self-Regulation"³. In his submission Lord Black states:

"Responses to the industry consultation from within an extremely diverse set of businesses have inevitably been varied. Parts of the industry – particularly the regional and periodical press – have been understandably anxious about such substantial change, especially when the current system works well for them (as the Inquiry has heard) and above all for their readers. They have rightly been worried about the potential increase in costs and bureaucracy of a new system. But at the other end of the spectrum, some national publishers have argued for even tougher controls. At the end of the day, therefore, this proposal seeks so far as is possible to balance these views. But there is no doubt to me that the vast majority of the industry sees them as credible, likely to prove effective and that they will take part. Northern and Shell has indicated that it is willing to participate, subject to detailed contract terms."

(2) To what extent were you personally involved in drawing up this proposal for a new system of self-regulation based on contractual obligations, as now set out by Lord Black?

(3) How far would you personally, in your capacity as editor, expect to be involved in the final decision as to whether your publication signed up to the contractual obligations envisaged by this system? Please explain in full how that decision would be taken.

(4) In so far as you are able to do so, please indicate whether your publication is at present fully ready and committed to enter into these contractual obligations. If it is not at present fully ready and committed, please explain why, and detail any changes that would need to be made to the proposal, any further development to proposal required, or any preparatory steps that would need to be taken at your publication, in order to put it in the position of being fully ready and committed to enter into these obligations. If there are no circumstances in which it would be prepared to enter into obligations of this nature, please explain why not.

(5) What specific differences would membership of a system of the kind set out by Lord Black, underpinned by contractual obligations, make to the culture, practices and ethics of your publication?

(6) Is there any other comment you wish to make on the proposal put forward by Lord Black, or on the proposals put forward by others, that are now published on the Inquiry website at <http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/about/module-4-submissions-on-the-future-regime-for-the-press/>

³ <http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Submission-by-Lord-Black-of-Brentwood1.pdf>

Lord Justice Leveson is directed by law to explain to you the consequences of failing to comply with this notice. He therefore draws to your attention the provisions of section 35(1) of the Inquiries Act 2005 which make it a criminal offence to fail without reasonable excuse to do anything which is required by a notice under section 21. He wishes to make it clear that all recipients of section 21 notices are having their attention drawn to this provision, since it is a formal legal requirement.

He is also directed by law to indicate to you what you should do if you wish to make a claim under sub-section (4) of section 21, namely a claim that you are either unable to comply with this notice at all, or cannot reasonably comply with this notice within the period specified or otherwise. You are invited to consider the full text of section 21, including for these purposes sub-sections (3)-(5), if necessary with the benefit of legal advice. Lord Justice Leveson invites you to make any such claim in writing and as soon as possible, addressed to the Solicitor to the Leveson Inquiry into the Culture, Practices and Ethics of the Press, c/o Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London, WC2A 2LL.

Furthermore, Lord Justice Leveson has power under section 19(2)(b) of the Act to impose restrictions in relation, amongst other things, to the disclosure or publication of any evidence of documents given, produced or provided to the Inquiry, including evidence produced under section 21. Lord Justice Leveson will be considering the exercise of his powers under section 19 in any event, but if you seek to invite him to exercise those powers in respect of your evidence, including documentary evidence, or any part of it, you should set out your position in writing as soon as possible.

Finally, Lord Justice Leveson draws to your attention the provisions of section 22 of the Act which state that you may not under section 21 be required to give, produce or provide any evidence or document if you could not be required to do so if the proceedings of the Inquiry were civil proceedings in a court in the relevant part of the United Kingdom, or the requirement would be incompatible with a Community obligation. No doubt you will take legal advice as to the effect of this provision, but, in the spirit of openness and with the wish to ensure that all possible aspects of his Terms of Reference are fully considered, he invites you nonetheless to waive privilege in relation to any such document or evidence. Please therefore state in your response to this notice whether you are prepared to do so.

Yours sincerely

Kim Brudenell

Kim Brudenell
Solicitor to the Inquiry