

<p>1 2 (2.10 pm) 3 MR JAY: Sir, this afternoon we have the Telegraph Media 4 Group Limited. The first witness is Mr Murdoch 5 MacLennan, please. 6 MR MURDOCH MACLENNAN (sworn) 7 Questions by MR JAY 8 MR JAY: Please make yourself comfortable, Mr MacLennan. 9 A. Thank you, Mr Jay. 10 Q. And give us your full name, please. 11 A. Murdoch MacLennan. 12 Q. Thank you. I hope in the first of the two bundles in 13 front of you you'll find under tab 2 your witness 14 statement dated 15 September 2011; is that right? 15 A. That's correct. 16 Q. You have signed and dated it and appended to it is 17 a statement of truth. Is this your formal evidence to 18 the Inquiry, Mr MacLennan? 19 A. It is. 20 Q. You are the chief executive officer of Telegraph Media 21 Group Limited. Since 2010, you've also been chairman of 22 the Press Association, and you have spent a lifetime 23 working in the newspaper industry; is that correct? 24 A. Yes. Over 40 years. 25 Q. You tell us in paragraph 5 that between 2005 and 2007</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 1</p>	<p>1 and the evidence of the next witness that if anything, 2 the ship has tightened financially since 2008; is that 3 correct? 4 A. That would be fair. But it's also one of the most 5 modern newspaper and multimedia operations on the planet 6 and that's been a process that we've undergone during 7 the last seven years. 8 Q. Of course, one of the initiatives the Telegraph is 9 pursuing, along, of course, with its competitors, is in 10 relation to its digital offering on the Internet, and 11 that presumably is an ongoing priority for your title; 12 is that right? 13 A. It is, and when we talk about our profitability, we 14 plough our money back into the business to make sure 15 that we stay at the forefront of technological change 16 within our business, because our competitors these days 17 are no longer just other newspapers, but the entire 18 media. 19 Q. Can I ask you a question about the relationship between 20 the owners of the paper and the board on the one hand 21 and then the editors on the other. Do the owners have 22 any influence over what goes into the newspaper? 23 A. None at all. 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Is that a feature of some surprise? 25 I mean, if one reads historically into the earlier part</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 3</p>
<p>1 you were chairman of the Newspaper Publishers 2 Association. Can you tell us about that trade body, 3 please? What are its aims and objects? 4 A. It's a trade body for the national newspapers in this 5 country and there are a number of other bodies that 6 report into it, although the NPA, or Newspaper 7 Publishers Association has no jurisdiction over those 8 other bodies that cover circulation, readership and so 9 on. It's the collective. 10 Q. Thank you. The Telegraph Media Group Limited, if I can 11 put it in these terms, is the most successful 12 commercially of the traditional broadsheet newspapers. 13 You tell us what your turnover and after profit and 14 taxation was in the year 2010 in paragraph 30. In 15 a nutshell, why is this so, Mr MacLennan? Why is the 16 Telegraph successful? 17 A. The Telegraph, when we took over the company, was making 18 a profit at that stage. It has the most loyal 19 readership of any of the newspapers I've ever worked on. 20 It's a tight ship. We have a large number of -- in 21 fact, we have more journalists, full-time journalists, 22 on the team now than we had when we took over, and I'd 23 like to think the most talented journalists in the 24 country. 25 Q. You mention tight ship. It's clear from your evidence</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 2</p>	<p>1 of the last century, the big proprietors were not merely 2 proprietors; they were much, much more than that. 3 A. Yes, and they used their power accordingly. 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes. 5 A. My recent experiences, sir, have been, with my present 6 employers and going back to my last employer, 7 Lord Rothermere and his late father, absolutely no 8 involvement with their titles. They take a very 9 professional view of church and state between editorial 10 and the business operation. 11 MR JAY: Do you know the reasons for that? 12 A. Well, my present chairman is a very private individual, 13 but also, as I said, very professional in the way he 14 deals with the business. He's very interested on 15 a day-to-day basis with the running of the business, how 16 effective or otherwise I am, and leaves the editorial 17 side entirely in the hands of his editors. 18 Q. Thank you. You say in paragraph 9 of your statement 19 that you hold weekly senior management meetings -- 20 A. Yes. 21 Q. -- which include both the editors and the senior 22 commercial directors to review the performance of the 23 business and to discuss key strategic issues. You're 24 obviously excluding from that editorial issues but what, 25 in a nutshell, are these key strategic issues?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 4</p>

<p>1 A. We could be talking about promotions. We could be 2 talking about a major shift in the IT operation, general 3 business issues and major projects, which could also 4 involve the editorial operations, so there's no 5 exclusion to that, but not to discuss content in any 6 shape or form. 7 Q. No. Then you tell us in paragraph 13 -- I'm not going 8 to cover all your evidence, Mr MacLennan, we're going to 9 take the rest as read, if you don't mind: 10 "The Telegraph are strong supporters of the code and 11 since March 1998, adherence to the code has been written 12 into all journalists' contracts of employment." 13 Is that so? 14 A. That's correct. But because of the Inquiry and the 15 seriousness and the reasons the Inquiry was called, 16 we've reiterated the main protocols as a healthy 17 reminder to us all. 18 Q. A letter went out in your name, and it's under tab 3 of 19 this bundle. It bears the unique reference number 20 06776. 21 A. Yes. 22 Q. Do you have it there? 23 A. I have indeed. 24 Q. It went out on 14 September from your office, presumably 25 to all employees of the paper; is that right? Page 5</p>	<p>1 background is in the management side? 2 A. Yes. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But do I gather from the other 4 offices that you have held and are holding that it would 5 be wrong to say that you weren't equally interested and 6 have a not insignificant role in relation to the 7 editorial side? 8 A. Yes, I have both editorial and commercial reporting in 9 to me, sir. 10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But also, as chairman of the 11 Press Association and as the chairman of the Newspaper 12 Publishers Association and the vice president of the 13 World Association of Newspapers, presumably that brings 14 across the range. So you won't mind us asking you 15 questions across the entire range? 16 A. Delighted. 17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes. You could sound a bit more 18 enthusiastic. All right. 19 MR JAY: A point arises on the annex to this letter. It 20 starts at 06777 but the specific point is on 06778 under 21 the rubric "Obeying the law". Do you see that, 22 Mr MacLennan? 23 A. Yes, I do. 24 Q. You point out clearly that staff must obey the law. 25 That includes not tapping telephones, intercepting email Page 7</p>
<p>1 A. Yes. 2 Q. You point out: 3 "Recent events at the News of the World have placed 4 into very sharp focus the issues of ethics and 5 integrity. The newspaper industry is under 6 unprecedented scrutiny." 7 The purpose of this letter, and then the next page, 8 was to remind journalists of obligations which they had 9 to comply with contractually in any event. It wasn't to 10 set any new standards; is that so, Mr MacLennan? 11 A. No, that's correct. Because of the black cloud hanging 12 over the industry with the phone hacking and the 13 News of the World -- I mean, phone hacking is just 14 non-existent, wouldn't even come into discussion at the 15 Telegraph, but it's important from all sorts of other -- 16 it's been a useful exercise, both on the financial side 17 as well as the editorial side of the business, to go 18 over our procedures again. 19 Q. Yes. 20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I've been described in many ways. 21 I've never previously been described as a "black cloud". 22 But I'd be very keen at some stage -- and I'm sure 23 Mr Jay is going to cover this, to -- develop with you 24 some of the concerns and some of the responses, but 25 before we get into that, before Mr Jay carries on, your Page 6</p>	<p>1 or voicemail messages, et cetera. And then the next 2 paragraph: 3 "As stated in the code, there may be extraordinary 4 circumstances where exceptions to this rule (and others) 5 can be justified in the public interest." 6 It's not your understanding, is it, that there is 7 a public interest defence to tapping telephones, which 8 under the relevant statute is an absolute offence, and 9 there isn't a defence, for example, of acting in the 10 public interest? Do you follow that? 11 A. I do. It's completely -- it wouldn't come up for even 12 discussion within the Telegraph operation, so there's -- 13 we have never been involved or engaged in anything of 14 that type, and it's never been a discussion or debating 15 point. 16 Q. Yes. 17 A. Our journalists live by the PCC code. 18 Q. If it isn't a matter even on the radar of the Telegraph, 19 it might be said: well, why mention it in the context of 20 this advice that you're giving your journalists? 21 A. I think it comes back to what's happened at the 22 News of the World. To make it very clear to everyone 23 what we stand for. I mean, our readers, our viewers 24 demand honesty and integrity as a given. 25 Q. That's part of the Telegraph brand; is that what you're Page 8</p>

<p>1 telling us?</p> <p>2 A. It is indeed, and that's what we seek to protect at all</p> <p>3 costs.</p> <p>4 Q. Maybe you weren't responsible for the precise wording of</p> <p>5 this advice; it just went out under your name. Do</p> <p>6 I have that right?</p> <p>7 A. Yes. It's a healthy reminder, Mr Jay, across the</p> <p>8 company, because the company handbook is about three</p> <p>9 inches thick and is used as a sort of reference</p> <p>10 document. It's available online to all staff. This was</p> <p>11 just a comprehensive reminder of the main points.</p> <p>12 Q. Okay.</p> <p>13 A. I have to say I probably wouldn't have issued it if this</p> <p>14 whole thing hadn't blown up.</p> <p>15 Q. In paragraph 16 of your statement, you say where a PCC</p> <p>16 complaint is upheld or legal action is lost, senior</p> <p>17 management would receive a report explaining what has</p> <p>18 happened and assessing how a repetition could be</p> <p>19 avoided. Have disciplinary proceedings ever been taken</p> <p>20 against members of staff under such circumstances?</p> <p>21 A. No. We haven't had that many complaints, let alone</p> <p>22 serious complaints, but when we have had a serious libel</p> <p>23 action that's gone against us, then a number of lessons</p> <p>24 are drawn from that and that's taken up by the editorial</p> <p>25 manager with the staff. And I'm also made aware of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 9</p>	<p>1 to carry a letter putting a different point of view."</p> <p>2 Does that happen to your knowledge?</p> <p>3 A. It does if we're proven to be wrong.</p> <p>4 Q. Do you have a corrections page?</p> <p>5 A. No.</p> <p>6 Q. Maybe I should ask the editor more about what the policy</p> <p>7 is in relation to that.</p> <p>8 A. The editors, Mr Jay, they are responsible for complaints</p> <p>9 and they deal with them directly, or their senior</p> <p>10 executives, and they deal with them quickly, so they --</p> <p>11 the complaints procedure within the Telegraph</p> <p>12 editorially is handled at the very top.</p> <p>13 Q. Thank you. Your statement then goes on to deal with the</p> <p>14 MPs expenses matter, which I'm going to ask other</p> <p>15 witnesses about, although you cover the issue of</p> <p>16 financial authority for the intermediary and the</p> <p>17 purchase of the disk because the amount was of such</p> <p>18 a level that your authority was necessary; is that</p> <p>19 right?</p> <p>20 A. That's correct.</p> <p>21 Q. So other witnesses will deal with that in more detail.</p> <p>22 Can I deal with the issue of ethics, which is</p> <p>23 question 9, paragraph 25 and following. In one sense,</p> <p>24 you can view this from the standpoint of both commercial</p> <p>25 expert within the newspaper industry and also having</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 11</p>
<p>1 changes.</p> <p>2 Q. Right. So is it more a question then of identifying and</p> <p>3 acquiring lessons learnt than bringing disciplinary</p> <p>4 proceedings against members of staff responsible? Have</p> <p>5 I understood that correctly?</p> <p>6 A. If members of staff have committed a serious breach,</p> <p>7 then it's a different matter. It's in their contracts</p> <p>8 of employment. As I said earlier, Mr Jay, they live by</p> <p>9 the letter of the Editors' Code.</p> <p>10 Q. Can I ask you about paragraph 19. You say:</p> <p>11 "The senior executive team, in conjunction with the</p> <p>12 senior editorial team, have also sought to inculcate</p> <p>13 within the company a culture of accuracy and</p> <p>14 professionalism."</p> <p>15 We'll hear from the senior editorial team, or rather</p> <p>16 the current editor, how that is achieved from his</p> <p>17 perspective, but how are those objectives achieved from</p> <p>18 your perspective?</p> <p>19 A. Within the Telegraph as a business, we would expect --</p> <p>20 our readers would expect to have any inaccuracy</p> <p>21 highlighted and to have it -- as I said here, to put it</p> <p>22 right in the proper manner as quickly as possible.</p> <p>23 Q. You give one specific example where there's a dispute of</p> <p>24 facts. It's rather a general example:</p> <p>25 "Where there is a dispute of fact, I would expect us</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 10</p>	<p>1 some editorial expertise as well. Paragraph 26:</p> <p>2 "Ethics means that the newspaper abides by the law</p> <p>3 and the code. The newspaper should own up when</p> <p>4 something has gone wrong and seek to put it right. It</p> <p>5 must respect individual privacy in the news and the</p> <p>6 photographs it publishes."</p> <p>7 I mean, to your experience, do individual privacy</p> <p>8 issues often arise in relation to the sort of stories</p> <p>9 that the Telegraph publishes?</p> <p>10 A. Very seldom.</p> <p>11 Q. Why do you think that is?</p> <p>12 A. Well, back to our -- the very basics of the Telegraph,</p> <p>13 as far as our loyal readership is concerned, they</p> <p>14 expect -- and I hope they get, I know they get --</p> <p>15 accuracy on a day in -- on a daily basis. The paper</p> <p>16 itself is the mission statement of the business.</p> <p>17 Q. That doesn't quite deal with the issue of privacy, why</p> <p>18 that doesn't feature much in relation to the Telegraph's</p> <p>19 stories. You've covered the issue of accuracy but not</p> <p>20 that of privacy, I think.</p> <p>21 A. It's probably a question better asked of the editor, but</p> <p>22 to my knowledge there are very few occasions when</p> <p>23 privacy is an issue for us.</p> <p>24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, it was in relation to expenses,</p> <p>25 but was overridden by the public interest in the story.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 12</p>

<p>1 That's something that we can raise.</p> <p>2 A. That's true, sir.</p> <p>3 MR JAY: But did you have any input into the public interest</p> <p>4 decision or issues which arose in the MPs' expenses case</p> <p>5 or was that entirely a matter for editors?</p> <p>6 A. The final decision to publish was entirely the editors',</p> <p>7 but I was involved in the background to the whole</p> <p>8 business. Although I was on holiday when the initial</p> <p>9 £10,000 was spent on a sample disk, when I came back --</p> <p>10 and I supported that -- when I came back, I was making</p> <p>11 sort of continuous enquiries of our legal department and</p> <p>12 the editor, absolutely satisfied there were major public</p> <p>13 issues at stake there -- public money at stake, and</p> <p>14 serious impropriety and in some cases, a few cases,</p> <p>15 criminality suggested.</p> <p>16 Q. Were you at all concerned whether the publication of</p> <p>17 this story might have an impact on the Telegraph's brand</p> <p>18 reputation? And if so, was your input sought in</p> <p>19 relation to that?</p> <p>20 A. I live daily with a concern about the brand reputation</p> <p>21 of our title and protecting our titles and</p> <p>22 future-proofing our titles. It's always at the</p> <p>23 forefront of our minds.</p> <p>24 Q. But did this particular story, for you at least, throw</p> <p>25 up any issues which bore on the Telegraph's brand</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 13</p>	<p>1 management and protecting the reputation of the brand?</p> <p>2 A. As I said, that's to the forefront of our minds. We</p> <p>3 have a number of policies in place to protect our brand,</p> <p>4 to protect our titles and to protect our business, and</p> <p>5 also it's very important that we make arrangements to --</p> <p>6 in the event of an emergency, to cover that, if we had</p> <p>7 problems in the place we publish from. But beyond that,</p> <p>8 it's protecting our brands, future-proofing them going</p> <p>9 forward.</p> <p>10 Q. And presumably as well understanding your readers; is</p> <p>11 that right?</p> <p>12 A. That's certainly to the forefront of our minds. We are</p> <p>13 probably one of the most customer-focused businesses,</p> <p>14 and we would not -- in fact, it's very difficult to even</p> <p>15 change or modify something in the paper without getting</p> <p>16 a very strong reader reaction. It's a very intelligent</p> <p>17 readership.</p> <p>18 Q. Yes. I'm sure from what you said it's a very loyal</p> <p>19 readership, but how do you understand your readers?</p> <p>20 What processes, if any, do you undertake to lock into</p> <p>21 their thinking?</p> <p>22 A. We have the largest reader subscriber base in the</p> <p>23 newspaper business in this country. People who buy the</p> <p>24 Telegraph have often told me they take the Telegraph,</p> <p>25 they simply hand it down from generation to generation,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 15</p>
<p>1 reputation or was it for you more: "There's an</p> <p>2 overwhelming public interest in publishing this story,</p> <p>3 that is sufficient for me"?</p> <p>4 A. I was interested in the accuracy of the material, and</p> <p>5 when both the editor and the legal director were more</p> <p>6 than satisfied with that, I supported it completely.</p> <p>7 Q. I'll ask you some general questions now. First of all,</p> <p>8 since the announcement of this Inquiry, which, as we</p> <p>9 know, was in July of last year, has the approach of the</p> <p>10 Telegraph to risk and/or the publication of types of</p> <p>11 story changed in any way?</p> <p>12 A. On the story, you'd probably better ask that question,</p> <p>13 I would suggest, Mr Jay, of the editor, but he and his</p> <p>14 team go through exactly the same procedures. They deal</p> <p>15 with many stories in the course of the day, but accuracy</p> <p>16 and honesty are at the forefront of their minds with</p> <p>17 that.</p> <p>18 In terms of the rest of the business, yes, it's</p> <p>19 brought everything into sharp focus. We carried out</p> <p>20 a -- that major -- I've mentioned it -- major exercise</p> <p>21 into our financial systems and have checked back to 2005</p> <p>22 to make sure that we could come to this Inquiry with the</p> <p>23 backing of Slaughter & May and say that we are clear.</p> <p>24 Q. What is the "policy" of the Telegraph from your</p> <p>25 perspective in relation to the whole issue of risk</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 14</p>	<p>1 and they expect the highest standards from us. But I'm</p> <p>2 very satisfied our editorial team are completely locked</p> <p>3 into their needs and desires.</p> <p>4 Q. Can I ask you a separate question now about</p> <p>5 non-aggression pacts with other newspaper proprietors?</p> <p>6 There's certainly a perception that such pacts exist,</p> <p>7 and if they did, you would know about them. Do they</p> <p>8 exist, Mr MacLennan?</p> <p>9 A. I would know about them and they don't exist. And</p> <p>10 there's a -- I have been criticised in the past for</p> <p>11 trying to ensure that we are more focused on our</p> <p>12 business as an industry. Some players within the</p> <p>13 industry are more obsessed with the media space than our</p> <p>14 readers are.</p> <p>15 Q. There was a lunch, I think, which took place when, in</p> <p>16 fact, you were managing director of Associated -- so</p> <p>17 this must have been before 2005 -- between you and</p> <p>18 Mr Richard Desmond, who owns the Northern Shell titles.</p> <p>19 Did you reach informal agreement with him at that lunch,</p> <p>20 as others have purported, that it was not in the</p> <p>21 interests of either newspaper to use them for</p> <p>22 mudslinging?</p> <p>23 A. I've never been in favour of mudslinging. There was no</p> <p>24 agreement with Mr Desmond, but I did receive at that</p> <p>25 lunch a series of demands from Mr Desmond to stop the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 16</p>

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<p>1 articles that were appearing in his publications. 2 I said I'd take those demands back to the editor but 3 Mr Desmond must have known that those demands would have 4 been thrown out and completely ignored, because before 5 I even got back to the office, a statement had been 6 issued to other newspapers that an agreement was in 7 existence. There was no such agreement and taking back 8 the demands, they were laughed out of court. 9 Q. These were demands which were coming from Mr Desmond, 10 which, as your evidence is, were laughed out of court. 11 But what specifically were the demands that were being 12 made? Can you recall now? 13 A. No, I can't remember the detail. To stop publishing 14 articles attacking my proprietor. 15 Q. He was the proprietor, though, wasn't he, Mr Desmond? 16 A. Yes. 17 Q. Sorry, I misunderstood. 18 A. Sorry. 19 Q. You were supposed to be communicating to the editor 20 demands which he, the editor, then presumably Mr Dacre, 21 would activate, and one of the demands was that he, 22 Mr Dacre, would stop publishing articles which attack 23 Mr Desmond? Is that right? 24 A. Anyone who knows Mr Dacre would accept that he would 25 have laughed at the suggestion that he stop publishing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 17</p>	<p>1 ruling of the PCC was published in the Telegraph; have 2 I understood your evidence correctly? 3 A. Correct. 4 Q. Thank you. 5 A. Also, the use of subterfuge -- there was a further story 6 recently on the exam boards where you could use the same 7 sort of arguments but there were no complaints. Anyway, 8 we printed the ruling in full. 9 Q. Yes, in the Dr Cable case; is that right? 10 A. Yes. 11 Q. But was that the editor's decision, not yours? Have 12 I understood that right? 13 A. Entirely. 14 MR JAY: I don't have any further questions for you, but -- 15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Let me have a go. 16 Can I go backing to what you've just said about the 17 discussion you had with Mr Desmond. I accept entirely 18 what you say about the likely reaction of Mr Dacre, but 19 it is a concern or may be a concern that whereas the 20 press will look at every organ of the country, whether 21 it be Parliament, the government, local authorities, 22 health service, the army, the judiciary, about which 23 I have no complaint at all, and if they find something 24 legitimately expose it, there doesn't seem to be as much 25 of that in relation to the press, and therefore the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 19</p>
<p>1 on the back of -- or because of a threat. 2 Q. Thank you. Was the Daily Telegraph censured by the PCC 3 in May 2011 over the Vince Cable sting story? 4 A. Yes, it was on a technicality, yes. 5 Q. You haven't been put on notice of this question. If you 6 need more time to consider it, of course you can have 7 it, but can you remember what the nature of the 8 technicality was? 9 A. Not exactly, but it was on some sort of fishing -- 10 I think that was the word used. Because subterfuge was 11 used. I didn't agree with the ruling, but because 12 the -- I didn't agree at all with the ruling, but if 13 you're in the PCC, you accept the adjudication, which we 14 did, and the editor, as I recall, was invited to print 15 a summary and he in fact printed the entire ruling. 16 Q. I think the issue was this: that two journalists posed 17 as constituents of Dr Cable, went to see him at his 18 surgery, and he said certain things during the course of 19 that meeting which led to consequences we know about, 20 namely that he was taken off considering the bid by 21 News International, News Corporation, for BSkyB. But 22 the issue is whether the use of subterfuge was justified 23 in those circumstances, I think, was it not? 24 A. Yes. 25 Q. Okay. But the action which followed is that the full</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 18</p>	<p>1 perception, if not the reality -- and that's really what 2 I'm asking you about -- is that whether or not there's 3 a formal agreement, there is an understanding that one 4 doesn't really have a go at other titles. 5 The fact is, as we know, that Mulcaire/Goodman was 6 2005/2006. Whittamore was 2002/2003 and these stories 7 weren't picked up and run with as they might have been 8 if they'd been involved in some other organ of the 9 state. You may say that's not fair, or you may think it 10 is fair. I welcome your experienced view on it. 11 A. I would disagree, sir, and I think there are far too 12 many stories about the press on the press, almost an 13 obsession, to the point where -- 14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Certainly now, I agree. 15 A. But where -- readers are not as obsessed as we are about 16 our own business. I often get attacked -- well, I have 17 in the past but I take responsibility for that because 18 I don't, as a habit, give interviews, but I think we 19 tend to write too much about ourselves. 20 If we're talking about impropriety, if we're talking 21 about wrongdoing, then I have no doubt that would be 22 exposed in a very healthy way by the media, and 23 journalism -- some people would argue it's a trade or 24 a -- I'd say it's a real profession. It's become quite 25 onerous in many ways, but in terms of reporting on</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 20</p>

5 (Pages 17 to 20)

<p>1 wrongdoing within our industry, that would be done 2 without fear or favour. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, it's interesting, but if one 4 takes the example of phone hacking -- I've heard a fair 5 amount of evidence, as you may be aware, of people 6 writing in positive terms, in terms of clear fact, that 7 it was well-known to be going on, now rather softened by 8 saying "rumours", but yet it took considerable work on 9 the part of the Guardian before it really became alive 10 again as a story, and even then, as you yourself are 11 aware, the PCC were very, very dismissive of that story, 12 and yet if what I've heard is right, that people were 13 saying, "Well, of course we knew it was all going on", 14 one would have thought that that doesn't really square 15 with a determination to get to the bottom of all 16 wrongdoing in other organs of the press. 17 A. I think that there has been so much now written about 18 phone hacking and the Guardian provided a very good 19 service to the industry, and it's the worst example, 20 because in spite of what you've said, I -- we, at the 21 Telegraph, were astonished about the business of phone 22 hacking at the News of the World. I was really 23 surprised by it. 24 And the PCC -- well, they didn't handle that well 25 because they weren't provided with the facts, and that's</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 21</p>	<p>1 newspaper outside, but there's some interest, I've 2 heard, in coming back into the PCC operation. But we 3 have to take account of the major digital companies that 4 are repurposing news, because although they're not 5 involved in investigations, they're repurposing the 6 investigations that we're involved in. 7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand. 8 A. And when it comes to individual bloggers, as you've 9 heard, that's much more of a -- that's a more difficult 10 exercise. 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Individual bloggers, speaking 12 entirely for myself and without committing myself to 13 anything, are not my greatest concern. I do understand 14 the issue that you raise about those who are in the 15 business of recycling news on the Internet, which I have 16 described, I think more than once, as the elephant in 17 the room. But as regards membership, I have difficulty 18 with the idea that it can always be entirely voluntary, 19 because if everybody isn't involved, it just becomes 20 very difficult. 21 Don't get me wrong. I am not suggesting 22 a government or a statutory regime. On the other hand, 23 I don't think it's a binary choice between that and 24 self-regulation where it's all entirely voluntary. 25 I don't think you were in the Inquiry when Mr Barber was</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 23</p>
<p>1 why there's going to have to be changes now, because 2 most -- because phone hacking's the worst example. If 3 you think of most complaints, 90-odd per cent of 4 complaints are handled, I think, successfully by the 5 PCC, but within that there has to be room for 6 handling -- or there has to be a method of handling more 7 serious complaints. It's not so much a PCC plus, but 8 for the most serious complaints, there have to be powers 9 of investigation. 10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I think actually the PCC does contain 11 within it a power -- it may not have been exercised. 12 I've just read the terms of the documentation. 13 A. Well, that's not been clear to me, that they have the 14 power to go in and demand emails and text messages and 15 correspondence. 16 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mm. 17 A. But they should be able to do that, and then there must 18 be some sort of enforcement or -- yeah, it's taken me 19 a while to come around to this, but bringing all this 20 into sharp focus, there has to be a way of imposing 21 sanctions, fines, on the worst offenders, whether that 22 be a business or whether that be an individual. 23 The other problem that we have is to make sure that 24 everyone is inside the tent. That's when it becomes 25 a bit more expansive, because we still have one national</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 22</p>	<p>1 giving evidence this morning, but we had a discussion 2 about this very topic. 3 A. Are you talking about -- sorry, sir, are you talking 4 about statute and -- 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, Mr Barber and I spoke about the 6 binary -- about something between -- he was very much 7 against statutory regulation, which I understand. 8 A. Yes. 9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But on the other hand he recognised 10 that if it was entirely consensual self-regulation, then 11 some possible advantages of a new regime might be lost. 12 Let me give you the example that I've discussed with 13 him this morning that he went away to think about. I'm 14 not saying anything that's novel. He expressed concern 15 about the way in which the libel laws operate and the 16 enormous expense which is involved. 17 A. Yes. 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And I postulated to him the 19 possibility of some arbitral system, which is, if you 20 like, an arbitral arm of whatever comes after the PCC, 21 but made the point to him that unless it had some sort 22 of framework that required people to go through it, then 23 the very wealthy would simply say, "I'm not prepared to 24 go down that route, I'm simply going to institute 25 enormously expensive litigation", and so make it very</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 24</p>

<p>1 difficult for whoever to defend it.</p> <p>2 So what I was asking him about, and what I'm very</p> <p>3 keen to hear your voice about -- if not now, then at</p> <p>4 some stage, because I'm very conscious that I'm only</p> <p>5 expressing ideas, and I'm keen to the get the view of</p> <p>6 the industry -- but there has to be a framework onto</p> <p>7 which you latch independent regulation, which is</p> <p>8 absolutely independent of government and also not</p> <p>9 necessarily run by editors but perhaps by some very</p> <p>10 senior retired journalists on it. I fear there probably</p> <p>11 would have to be a lawyer somewhere around there.</p> <p>12 I know that everybody's concerned about them, but other</p> <p>13 independent people who not only could continue the</p> <p>14 complaints work that the PCC have done, although perhaps</p> <p>15 expanding it to allow complaints from people over than</p> <p>16 those specifically affected -- there are bits and pieces</p> <p>17 that one could hook onto -- but additionally had</p> <p>18 a regulatory mechanism and an arbitral mechanism.</p> <p>19 A. Yes.</p> <p>20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: A much more complex construction, but</p> <p>21 one that actually provided all the avenues for those who</p> <p>22 are concerned about the press to raise them in</p> <p>23 a comparatively straightforward, quick, comparatively</p> <p>24 cheap way, and the press to respond in like kind. But</p> <p>25 I don't see how that could be entirely consensual.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 25</p>	<p>1 construction to do it.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Otherwise, you can't force anybody to</p> <p>4 do it. The example that got Mr Barber thinking was --</p> <p>5 he expressed concern about the extremely wealthy people</p> <p>6 who will seek to take the Financial Times on and have so</p> <p>7 much money that they can overwhelm everybody. Now,</p> <p>8 that's not happy either.</p> <p>9 A. No. That was one of my concerns -- still is a concern,</p> <p>10 about affordability within the industry defines -- it's</p> <p>11 another end of the argument with CFAs.</p> <p>12 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Of course, as I said I think this</p> <p>13 morning, there was a time when the industry had the boot</p> <p>14 because legal aid wasn't available for libel and it was</p> <p>15 very expensive to bring and the industry, although you</p> <p>16 might smile at it now, was seen to be very wealthy and</p> <p>17 able to afford the sort of litigation and therefore that</p> <p>18 acted as a chilling effect on bringing actions. Now</p> <p>19 with CFAs, the boot is, I understand, on the other foot.</p> <p>20 A. Yes.</p> <p>21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: The question is to find a median way</p> <p>22 which allows privacy, libel, all these issues to be</p> <p>23 resolved quickly, efficiently and comparatively cheaply.</p> <p>24 A. Yes.</p> <p>25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Now, the civil law might provide</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 27</p>
<p>1 Q. That's really worth considering. You take my point,</p> <p>2 though, that the vast majority of complaints are handled</p> <p>3 in the normal way. It's these more serious issues that</p> <p>4 concern us all, and having them thoroughly</p> <p>5 investigated -- I can tell you that Lord Hunt, you're</p> <p>6 probably aware, the chairman of the PCC, is carrying out</p> <p>7 a process of consultation within the industry before he</p> <p>8 appears in front of you.</p> <p>9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm delighted to hear it, because at</p> <p>10 the seminars I made clear that I was very keen that the</p> <p>11 industry have some ideas, provided the industry accept,</p> <p>12 as I've said many times, that they've not only got to</p> <p>13 work for the industry but they have to work for me --</p> <p>14 and by "me", I really mean the public.</p> <p>15 A. Yes. It's worth considering -- I mean, we hosted our</p> <p>16 own sort of seminar at the start of that consultation</p> <p>17 process. I don't know how these -- I don't know the</p> <p>18 outcome yet. It's a bit too early and it's wrong for me</p> <p>19 to say. It must come back to you as industry</p> <p>20 recommendations, but we accept there have to be changes.</p> <p>21 I agree with the editor of the FT about self-regulation,</p> <p>22 but it's how that's handled. And could this not be</p> <p>23 handled under civil law?</p> <p>24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It may be that's the way to do it,</p> <p>25 but then we would have to create the civil law</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 26</p>	<p>1 a way forward, but once you've used the word that</p> <p>2 everybody hates, namely "law".</p> <p>3 A. I think it's not an attack on the legal profession.</p> <p>4 It's --</p> <p>5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, no, no.</p> <p>6 A. It's a concern about government.</p> <p>7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: No, I understand. I'd be very</p> <p>8 surprised if government regulation ever even entered my</p> <p>9 mind. I'm not committing myself to anything -- I have</p> <p>10 to hear everybody's views -- but I have said more than</p> <p>11 once that freedom of expression and freedom of the</p> <p>12 press, which are different concepts --</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- are, to my mind, a fundamental</p> <p>15 bedrock of our society. But that's not to say that the</p> <p>16 there can't be some sort of independent mechanism that</p> <p>17 deals with complaints, regulation and resolution of</p> <p>18 disputes that doesn't involve the government, doesn't</p> <p>19 involve the state, but is in some way set up so that it</p> <p>20 can operate and can require people to go through that</p> <p>21 route, however independently staffed it is, which</p> <p>22 I think is essential.</p> <p>23 A. Sounds helpful, very helpful.</p> <p>24 The only -- one point I'd make on that is that once</p> <p>25 everyone is in, it's important, however -- and you're an</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 28</p>

<p>1 expert on civil law -- how that could be -- how they 2 could be contained so that it's so onerous to leave the 3 system that you're practically disqualified. 4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes. The answer is that that is 5 extremely difficult if it's purely a matter of contract 6 because there can be arguments about that. 7 A. I think, though, if the punishment -- the financial 8 punishments are considerable, that would help. 9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: The financial constraints on leaving 10 or not joining? You have to get people to come into the 11 club, and one -- I'd be surprised if I agreed with this, 12 that everybody says, "We're all now friends together, we 13 can all do this because of the terrible six months we've 14 had." Reading the history of discussions about the 15 press since the last world war, there have been a number 16 of attempts. Something terrible has happened, there's 17 been a report, everybody says, "Oh, it will be much 18 better next time." That's happened more than once; 19 I hope you would agree with that. 20 A. I do, but could I add that nothing ever like this has 21 happened to the press. Nothing as comprehensive on the 22 media. Nothing as far-reaching as this has hit us thus 23 far, and I think you'll find there's a general consensus 24 across the industry that things have to change. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Right.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 29</p>	<p>1 A. Yes. 2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You may then come back, and you 3 certainly can come back at the time that Lord Hunt is 4 speaking, if not to give evidence, at least in writing. 5 I'm happy to receive views at any time, to try to get 6 the thing as ordered as I can, but ordered in such a way 7 that requires participation without permitting 8 interference, whether it be by the judiciary or the 9 government or the state in any other way -- 10 A. Sure. 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- but achieves a mechanism that 12 ensures that all those who do provide us with our news 13 are bound by certain standards. 14 A. Yes. 15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And I'm obviously talking about 16 minimum standards, as to which everybody seems to 17 believe that the code is a good piece of work. 18 A. It is. 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And that's my immediate reaction. 20 The extent to which it is observed and enforced is 21 something else, but the actual language may not require 22 very much. But I've probably pressed you enough on all 23 this. 24 A. No, but that's very helpful. Thank you. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you very much.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 31</p>
<p>1 A. I think you'd be pleased about that, rather than 2 everything is perfect. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Given the effort that I've put into 4 persuading the industry to think about it themselves, 5 I'm very pleased to hear it. I'm not asking you to 6 commit to solutions. Any views you wish to express I'd 7 be interested to receive, now or at any time. That's 8 not a requirement; it's a genuine wish to make sure that 9 whatever I come up with works for the industry and works 10 for the public and the good of the public as well. 11 What I do not want -- and I've said this publicly 12 too -- is to produce a report that everybody reads, 13 either likes or rubbishes, and then it just sits on 14 a shelf, because then I've wasted a lot of time and 15 we've all wasted a lot of money. 16 A. On that point, sir, could we, before the end of this 17 particular section of your Inquiry, then come back to 18 you? 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You can come back to me, but you 20 don't need to have to be worried about precisely when -- 21 I'm not allowing a free range -- because what I will be 22 doing is moving from this module, which is to do with 23 the public, onto a module to do with the police, and 24 then the politicians, and there will be an opportunity 25 to discuss emerging findings.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 30</p>	<p>1 MR JAY: The next witness is Mr Finbarr Ronayne, which is 2 tab 5. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you. 4 MR FINBARR PATRICK RONAYNE (affirmed) 5 Questions by MR JAY 6 MR JAY: Mr Ronayne, sit down and make yourself comfortable. 7 In file 1, the bundle in front of you, under tab 5, you 8 should see a witness statement that bears your name. 9 For our record, could you give us your full name? 10 A. Finbarr Patrick Ronayne. 11 Q. Thank you. The statement you'll see is dated 14 October 12 of last year, is signed by you and has a statement of 13 truth at the end; is that correct? 14 A. That's correct, yes. 15 Q. You have an accounting background. You worked at 16 Trinity Mirror between 1991 and 2008, when you left to 17 take up your present position at the Daily Telegraph 18 in October; is that right? 19 A. That's correct, yes. 20 Q. And you are the finance director of the group. Can 21 I ask you a general question: what are the differences, 22 if any, in cultural terms, if I can so describe it, 23 between Trinity Mirror and the Daily Telegraph? 24 A. Okay, the key difference probably is Trinity Mirror is 25 a plc and I worked in one of the operating divisions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 32</p>

<p>1 I was finance director for the national newspapers, 2 which covered the Daily Mirror, the Sunday Mirror and 3 the People, so I was more involved in implementing 4 strategy, which was basically decided on -- at board 5 level. 6 At the Telegraph, I'm obviously a main board member 7 and involved in actually setting the strategy. 8 Q. Yes. 9 A. But in aspects of the day-to-day job, it's pretty 10 similar actually in terms of the operating day-to-day 11 base. 12 Q. Trinity Mirror is a public limited company. 13 Daily Telegraph is a limited company. 14 A. That's correct. 15 Q. But the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 are the 16 same? 17 A. Are the same. 18 Q. Thank you. A lot of your evidence we're going to take 19 as read, Mr Ronayne, given the time available. Can 20 I ask you this: when you arrived in October 2008, the 21 country was in the middle of a recession. Did that lead 22 to the taking of measures of financial stringency at the 23 Daily Telegraph? 24 A. That's correct. As you mentioned, when I arrived 25 in October 2008, it was shortly after the credit crunch Page 33</p>	<p>1 A. That would be covered basically under the policy of 2 central control of certain aspects of the business, 3 under paragraph 9 for central control of the key 4 functions, would include basically litigation 5 settlements or, I think, the decision whether to defend 6 or settle the case, depending on magnitude of that. The 7 legal director would basically bring that advice to 8 myself and the chief executive. 9 Q. Right. 10 A. To decide the best course of action. 11 Q. Thank you. Then from a financial governance 12 perspective -- I'm now on paragraph 18 -- there are two 13 key policies. There's a procurement policy, which is no 14 doubt designed to bring the Telegraph in line with its 15 obligations under the public contracts regulations and 16 the similar secondary legislation. I think we're 17 probably more interested in the expenses and business 18 travel policy, which is subparagraph (b) of 19 paragraph 18, Mr Ronayne. 20 A. The commissioning of content would actually fall under 21 the procurement policy. The expenses and business 22 travel policy is in respect of editorial employees, and 23 indeed all employees reclaiming expenses incurred on 24 behalf of the business. 25 Q. Have these policies been tightened during your time as Page 35</p>
<p>1 crisis, and in terms of actually budgeting for business 2 performance the following year, we expected 3 a significant reduction in advertising revenue, as 4 indeed the entire industry faced, and that required 5 basically a detailed review of our current cost base, 6 our decline(?). 7 Q. You explain the systems in place to ensure the correct 8 allocation of funds. The framework is in paragraph 9. 9 The first element is a robust budgeting process, which 10 starts under paragraph 10, and it involves, if I can 11 summarise it in this way, preparing a detailed annual 12 budget and then reviewing that budget on a monthly 13 basis; is that correct? 14 A. That's correct, yes. 15 Q. The Inquiry is probably specifically or more interested 16 in two aspects, which are the authority levels and then 17 the policies. You tell us in paragraph 14 that the 18 authority levels were lowered in December of 2008 as 19 part and parcel of the cost reduction programme; is that 20 correct? 21 A. That's correct. 22 Q. And you explain how the authority levels are applied. 23 May I cover one issue, which in fact was not addressed 24 in your statement, and this is authority for settling 25 litigation. How does that work? Page 34</p>	<p>1 finance director? 2 A. Yes. When I joined in October 2008, I basically rewrote 3 both policies, mainly due to the economic climate at the 4 time. 5 Q. Yes. You tell us that the policies were revised 6 in October of 2008 but did you have a feeling therefore 7 that they were too loose beforehand or was this merely 8 a response to the background economic situation in the 9 country as a whole? 10 A. I think in the main it was a response to the economic 11 climate, but yes, we did actually use the opportunity to 12 tighten certain policies and procedures. 13 Q. Before October 2008, can you recall what -- this is when 14 you arrived -- the position was in relation to cash 15 payments expenses? 16 A. We undertook basically -- the business doesn't encourage 17 cash payments but we undertook a very detailed financial 18 review to -- you know, in support of our witness 19 statements to this Inquiry, and we have not identified 20 any cash payments that were made to purchase editorial 21 content back to January 2005. We have identified, 22 I think, through the expense system, that there were 23 about 12 claims basically between 2005 and 2008, you 24 know, where employees paid cash payments directly to 25 secure stories, I think the amount to £2,500 in total. Page 36</p>

<p>1 Q. Sorry, what was the sum in total?</p> <p>2 A. £2,500.</p> <p>3 Q. And that was for 12 stories?</p> <p>4 A. This is where there were 12 expense claims where cash</p> <p>5 payments were made in respect of stories around</p> <p>6 sensitive material. It was basically around stories in</p> <p>7 respect of the sex industry and around army barrack</p> <p>8 bullying.</p> <p>9 Q. Right.</p> <p>10 A. But there has been none since the policies were revised</p> <p>11 in October 2008.</p> <p>12 Q. The position therefore is, if I've correctly understood</p> <p>13 paragraph 19 of your statement, that cash payments by</p> <p>14 journalists to sources simply have not taken place</p> <p>15 since October or December 2008; is that right?</p> <p>16 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>17 Q. Different titles have expressed a concern or raised this</p> <p>18 point: that some sources don't want to be paid in other</p> <p>19 than cash, through fear of being identified. Is that an</p> <p>20 issue which you're aware of?</p> <p>21 A. I've certainly experienced that when I worked at</p> <p>22 Mirror Group. There was a very tight procedure over</p> <p>23 cash payments and -- where cash payments were actually</p> <p>24 made. In the case of the Telegraph, all contribution</p> <p>25 payments are actually processed on the system, where we</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 37</p>	<p>1 and I was the most senior executive in the business.</p> <p>2 Q. You explain what the payment was in paragraph 31.</p> <p>3 A deposit also had to be paid for, as it were, a ten-day</p> <p>4 review period to satisfy yourself that the material was</p> <p>5 what it purported to be?</p> <p>6 A. Correct.</p> <p>7 Q. And you were responsible for signing this off, as it</p> <p>8 were; is that correct?</p> <p>9 A. That's correct, yes.</p> <p>10 Q. Can I ask you about paragraph 35? You point out that</p> <p>11 from time to time, editorial executives will claim</p> <p>12 expenses in respect of entertaining police or public</p> <p>13 officials, and then I paraphrase: you aren't involved or</p> <p>14 have any knowledge of indirect payments made to police,</p> <p>15 public officials, mobile phone companies or</p> <p>16 intermediaries. What sort of expenses are we looking at</p> <p>17 in respect of entertaining? Are these the cost of</p> <p>18 a dinner --</p> <p>19 A. I think they generally take the form of lunch, dinner or</p> <p>20 a drink. Having undertaken this detailed financial</p> <p>21 review, I mean, I wasn't concerned that there were any</p> <p>22 extravagant expense claims made by the editorial team.</p> <p>23 Q. And the expense claims, is this correct, are always in</p> <p>24 respect of entertainment and not for the provision of</p> <p>25 information, for example, from these sources?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 39</p>
<p>1 take addresses, postcodes, bank account details, VAT</p> <p>2 registration numbers, if appropriate.</p> <p>3 Q. Yes, but to your knowledge, has that acted as</p> <p>4 a disincentive for sources giving stories to Telegraph</p> <p>5 journalists?</p> <p>6 A. Not that I've been made aware of.</p> <p>7 Q. Okay. The Telegraph also has a whistle-blowing policy.</p> <p>8 That's paragraph 20. Then in paragraph 25 you refer to</p> <p>9 the letter which we have seen as an exhibit to</p> <p>10 Mr MacLennan's evidence.</p> <p>11 A. That's correct.</p> <p>12 Q. Are there any specific financial issues which arise --</p> <p>13 this is in the context of paragraph 27 -- from the</p> <p>14 challenge which your company faces to transition from</p> <p>15 traditional print base to multimedia digital business?</p> <p>16 A. I think, as Mr MacLennan explained, obviously I think</p> <p>17 it's a priority for any print business to transition</p> <p>18 itself into a multimedia business, and I think we've</p> <p>19 taken the view basically as a board that we would set</p> <p>20 realistic profit targets for the traditional side of the</p> <p>21 business and reinvest those profits into technology and</p> <p>22 digital operations to diversify our revenue streams.</p> <p>23 Q. You were involved in organising the payment for the</p> <p>24 computer disk in relation to the MPs expenses story?</p> <p>25 A. That's correct. Mr MacLennan was on holiday at the time</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 38</p>	<p>1 A. No, these would all be in respect of expense claims.</p> <p>2 I mean, they need to support any expense claim with</p> <p>3 a detailed receipt of the entertaining.</p> <p>4 Q. And presumably public officials also includes</p> <p>5 politicians; is that correct?</p> <p>6 A. That would be correct, yes.</p> <p>7 MR JAY: Thank you, Mr Ronayne. Those are all the questions</p> <p>8 I have.</p> <p>9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Mr Ronayne, I'm grateful to you for</p> <p>10 leading the review of the records, which permitted the</p> <p>11 letter to be written, which I have seen. It's not just</p> <p>12 important, obviously, that I see all this, but it's</p> <p>13 important that it's seen publicly to have been done and</p> <p>14 to achieve the results that it's achieved. Thank you</p> <p>15 very much.</p> <p>16 A. Yes, thank you.</p> <p>17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Shall we take six minutes?</p> <p>18 MR JAY: The next two witnesses will be much lengthier.</p> <p>19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's all right.</p> <p>20 (3.25 pm)</p> <p>21 (A short break)</p> <p>22 (3.33 pm)</p> <p>23 MR JAY: The next witness is Mr William Lewis.</p> <p>24 MR WILLIAM JOHN LEWIS (sworn)</p> <p>25 Questions by Mr Jay</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 40</p>

<p>1 MR JAY: Your full name, please, Mr Lewis? 2 A. William John Lewis. 3 Q. Thank you. Under tab 4, you will see your witness 4 statement, which doesn't in fact have a statement of 5 truth at the end. Is this your evidence to the Inquiry? 6 A. Yes, it is. 7 Q. Can we be clear about your statement: it is very lengthy 8 and detailed. I understand that it took you some time 9 over the summer holiday. Is that so? 10 A. It did, yes. It represents my sum total of my knowledge 11 and recollection of my time at the Telegraph between 12 2006 and 2010 in relation to your questions. 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm very grateful to you for taking 14 the time to do it. It's been very helpful. 15 A. Thank you. 16 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm very conscious that I've imposed 17 a great deal on a large number of people, but I hope you 18 feel that it's worth the effort. 19 A. Very much so, and it was actually very interesting 20 reliving in my own mind and for this purpose what went 21 on there, particularly with the MPs' expenses story. 22 MR JAY: Mr Lewis, if I can look first of all at your 23 career. You've been, I think, at four separate papers. 24 Between 1991 and 2002, you were at the Mail -- no, 25 pardon me, you moved to the Financial Times at some</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 41</p>	<p>1 come and assist us further, but I understand it -- 2 A. Thank you. As you see fit, but for these purposes 3 I understand my evidence to relate entirely to my time 4 at the Telegraph between 2006 and 2010. 5 Q. That is so. But I do have a general question for you, 6 and it's one I've asked others, whether, in your 7 perception, there are any cultural differences between 8 the various papers for whom you've worked. 9 A. Yes, there were differences. Obviously I was at 10 different levels of seniority at each of those different 11 newspapers, but I think it's fair to say there was -- if 12 you take the Financial Times, for example, there was 13 a much more cerebral approach at the Financial Times. 14 When I moved to the Sunday Times, I became aware of the 15 power and the process involved in putting together such 16 a fantastic newspaper, and the Telegraph, as I detail in 17 my statement, was a process of tremendous change. We 18 went through a very profound change programme there, 19 where the culture shifted quite considerably. 20 Q. Thank you, and most of your statement is devoted to that 21 cultural shift and the systems and philosophies of 22 corporate governance which you introduced over a four, 23 five-year period; is that right? 24 A. Yes, with my team. 25 Q. Yes. Can I just deal with the background. When you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 43</p>
<p>1 stage between those two dates? 2 A. Yes. I started at the Mail on Sunday as a financial 3 reporter in 1991. I then moved to the Financial Times 4 in 1994. 5 Q. Thank you. Then to the Sunday Times in 2002? 6 A. As business editor, yes. 7 Q. City editor of the Telegraph in 2005 and you ended up, 8 if I can put it in those terms, as editor in-chief of 9 the Telegraph Media Group, from where you left in May 10 2010; is that correct? 11 A. That's correct, yes. 12 Q. Can I understand your current position: you are 13 permanently seconded to News Corporation, and have been 14 since July 2011, as executive member of the Management 15 and Standards Committee which is looking into all the 16 issues around the phone hacking matter. Is that so? 17 A. That is correct. The chairman is Lord Grabiner. 18 Q. Thank you. We've asked you to address your time, as it 19 were, at the Daily Telegraph, and not to cover your 20 recent history at News International and then News 21 Corporation, since a lot of what you're doing overlaps 22 with the concurrent police investigation. Is that so? 23 A. That is so, yes. 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's not to say that at some time 25 we're not going to ask Lord Grabiner and possibly you to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 42</p>	<p>1 arrived, the company, I think, was spread out 2 geographically over a number of locations but that 3 changed? 4 A. Yes. 5 Q. The impact of that may have been obvious, but in your 6 own words, what was the impact of that change? 7 A. The goal that I was set was to try and find a way of 8 publishing both newspapers to the same or higher 9 standard -- that's the Daily Telegraph and the Sunday 10 Telegraph -- and at the same time to move confidently 11 into embracing the new digital opportunities: online, 12 mobile and so on, all within broadly the same budget. 13 That was the goal that was the purpose of the change 14 programme. And as I think was referred to earlier, 15 another key part of this was putting the customer, the 16 reader, the user online, at the very heart of the 17 business, which hadn't been the case before, and all the 18 changes that we took together and implemented stemmed 19 from that goal. 20 Q. The one specific issue you address under the old regime, 21 as it were, in paragraph 6.3.4, is heavy reliance on 22 casual labour. 23 A. Yes. 24 Q. As you describe it, what were the problems associated 25 with that?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 44</p>

<p>1 A. There were various issues related to casual labour. In 2 particular, it was -- it made it difficult to effect 3 serious cost control. Although department heads 4 professed to have a grip on expenditure in that area, 5 that was not the case, and so that, in addition to the 6 need to professionalise -- the company was going to be 7 investing a large amount of money in training programmes 8 to help journalists understand how to do new media. It 9 seemed sensible that that money should be spent on staff 10 rather than casual labour. 11 Q. Once the geography was sorted out, you rolled out what 12 you call here the five governance principles? 13 A. Yes. 14 Q. Can we just identify those. The first was one, 15 newsroom, which was really a question both of 16 geographical integration and integrating the print and 17 online operations; is that right? 18 A. Yes, that's correct. 19 Q. The second governance principle: effective and 20 transparent cost management and incentive schemes. Can 21 you just tell us a little bit about that matter, please? 22 A. Well, that was -- a point of this part of the change 23 programme was to get a firmer grip on costs in order to 24 be able to effect change in the cost base, to be able to 25 have new types of roles and new types of jobs. We faced</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 45</p>	<p>1 A. Yes, and training was -- there's two issues here. We've 2 already talked about the need for new media training and 3 every colleague was given that opportunity, but there's 4 also a need for ongoing training and professional 5 development and core journalistic skills. So we were 6 trying to really create a training culture at the 7 Telegraph, and we did successfully, something which 8 hasn't traditionally been the case in newspaper groups. 9 Q. Part and parcel of that was the relaunching of the 10 Telegraph's graduate trainee scheme. 11 A. Yes. 12 Q. Can I just follow that through a little bit. When you 13 are employing people from the bottom, if I can put it in 14 those terms, you explain there's a two-day programme of 15 interviews and tests for the shortlisted candidates. 16 Who carries out the interviews, first of all, and who 17 decides who is going to be selected for employment? 18 A. I'm not sure I'd agree with the interpretation of "the 19 bottom". I mean, some of our best people very quickly 20 accessed great work, did great work at the Telegraph 21 right from the very beginning. So I mean, one of the 22 key people in the MPs' expenses story was a trainee 23 journalist. If I could just -- 24 Q. Junior, then? 25 A. Uh ... younger. Even that's not necessarily correct.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 47</p>
<p>1 a real opportunity but also a threat in the digital 2 area. We needed to, within broadly the same money, 3 create new jobs, whether it's early morning working, 4 technology correspondence and so on, and so we needed to 5 get much better about cost management, and that's what 6 that passage refers to. 7 Q. Thank you, and that had various subelements. First of 8 all, the elimination of casual journalists, which is 9 dealt with under 8.3, and then what you call external 10 content, which starts under paragraph 8.6, and then 11 there are various policies which you outline under 8.7; 12 is that right? Which largely go to financial matters. 13 A. Yes, that's right, and also -- but control and 14 visibility. I mean, one of the key issues here was 15 trying to effect better management control through 16 better transparency. If we can know in near real time 17 how money was being spent, then we'd be able to manage 18 the use of that money better. 19 Q. Thank you. The third governance incidence principle, 20 professionalisation, I suppose means improving the 21 training and quality of the workforce, but governance 22 principle four, which is very much related to that, 23 training continuous professional development, in 24 particular the introduction of training programmes, you 25 explain that under paragraph 10 in particular.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 46</p>	<p>1 But graduate trainees, if one can call them that. 2 I was intimately involved in that process with 3 senior colleagues. It was one of the main ways we were 4 going to get replenishment of the gene pool, so we took 5 it incredibly seriously and were very proud we got it 6 relaunched and it still carries on today, I understand 7 it. 8 Q. In terms, though, of who decides who is going to be 9 employed, who makes the hire decisions? 10 A. It would be a panel of senior editorial people. In my 11 day, if I can recall correctly -- but this may not be 12 entirely accurate -- it was two colleagues, Richard 13 Preston and Simon Heffer, who brought their 14 recommendation to me. 15 Q. Of course, the Telegraph, aligned with the practice of 16 other newspapers, are bringing in people higher up, 17 lateral hires. Who would decide who was going to be 18 hired pursuant to that sort of process? 19 A. Well, ultimately it would be the editor or editor 20 in-chief, with heads of department making 21 recommendations. And yes, you're right, there was quite 22 a radical infusion of new blood into the Telegraph 23 during my time there, where we tried to combine the best 24 of the best from around Fleet Street to try and meet 25 this challenge of producing both papers to the same or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 48</p>

<p>1 higher standard and embrace all digital opportunities. 2 Q. Thank you. The fifth governance principle, clear 3 appropriate reporting lines for editorial, finance, 4 legal and compliance functions, you explain the 5 differences in role between the editor or editor 6 in-chief, the executive director and the legal manager. 7 I don't think it's necessary to go through those 8 specifically, but you helpfully explain that. 9 A. Could I just highlight one point here, which is that the 10 concept of the independent force in the newsroom. This 11 structure, my belief is, is quite or was quite unusual, 12 where the editor didn't have these functions reporting 13 to him or her. So it's something that was there right 14 from the beginning of my tenure as editor, and 15 I embraced and I came to understand how valuable it was. 16 Q. Thank you. Your specific role -- and this you deal with 17 under paragraph 13 -- was to ensure that the Telegraph's 18 editorial corporate governance policies, which we've 19 just been discussing, were adhered to in practice, and 20 part and parcel of that was responsibility for ensuring 21 that the editorial budget was adhered to. 22 A. Yes. The key roles of the editor were really 23 fundamentally around what to publish and what not to 24 publish in the papers and online, around people issues 25 that we talked about, and making sure we're getting the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 49</p>	<p>1 A. Mm. 2 Q. How does this work in practice? 3 A. Well, in practice, it's exactly as I state there, that 4 it's something that any editor will ask of him or 5 herself on a regular basis, and they should and will, 6 I'm sure, also ask that of senior colleagues. It speaks 7 to the judgment that's at the heart of good editing. 8 Q. It might be said this is not very scientific. Does it 9 feel right doesn't involve the invocation of any 10 particular principle or any standard; it's whether it 11 feels right in one's waters, as it were. 12 A. Yes. 13 Q. Is it more precise than that? 14 A. One can take as many steps as one can to make scientific 15 what is a creative process. Editors start each day with 16 a blank bit of paper that they have to fill with 17 vibrant, dynamic journalism by the end of the day, 18 compliant with the law, code, spirit of the code, 19 Reynolds, all carried out within Reynolds' journalistic 20 practices. It's extremely challenging, creative work 21 and at the end of the day you really have to ask 22 yourself this nonscientific but really crucially 23 important question of: does it feel right? And several 24 times in my time at the Telegraph, it didn't feel right, 25 so we didn't do it.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 51</p>
<p>1 best out of our people, and also to ensure that the 2 budget that had been allocated was being spent sensibly 3 and appropriately. That was overlaid, obviously, by 4 the overall responsibility of the editor to ensure that 5 the editorial department is going about its business in 6 compliance with PCC, Reynolds and the law. 7 Q. Thank you. Can I move on to paragraph 14, if I may. 8 This is PCC issues. You didn't, I think, at the time 9 your statement was prepared, have access to documents 10 which would enable you to quantify the number of 11 complaints which were resolved on the one hand without 12 the need for a ruling and those which then proceeded to 13 an adjudication; is that right? 14 A. Yes. No, that's correct. 15 Q. If we want to know the precise figures, doubtless those 16 can be provided in writing in due course. I'm going to 17 pass over matters which we can either take as read or 18 hear from the editor. Can I ask you about section 8, 19 which is paragraph 18, ethics in print media. 20 A. Mm. 21 Q. Your analysis is really tripartite, I think. First of 22 all, it entails employing the right people, secondly 23 complying with the relevant standards as laid down by 24 the code. Can I deal with the third one, "Judgment: 25 does this feel right?"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 50</p>	<p>1 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: When you say "feel right", do you 2 mean this doesn't sound right factually, it doesn't 3 appear right ethically, it doesn't seem right 4 emotionally, or is it all of those things? 5 A. I'm not sure about the third one. The emotional one 6 wasn't necessarily -- 7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Commercially? 8 A. No, I'd probably say it's the first two primarily. But 9 I think -- the mistakes that I've made in my career, and 10 there have been several, and they are numerous, have 11 come about when I haven't followed my instinct, and that 12 instinct can only be described as "does it feel right". 13 The best advice I ever got was: if in doubt, don't 14 do it that day. Wait a day, do it the next day, come at 15 it again. And that's all that this paragraph is 16 meant -- it's not meant to be a catch-all. I'm not 17 suggesting it as a new regulatory framework. 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm pleased to hear that. 19 A. Although it may rule out the need for lawyers, which may 20 be troubling, or not, but I just think it would be wrong 21 not to make it clear how important the feel is in the 22 trade in which I've worked for the last 20 years. 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's really a default question of 24 a slightly different level, isn't it? You may have done 25 everything right. You may have got sensible people</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 52</p>

<p>1 working on it. You may have sourced the story in a way 2 that you are satisfied with. You may feel it will 3 satisfies the PCC code -- 4 A. Yeah. 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: -- but even then, although you've 6 ticked all those boxes, if you're broadly unhappy, then 7 you're not going to publish is that day? That's what 8 you're saying? 9 A. I'm saying that. I'm saying that -- and it always 10 annoys the reporter as well. They always go storming 11 out of your office, and at the end of the day, that has 12 to be an editor's right, to say, "It just doesn't feel 13 right. I can't put my finger on it, but it doesn't feel 14 right." 15 Editing really, to give sort of gobbledygook 16 management speak, is about risk mitigation. Editors 17 have to wrestle each day with really difficult issues. 18 We have a saying in my industry, which is: we don't make 19 chocolates. Mars bars or the like don't come churning 20 off a conveyor belt and simply accumulate in a box 21 and -- it's a very complicated business, as I know 22 you're aware. The best stories are never black and 23 white. You don't get a receipt for a whistle-blower 24 providing information to you. It's just not how it 25 works, and so you will perhaps, on that basis,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 53</p>	<p>1 duties. Can you be more specific there about the sort 2 of contact you're referring to there? 3 A. Yes. I mean, when a fraud hits a big company, they will 4 often engage the services of a reputable investigations 5 unit in order to help the company find out who did what 6 when, and I would have expected my reporters involved in 7 covering those types of stories to have engaged with 8 those investigators to see if they could become sources 9 who could provide timely information so that the readers 10 of the Telegraph could be better informed about the 11 fraud that had been ongoing at that company. 12 Q. Thank you. Separately from that, a significant sum, you 13 think in the order of £150,000, was paid to the 14 intermediary, if I can so describe him, in connection 15 with the MPs' expenses story; is that right? 16 A. That's right, yeah. 17 Q. Some specific questions, please, about the expenses 18 story, which is picked up in paragraph 31. 19 A. Yes. 20 Q. The first issue, I suppose, which you had to satisfy 21 yourself of was that the material was genuine and not 22 a hoax? 23 A. Yes. I was concerned from the very beginning that it 24 was a hoax. I used to work, as you referred to earlier, 25 at the Sunday Times, when many years previously the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 55</p>
<p>1 understand how the instincts of you and the people 2 around you -- one is very reliant -- I was very reliant 3 on my deputy during my time as editor, who's now the 4 editor. I was reliant on my colleague, who is now the 5 editor of the Sunday Telegraph, and a range of other 6 important colleagues who would also hold you to account 7 and would often ask the question: "Are you really sure? 8 Does this not feel right? If which case, let's not do 9 it." 10 MR JAY: Thank you. 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm going to have problems 12 articulating that, but there it is. I understand the 13 point you're making. 14 MR JAY: May I move on, Mr Lewis, to the issue of private 15 investigators and other external providers of 16 information. This is paragraph 22. 17 A. Right. 18 Q. You make it clear that the general practice at the 19 Telegraph Media Group was not to pay private 20 investigators. To the best of your knowledge, this 21 never happened during your tenure between 2006 and 2010. 22 But then you say in paragraph 22.18 you're fairly 23 certain that a number of reporters would, from time to 24 time, have some sort of contact with private 25 investigators during the course of their reporting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 Hitler diaries hoax took place, and the ghost of that 2 particular situation still rose around the Sunday Times 3 newsroom, so I was particularly aware of the possibility 4 of someone trying to stitch me up by providing hoax 5 material. Quite quickly I was able to satisfy myself -- 6 although I will concede that worry about a hoax dogged 7 me all the way through until the MPs finally confirmed 8 it themselves. So my first concern was it being a hoax. 9 I was also aware of the fact that this story was 10 laced with risk all round, as the best and most 11 important public interest journalism tends to be, 12 whether it was the time that we had in order to be able 13 to investigate it, whether it was the reaction of the 14 readers, that one couldn't be certain of and all the 15 people we were dealing with. It was a story that was 16 laced with risk, so I felt the best way was to engage in 17 an iterative process, a five-step process, if you like, 18 in order to run this investigation and to conclude 19 finally about publication, which I'm happy to share with 20 you, if you wish. 21 Q. Just to go through some of the stages, one of the early 22 issues, I think, was whether a breach of the criminal 23 law might be perpetrated. Have I understood that 24 correctly? 25 A. Stage one was I was told by colleagues that they had</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 56</p>

<p>1 been approached by an intermediary on behalf of a source 2 to say they had got four years' worth of MPs' data 3 copied onto a disk. Obviously, the first question was: 4 could we go ahead and negotiate with that source and 5 have that kind of conversation? So we took legal 6 advice, and given that the information had been copied 7 onto a disk, the advice was that was not capable of 8 theft, and in addition it was also seen as being 9 important that no Telegraph person had been involved in 10 the copying process. It would be also wrong not to 11 state now that already at the very beginning I was 12 pretty aware of the likely public interest in the 13 material seeing the light of day, so that was phase one. 14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I understand that, but let me just 15 change the facts a little bit and ask whether it would 16 have made a difference. 17 A. Yes. 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Assume that it hadn't been a disk 19 that whoever it was copied it had bought in a shop and 20 taken in and then copied the data on -- because I'm 21 aware of the law in relation to intellectual property -- 22 but they'd actually stolen a disk. In other words, 23 they'd used a disk that wasn't theirs and stolen it. Do 24 you think that would have made an entirely different 25 analysis of the position?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 57</p>	<p>1 their day in the sun, as it were. Of course, I was 2 delighted to provide that, because that's what we would 3 have done anyway. 4 We then, on that basis, concluded this agreement and 5 then moved to phase three, which was the most important 6 phase and the most difficult phase, which was we had ten 7 days given to us to investigate the data on this disk, 8 and the data ran to more than a million documents. So 9 we had to put together the best of the best in a secret 10 room and get them to see what was on this disk, and they 11 uncovered quite quickly things that no one thought 12 probable, looking through such stuff. So I became very 13 aware that it was my responsibility to bring this to the 14 public domain. It was no longer going to be a choice 15 for me as editor; I now this a duty to bring this into 16 the public domain. 17 Which takes me onto stage four, which was about 18 engaging with colleagues on how we were going to 19 publish. This was a matter of enormous importance 20 because I wanted it to be seen to be fair and balanced 21 in our approach, and we concluded that we should rightly 22 start with the government and then move into the 23 opposition as it was then, the Conservative party. 24 Stage 5 was then about writing to each MP to say, 25 "Here are allegations we need to put to you", giving</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 59</p>
<p>1 A. I would obviously have got legal advice, as I got 2 throughout this process, and I would like to think that 3 we would have been able to find a way to bring this very 4 important information to the readers' attention without 5 breaking the law. 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Handling stolen property. That's the 7 law. 8 A. I don't know what the legal advice would be, but my 9 first port of call would have been to get legal advice 10 and -- 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You were having a go at lawyers a few 12 minutes ago. 13 A. Yes. A fair point. 14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: All right, all right, keep going. 15 Cheap, cheap. 16 A. Apologies, yes. But the second phase I think is really 17 quite important. So I felt comfortable with my 18 negotiating team going to meet the source, and the 19 source was really quite interesting because he wanted 20 some money, which was not unexpected, he wanted some 21 legal protection, but what was really interesting was 22 that he wanted -- the reason he had come to the 23 Telegraph was he wanted to ensure fair and balanced 24 coverage. He wanted to be certain that the Labour MPs 25 and the Conservative MPs all had their chance to have</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 58</p>	<p>1 them due notice, and waiting for their replies. I can 2 remember it as if it was yesterday when I was told that 3 Jack Straw had replied, confirming information and 4 explaining his expenses, and only then did I feel able 5 to give the green light to publication that evening. 6 MR JAY: Thank you. This yielded a number of complaints, 7 some of which were successful, others not, and you list 8 those in paragraph 31.10, I think, Mr Lewis. 9 A. Yeah, mistakes are always an issue, and I hated it when 10 we made errors, and I hated it even more in relation to 11 this story, but I will say in defence of what we did 12 that the mistake ratio here is reasonably low and 13 I remain hugely proud of -- given the intensity with 14 which the MPs' expenses team had to work, the incredible 15 pressure they worked under, continual threat of trying 16 to be stopped what they were doing, I think this record 17 is one we should be proud of. 18 Q. Some might say the expenses story went on for too long 19 and the Telegraph, as it were, eked it out for what it 20 was worth. You say that the strategy was to start with 21 the government, work down and move on to the opposition, 22 but really, you took every possible commercial advantage 23 that was open to you to, as it were, make as much money 24 out of this as possible. Would you accept that? 25 A. No, I wouldn't, and I suppose some might say that it</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 60</p>

<p>1 represents one of the most important bits of public 2 service and public interest journalism in the post-war 3 period that unveiled and revealed such wrongdoing in 4 Parliament that the speaker had to resign and many MPs 5 followed after him, and I'd probably prefer that version 6 of events rather than the one you put to me. 7 Q. Okay. So it wasn't a question then of achieving 8 a return on a no doubt substantial investment for the 9 material in the first place? You wouldn't agree with 10 that proposition? 11 A. I wouldn't agree with that. I'd say that the reason 12 that we did it was because ultimately I was obliged -- 13 I saw it as my ethical obligation to bring this profound 14 wrongdoing at the heart of the House of Commons into the 15 public domain, and remain passionately of that view now. 16 Q. No one would seriously suggest that the Telegraph was 17 not entitled to make money, but looking at the 18 circulation figures over this period of time, as I'm 19 sure you did, is it possible to say whether or not there 20 was a return on the Telegraph's investment? 21 A. I don't know, but I wouldn't agree with the premise of 22 the question that the money paid was an investment. It 23 was a way to ensure that the readers of the Telegraph 24 and the broader British public were able to find out 25 about the profound wrongdoing in the House of Commons</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 61</p>	<p>1 A. That is correct. 2 Q. Indeed, we know from the chronology that you left that 3 summer, didn't you? 4 A. Yes. May, actually, I think. 5 Q. The original story in the Telegraph, published on 6 20 December 2010, did not include Dr Cable saying that 7 he'd declared war on Rupert Murdoch by referring the 8 BSKyB bid to Ofcom. Do you recall that? 9 A. I do. 10 Q. Subsequently Mr Peston of the BBC got hold of the full 11 story, including those remarks, and the question then 12 arose where Mr Peston had got that information from. Am 13 I right in saying that the Telegraph carried out an 14 internal investigation through private investigators to 15 see who had leaked or might have leaked the story to 16 Mr Peston? Is that correct? 17 A. I have no idea. As you said earlier in your question, 18 I left the Telegraph in May 2010, so I've no idea if the 19 Telegraph conducted such an investigation. 20 Q. Okay. But the conclusion, insofar as there was one, 21 which the investigators reached was that there was 22 a strong suspicion that you and someone else were 23 involved in orchestrating the leaking of that 24 information to Mr Peston. The question I have for 25 you --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 63</p>
<p>1 and how MPs had stolen from the taxpayer. 2 Q. Of course it's accepted that without payment you weren't 3 going to get the data, and one can characterise the 4 payment in whatever terms one wishes, either in your 5 terms or in mine, but however it's characterised, is it 6 capable of being demonstrated with reference to the 7 circulation figures whether the increase in circulation 8 and therefore the resultant increase in revenue 9 overtopped the amount of money that had to be paid for 10 the retention of the data? 11 A. I don't know the answer to that question. In line with 12 other big stories that I've been involved with, one 13 would expect circulation to go up, but at the heart of 14 the MPs' expenses story was a desire to ensure that 15 loyal Telegraph readers -- and you've already heard 16 about the unusual loyalty of Telegraph readers -- were 17 informed about how their MPs were fleecing the taxpayer. 18 Q. I've been asked to put to you a question on a completely 19 unrelated matter, and I gave you some notice of this. 20 It concerns the sting, if I can so describe it, of 21 Dr Vince Cable, which I think was in December of 2010, 22 when two female journalists from the Telegraph 23 impersonated his constituents. You obviously know about 24 that matter, although by that stage it's right to point 25 out that you had left the Telegraph; is that correct?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 62</p>	<p>1 A. Right? 2 Q. -- is simply this: is that strong suspicion correct or 3 incorrect? Or, rather, did you leak this information to 4 Mr Peston? 5 A. I can't assist you with that. As you know, core to any 6 journalist -- and I'm included -- is the protection of 7 journalistic sources, whether they're my sources or 8 someone else's sources, and any way that I answer that 9 question, helpful as I would like to be, would endanger 10 that principle. If I was to give you an example, if 11 I was to confirm that I was not involved at all, and 12 that is -- those reports -- the reports you've just read 13 out to me are inaccurate, I'm sure that would cause the 14 Telegraph and/or this agency that you say that they took 15 on -- but I don't know that for a fact -- to 16 reinvestigate and to try and hunt down what might be 17 entirely legitimate journalistic sources. So I can't 18 assist you on that. 19 Q. Can I just press that a little bit further, Mr Lewis? 20 There are two possibilities here, logically. Either it 21 was you who leaked the information to Mr Peston, in 22 which case there's no question of a source involved 23 because you were the person who leaked the information, 24 or it wasn't you, in which case it's not your source 25 that's involved, but Mr Peston and his relationship with</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 64</p>

16 (Pages 61 to 64)

<p>1 another source. I'm not quite sure why you're unwilling 2 to tell us "yes" or "no" whether you provided this 3 information to Mr Peston, since there's no question 4 of -- 5 [Alarm sounded] 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: One might have thought you were 7 responsible for this, but this is the not the Queen's 8 building, so we are not -- I'm afraid it will happen 9 twice. 10 A. I'm in danger of repeating myself, but I will repeat 11 myself, which is that -- I think it's clause 14 of the 12 PCC code, for me, as I've lived with all my professional 13 dread, is as much about protecting my own sources as it 14 is for protecting other journalistic sources. I just 15 won't do it. So I don't mean to frustrate, and I hope 16 you'll agree I've been as helpful as I can be in areas 17 that are of importance, I thought, to this Inquiry, but 18 in this instance I've probably gone as far as I can and 19 should. 20 Q. Okay, Mr Lewis, I fully accept that you have been 21 a great assistance to the Inquiry. I'm not going to 22 press the matter further unless it's suggested that 23 I should. 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: You heard the debate or discussion 25 that I had, I have no doubt, with Mr MacLennan.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 65</p>	<p>1 find ways to assure the public that newsroom behaviour 2 is going to improve and can be controlled, if 3 I understand that to be the central question, then we 4 must therefore focus our attention on what's the best 5 way to influence those newsroom behaviours. 6 You can then turn the question around, can't you, 7 and say: what is best practice newsroom behaviour? And 8 it strikes me that that's a question we need to focus on 9 now as a matter of urgency, so that issues like an 10 independent force within the newsroom being a key best 11 practice principle would be, I think, something that 12 I would suggest. Assurances of the independence of the 13 editor it is another key principle, and alongside the 14 Editors' Code, you would see the son of the PCC, this 15 new regulator, hold newsrooms to account on those 16 principles as well as the Editors' Code, and that's the 17 best way in my mind for influencing newsroom behaviour. 18 At the same time, you would ensure that newsrooms 19 had to be transparent and therefore accountable for how 20 their newsrooms operated. Sunlight is a fantastic 21 disinfectant, and the very act of causing newsrooms to 22 have to disclose how they work and how far away they are 23 from best practice would be an incredibly empowering act 24 to help assure the public that newsroom behaviours were 25 under control.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 67</p>
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<p>1 A. Yes. 2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I appreciate that your present role 3 may involve you thinking about some of these issues, but 4 if you do have anything to say having regard to your 5 experience as an editor in relation to these matters, 6 I wanted to give you the opportunity to say it. 7 A. That's very kind. I do, and in my statement I make some 8 references to some ideas, but that was in August, and my 9 thinking has built on that since then. I know you asked 10 people to go away and think about -- 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: That's true. 12 A. I hope this is of some use, but I would say four things, 13 I think. They may or may not be of use. 14 Firstly, I completely agree with your judgment not 15 to rush to judgment, I mean, in terms of how to change, 16 since it's incredibly complicated, and we must not throw 17 the baby out with the bathwater. There is tremendous 18 work -- good work that, for example, the PCC has done 19 over the years that we mustn't lose. 20 But my key point is this: that there's been a lot of 21 talk, rightly so, about what the son of PCC who look 22 like, whether it should be legislated for -- wrong, no, 23 it should be self-legislated, but if I understand the 24 key question to be that there is legitimate public 25 concern about newsroom behaviours, and that we need to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 66</p>	<p>1 I know you will probably be thinking: what about the 2 issue of how do you get everywhere in the tent? I don't 3 think you've call it the Richard Desmond issue, but it 4 is the Richard Desmond issue as things stand. 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: It's much more than Richard Desmond 6 There are magazines, all other sorts of journals that 7 aren't members of the PCC, aren't there? 8 A. Correct, correct, and I think there my thinking is 9 focused really on following the money. Businesses tend 10 to make decisions where the money increases rather than 11 decreases, and logic would dictate that if this son of 12 PCC was able to control the currency, the advertising 13 currency that is so vital to the newspaper industry, 14 which is currently owned by organisations such as ABC 15 and NRS -- if those were to come under the control of 16 the son of PCC, then any newspaper group outside of the 17 son of PCC would be unable to sell its advertising wares 18 based on these crucial currencies that are so important 19 to how newspapers sell advertising. 20 In addition, in the increasingly important online 21 advertising market, ABCE would also and should also fall 22 under the control of this new regulator, so you wouldn't 23 be able to force anyone to join it but if you wanted, as 24 a media house, to continue to use this advertising 25 currency, you would have to be part of son of PCC.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 68</p>
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<p>1 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: How would you require that to happen?</p> <p>2 A. How would you require the son of PCC to get that</p> <p>3 control?</p> <p>4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not going to call it the son of</p> <p>5 PCC because that suggests that a little tinkering will</p> <p>6 do, and I'm not sure it would.</p> <p>7 A. I don't mean to imply that at all. I understand the PCC</p> <p>8 up until this point to have been a mediator with</p> <p>9 regulatory reputation, and I think there is now --</p> <p>10 I don't disagree with the emerging consensus of the need</p> <p>11 for the industry to have a regulator, a self-regulator,</p> <p>12 an industry that -- the industry should set it up for</p> <p>13 itself, albeit with non-industry people. I don't</p> <p>14 disagree with that emerging consensus at all.</p> <p>15 You wouldn't be able to force people to join it, but</p> <p>16 if you create an environment where the money, the</p> <p>17 advertising money, was more able to be accessed if you</p> <p>18 were a member of it, that would be one step that would</p> <p>19 cause this to happen.</p> <p>20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not sure how you would be able to</p> <p>21 require advertisers to commit into such an organisation.</p> <p>22 Why would a company wishing to advertise, say, "Well, of</p> <p>23 course I'll only go to those who are approved by the</p> <p>24 regulator" unless you required it? And once you're</p> <p>25 requiring it, then you're going to run yourself into</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 69</p>	<p>1 A. No, sir.</p> <p>2 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you very much indeed. Thank</p> <p>3 you.</p> <p>4 MR JAY: Sir, the final witness is Mr Tony Gallagher.</p> <p>5 MR ANTHONY CONNELL GALLAGHER (sworn)</p> <p>6 Questions by MR JAY</p> <p>7 MR JAY: Your full name?</p> <p>8 A. My name is Anthony Connell Gallagher.</p> <p>9 Q. Thank you. Under tab 6 of the bundle in front of you,</p> <p>10 you should find a copy of your witness statement, dated</p> <p>11 14 October of last year, and underneath a statement of</p> <p>12 truth and signed by you; is that correct?</p> <p>13 A. Yes.</p> <p>14 Q. You are currently the editor of the Daily Telegraph?</p> <p>15 A. Correct.</p> <p>16 Q. In terms of your journalistic career, after working in</p> <p>17 the regional press, you joined the Daily Mail in 1990.</p> <p>18 You ended up, if I may so describe it, as assistant</p> <p>19 editor. You left the Daily Mail in October 2006 and you</p> <p>20 became editor of the Daily Telegraph after a number of</p> <p>21 other positions there in November 2009; is that correct?</p> <p>22 A. Yes.</p> <p>23 Q. I've asked this general question, this cultural question</p> <p>24 about the differences, if any, between the various</p> <p>25 newspapers for which you worked. In your case, it would</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 71</p>
<p>1 other difficulties. I'm happy to talk about it. I'm</p> <p>2 also happy to talk about independent regulation, however</p> <p>3 that comes about, and I'm also concerned to know how you</p> <p>4 would fit in the general requirement that people have</p> <p>5 expressed concern about in relation to libel and the</p> <p>6 cost of litigation and to have some speedier mediation</p> <p>7 solution.</p> <p>8 A. Yes, I heard that debate and discussion you had earlier.</p> <p>9 Just to clarify my advertising point, the way that</p> <p>10 newspaper advertising broadly works at the moment is</p> <p>11 that newspaper groups use this currency, whether it's</p> <p>12 through ABC or NRS or some other currencies, which is</p> <p>13 almost a stamp of approval that these bodies give to say</p> <p>14 you have this many readers or this many eyeballs on your</p> <p>15 website, and you use that, as a newspaper group, to then</p> <p>16 go to the advertising agencies that by and large control</p> <p>17 corporate advertising and you get -- off the back of</p> <p>18 that, you win advertising.</p> <p>19 So my argument is that the son of PCC, as I'm</p> <p>20 calling it, would -- should get control of that</p> <p>21 currency, to give an extra motivation to media houses to</p> <p>22 become part of that regulatory framework.</p> <p>23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We'll obviously have to look at how</p> <p>24 that works.</p> <p>25 Is there anything else that you --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 70</p>	<p>1 be a comparison between the Daily Mail on the one hand</p> <p>2 and the Daily Telegraph on the other. Are there any</p> <p>3 cultural differences between the two?</p> <p>4 A. Bear in mind that I was operating at a lower level when</p> <p>5 I was at the Daily Mail, but notwithstanding that,</p> <p>6 I don't see huge cultural differences between the</p> <p>7 newsroom of the Daily Mail and that of the</p> <p>8 Daily Telegraph, in that there's a desire for accuracy,</p> <p>9 there's a desire for professionalism, there's a desire</p> <p>10 to compete with and beat your rivals in what's a hugely</p> <p>11 competitive newspaper market, and I think it's right to</p> <p>12 say that the journalists that can thrive in one newsroom</p> <p>13 can usually thrive in another, and their skills are very</p> <p>14 transferable. So no, I don't see a huge cultural</p> <p>15 difference.</p> <p>16 Q. Thank you. Under paragraph 5, you explain -- and we</p> <p>17 know this from other evidence we've heard -- editorial</p> <p>18 decision making is your responsibility?</p> <p>19 A. That's right.</p> <p>20 Q. Although of course day-to-day decisions may be delegated</p> <p>21 to others; is that right?</p> <p>22 A. Correct.</p> <p>23 Q. In terms of what you decide to do yourself and what you</p> <p>24 decide to delegate, what principles, if any, do you</p> <p>25 apply to guide you?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 72</p>

<p>1 A. I have a team that works underneath me that I trust 2 implicitly that carries out a lot of the instructions 3 that I would make in the course of the day, but I think 4 it's fair to say that I'm very hands-on and I'm involved 5 in most of the key decisions of the day, from everything 6 that goes on the front page to the promotional blurbs, 7 to the page leads, to the choice of commentary, to the 8 leaders, to the choice of features. Pretty much 9 everything apart from the TV listings. 10 Q. Thank you. In the next few paragraphs of your statement 11 you deal with the structure within, as it were, the 12 editorial division of the Daily Telegraph and the 13 various departments. I can move on to paragraph 10 and 14 deal with the issue of the Telegraph website, which 15 we've heard from other evidence is becoming increasingly 16 important to the Telegraph's business model. Can you 17 explain what you mean by the phrase "reporters who 18 self-publish their own stories"? 19 A. In classic newsrooms, stories tend to be written and 20 then routed through the news editor, who will then route 21 them to the editor and discuss the importance of them. 22 With the Internet and the need for speed of delivery, as 23 we compete against Internet news providers, we took 24 a decision a couple of years ago to ensure that 25 experienced reporters were effectively able to bypass Page 73</p>	<p>1 other reporter launches it onto the interpret. 2 Q. Thank you. You explain how legal risk is addressed 3 under paragraph 14. Some stories require legal 4 sign-off, as you put it. There isn't a hard and fast 5 algorithm for deciding which stories require sign-off 6 and which don't. You explain it's a question of 7 judgment, but you're on the side of caution. 8 We understand fully about the concept of risk in the 9 context of defamation, but to what extent do privacy 10 issues feature in the Telegraph's product, the stories 11 they print? 12 A. That's not a very live issue for us, in that we don't 13 really go down that path in terms of the story choice, 14 so privacy doesn't normally arise. I think there's 15 a very tiny amount of stories for the Telegraph. 16 Q. But we know there's a showbusiness correspondent. 17 A. That is correct. 18 Q. What sort of stories does he or she write? 19 A. There's been a showbusiness correspondent dating back 20 two decades, but classically the showbusiness 21 correspondent will cover showbusiness stories that are 22 of interest to Telegraph readers, as we judge them. 23 They'll cover the radio, TV shows, theatrical first 24 nights, cinema premieres. To give you two immediate 25 examples, we've been very interested at the Telegraph in Page 75</p>
<p>1 the news deck, which would allow them to self-publish 2 their stories and have them peer-reviewed pretty much 3 instantly. But that was mainly for what I would 4 describe as noncontentious news stories rather than 5 anything that would be particularly controversial. 6 Q. So anything that might attract controversy, that would 7 go up through the traditional pathway; is that right? 8 A. Yes. Or it would -- or the reporter himself or herself 9 would quickly get involved with the legal department 10 that works on the same floor and is on tap the entire 11 day in terms of advice or guidance they might be able to 12 provide. 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Not to do so would create 14 a reputational risk. 15 A. Absolutely, and the lawyer is two doors away from my 16 office and is on the floor most of the day, and has his 17 door open to reporters the entire time, so can be 18 consulted at any stage, not just by me but by junior 19 reporters too. 20 MR JAY: Can you explain a little bit more how the process 21 of peer review works, both generally and particularly in 22 relation to the online product? 23 A. It's senior colleagues of the reporter in question 24 checking the accuracy of the story, making sure there 25 are no howling spelling errors and so forth before the Page 74</p>	<p>1 the premiere of War Horse, and we've carried a great 2 deal about that of late, and we have a great interest in 3 Downton Abbey, which appears on the news pages 4 periodically. 5 Q. It's a question of the Telegraph knowing its readers? 6 A. Absolutely. We're more likely to be interested in 7 Downton Abbey than we are in the X Factor, for example. 8 Q. I think I'm beginning to get the point, thank you. 9 Can I deal with paragraph 16. When the PCC asked 10 you not to publish a particular story or photograph, 11 what is the Telegraph's typical reaction to such 12 a request? Could you help us with that? 13 A. We tend to abide by it. The relationship with the PCC 14 is very healthy. They can pick up the phone or they can 15 send an email to me or to the head of the legal team, 16 and they're very quick to point out where there's an 17 issue with a particular person that is requiring or 18 demanding privacy. 19 I have to say, when they send these emails or they 20 ring us, I'm guessing that it's quite a small minority 21 of requests are relevant from the point of view of the 22 Daily Telegraph in terms of the personalities they're 23 talking about. 24 Q. Thank you. We heard, and I put it to a previous 25 witness, Mr MacLennan, that the Telegraph was censured Page 76</p>

<p>1 by the PCC in May 2011 over the Dr Vince Cable sting 2 story?</p> <p>3 A. Yes, that's correcting.</p> <p>4 Q. Mr MacLennan told us that the full adjudication was 5 published; is that right?</p> <p>6 A. That's right. The PCC ruling, which we accepted but 7 were unhappy with -- they required us to publish an 8 abridged version of that ruling. I felt that it was 9 a matter of such public interest that we should publish 10 the entire ruling, which was, from memory, about a third 11 longer than the abridged ruling. We published it in its 12 entirety.</p> <p>13 Q. You mentioned the public interest. What was the public 14 interest in publishing the entire ruling?</p> <p>15 A. I felt that it was -- the story itself generated a huge 16 controversy. It was probably the most important PCC 17 ruling of 2011 and I felt in the interests of justice, 18 we should carry the entire ruling, given that we'd 19 devoted a fair amount of space to the embarrassment of 20 the Liberal Democrats in December 2010.</p> <p>21 Q. Thank you. May I deal with the issue of corrections. 22 You don't have a corrections page?</p> <p>23 A. No.</p> <p>24 Q. What is your policy, if any, in relation to the 25 publication of corrections?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 77</p>	<p>1 Q. Paragraph 23, our page 21162.</p> <p>2 A. Yes.</p> <p>3 Q. "The culture of the Daily Telegraph is one of excellence 4 and professionalism."</p> <p>5 First of all, how is that culture inculcated? And 6 secondly, how is it executed, as it were, across the 7 whole of your product, by which I mean your employees?</p> <p>8 A. We have a highly professional staff who can be relied 9 upon themselves to work to the highest standards. 10 I think accuracy is at the forefront of everybody's mind 11 every day, and they pride themselves on getting stories 12 right. So first and foremost, it comes down to the 13 reporter.</p> <p>14 From my point of view, I lead from the front and I'm 15 highly visible. I'm there the entire day, 16 notwithstanding today, and I'm usually there when the 17 edition goes at night source. So I like to think that 18 they can approach me if there's a problem and that I'm 19 a keen stickler for accuracy and getting stories 20 100 per cent layered on right.</p> <p>21 Q. Can I move on to a different matter now. That's 22 responsibility for checking sources, starting at 23 paragraph 29. You explain the day-to-day operation of 24 the paper and the various conferences which take place 25 under paragraph 30. That's part of the background.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 79</p>
<p>1 A. All corrections come through me. Very often, complaints 2 are addressed to me directly by lawyers or by 3 individuals, if not me then the legal department, and we 4 try and deal with corrections very quickly. I don't 5 like them building up. I don't like the process being 6 drawn out. Wherever possible, I like them to be done 7 quickly. We don't have a corrections page, but my 8 thinking is emerging that it's something we may need to 9 consider in due course.</p> <p>10 Q. Thank you. It's been put to one or two editors already 11 the desirability or otherwise of having a readers' 12 editor, which I don't think the Telegraph has. What is 13 your view on that, if any?</p> <p>14 A. I'm not sure that a readers' editor is a wholly helpful 15 idea in that I think the person that should be dealing 16 with the readers is me. Complaints often come to my 17 desk, and I take on board the fact that -- where there 18 are complaints I will ring people and find out what the 19 nature of their complaint is. So I think it might be an 20 unnecessary layer of bureaucracy and I prefer to deal 21 with the issue myself in a quick and timely fashion. 22 But I must say, I don't have a hard and fast view on the 23 matter and if there was an industry consensus that 24 everybody had to have a readers' editor then I'd be 25 happy to go along with that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 78</p>	<p>1 The primary responsibility lies with the reporter, 2 but the -- can you just deal with the last sentence of 3 paragraph 29, the extent to which reporters are 4 questioned about their sources. Is this a question of 5 intuition or is there more developed science to it?</p> <p>6 A. It's a mix of both, I think. It depends upon the nature 7 of the story in the first instance, how explosive is the 8 story, to what extent is it a knocking story, what sort 9 of waves is it going to cause in political circles? 10 Secondly, what's the veracity of the source? Is the 11 source on the record? If the source is off the record, 12 is there documentation to back um what we're about to 13 allege?</p> <p>14 I think it's only right to say that we have to trust 15 in the judgment of the reporters, too. If a very senior 16 reporter comes to me with an explosive story and says, 17 "We can't name the source", we're more likely to take 18 that on board than if it happens to be a junior member 19 of staff who joined us five minutes ago.</p> <p>20 Q. This question was asked of others, and I suspect I know 21 the answer when I put the question to you, but is there 22 any written audit trail of these decisions in relation 23 to sources so that if there were to be litigation you 24 would be able to demonstrate the thought process?</p> <p>25 A. The PCC has issued, I believe, new rules in the past two</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 80</p>

<p>1 weeks on the nature to write down how public interest 2 decisions are taken and who is accountable for them. 3 That doesn't necessarily include identification of 4 sources, you won't be surprised to learn. 5 Q. No. 6 A. But certainly we're going to have to provide, going 7 forward, more documentary evidence of how we reached 8 a particular decision to publish a story, and I have to 9 say I'm comfortable with that. 10 Q. Thank you. Then paragraph 32, Mr Gallagher. If you 11 read a story and it makes you think: "When did that come 12 from?" you will almost certainly ask the question. 13 That's a question of the matter of experience. If you 14 smell a rat or there's doubt in your mind, you'll want 15 to probe further; is that correct? 16 A. Correct. Beyond the legal process, it's a matter of 17 some instinct, I think. 18 Q. Yes. I can move on. Paragraph 39. 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Before you do move on, Mr Gallagher 20 is it going to be extremely inconvenient for you to 21 return first thing tomorrow morning? 22 A. I'd really much rather continue after 5 o'clock if 23 that's at all possible. I've had to take the entire day 24 today, so if it's not too inconvenient for everybody. 25 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: We'll carry on but we will just give</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 81</p>	<p>1 2011, twice for dinner. George Osbourne, a similar 2 number of times. Ed Miliband, a similar number of 3 times. And with my team, we've had lunch or dinner 4 probably with three-quarters of the cabinet, and perhaps 5 50 per cent of the shadow cabinet over the previous 18 6 months. 7 Q. It's clear from that answer that you don't just see 8 those in government; you see those in opposition. 9 A. Indeed. 10 Q. Is there any difference in the reason for your meeting 11 politicians on the one hand in government and those 12 outside government? 13 A. Absolutely not. We're interested -- you won't be 14 surprised to learn -- as a newspaper, we're terribly 15 interested in politics, so it shouldn't be a great 16 surprise to discover that we have pretty regular 17 meetings with the most senior politicians in the land, 18 who are keen to get exposure for their policies, 19 convince us of their ideas and that their ideas are of 20 merit and so forth, but I think it's important that we 21 see all sides. 22 I would add the following: I never have these 23 dinners on my own, I've never been in their private 24 homes, and nor would I ever have them in my home. It's 25 usually me and senior members of the editorial team. So</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 83</p>
<p>1 the shorthand writer a couple of minutes. 2 (4.38 pm) 3 (A short break) 4 (4.42 pm) 5 MR JAY: Mr Gallagher, paragraph 39, if I may say so, though 6 very well written, we'll pass over, but we will note 7 your description of how ethics applied to what you do. 8 Can I deal though with paragraph 41 and the question 9 of any influence on you from above, namely the 10 proprietors. You tell us that there is no such 11 influence. Is that correct? 12 A. Correct. 13 Q. What is the nature of the communication, if any, between 14 the proprietors and yourself? 15 A. Next to nothing. I talk to the chairman of the 16 Telegraph Media Group, Aidan Barclay, ones or twice 17 a month. I think I spoke to him the week before 18 Christmas and I haven't spoken to him since. 19 Q. Thank you. May I ask you briefly at this stage about 20 your dealings, if any, with politicians? Do you have 21 dealings with politicians, particularly those in high 22 office? 23 A. Yes, I do. 24 Q. First of all, how frequently? 25 A. I think I've seen the Prime Minister three times in</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 82</p>	<p>1 it's purely work for us. 2 Q. Thank you. And presumably these dinners are an expense 3 on your paper; is that right? 4 A. Usually, yes. Equally I think it's only right to say 5 that politicians now -- senior politicians now document 6 these on their own websites in the interests of full 7 disclosure. 8 Q. Maybe in relation to the Daily Telegraph it's an 9 entirely stupid question but I ask it nonetheless so 10 I can get the answer. Presumably the reason behind 11 these meetings is not to persuade the Telegraph to 12 support or not to support a particular political party? 13 A. You'd have to ask David Cameron or Ed Miliband, but 14 I think we've given them pretty rough treatment, both of 15 them, for various issues over the past 12 months, so if 16 that was the measure they had in mind, they've failed. 17 Q. Thank you. Paragraph 50, please. 18 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Do you think it gives you influence? 19 A. Absolutely not. I don't kid myself. The only reason 20 they're having dinner with me is because I run the 21 Daily Telegraph but if I fell under a bus this evening, 22 they'd want dinner with the next editor of the 23 Daily Telegraph. 24 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, I understand that. I'll change 25 the question slightly. Do you think it gives the editor</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 84</p>

<p>1 of the Daily Telegraph influence?</p> <p>2 A. No, is the short answer to that. I think they become</p> <p>3 aware of where we stand on given issues, but given the</p> <p>4 extent to which we find ourselves in opposition with the</p> <p>5 current government, and indeed found ourselves in</p> <p>6 opposition with the last government, I think it would be</p> <p>7 fair to say we're not having a great influence if there</p> <p>8 are so many of their policies that we don't agree with.</p> <p>9 MR JAY: Paragraph 50, please, Mr Gallagher. These are</p> <p>10 factors you take into account on perhaps fairly rare</p> <p>11 occasions when a publishing decision has privacy</p> <p>12 implications.</p> <p>13 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>14 Q. You list three of them. The first is the position of</p> <p>15 the person who is the subject of the story. In your</p> <p>16 view, is the mere fact of celebrity a reason for</p> <p>17 publishing a story which would otherwise be an intrusion</p> <p>18 into that person's privacy?</p> <p>19 A. No.</p> <p>20 Q. Why do you say that?</p> <p>21 A. I would qualify that by saying that if the celebrity was</p> <p>22 of interest to Daily Telegraph readers, then we might be</p> <p>23 interested in it, but I think it's very hard to pin down</p> <p>24 precisely when and how we become interested in that</p> <p>25 person. It would far more relate to politicians,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 85</p>	<p>1 Blunkett, to give you another prominent political</p> <p>2 example, when it emerged that he was involved in a love</p> <p>3 tangle, to use a phrase, there might not have been an</p> <p>4 overwhelming public interest in that to begin with, but</p> <p>5 when it become apparent that there had been an issue</p> <p>6 over whether or not he had fast-tracked a visa for the</p> <p>7 lover's nanny, then it was suddenly a massive kind of</p> <p>8 public interest and he subsequently lost his job.</p> <p>9 MR JAY: May I ask a series of general questions. The issue</p> <p>10 of prior notification, whether it's the Telegraph's</p> <p>11 policy to notify the subjects of stories that stories</p> <p>12 are about to be published, is it or is it not the</p> <p>13 Telegraph's policy to do that?</p> <p>14 A. It tends to be our policy, the reason for that being</p> <p>15 that the Reynolds defence is well-known, I think hard</p> <p>16 wired to most members of staff, and giving them prior</p> <p>17 notice of stories seems to me to be good practice, even</p> <p>18 to the point where, on occasion, we've held the story</p> <p>19 out of the paper for 24 hours to ensure that the subject</p> <p>20 of the story is given full chance to respond in suitable</p> <p>21 detail.</p> <p>22 Q. Any policy may be subject to exceptions. Could you</p> <p>23 assist us, please, on a principle basis of the sort of</p> <p>24 situations which might justify a departure from that</p> <p>25 policy?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 87</p>
<p>1 I think, and we'd be much more interested in their</p> <p>2 private lives, but again, there probably comes a point</p> <p>3 when we get interested in it and it's hard to know when</p> <p>4 it becomes an overwhelming public interest in the</p> <p>5 disclosure of that information. It shifts, the ground,</p> <p>6 if you see what I'm saying.</p> <p>7 Q. Is it the Telegraph's position, if one were to take the</p> <p>8 example of a politician, who, for example, has not</p> <p>9 publicly spoken out in favour of family values, that the</p> <p>10 publication of adultery would be in the public interest</p> <p>11 in relation to that individual?</p> <p>12 A. It's a difficult question, to which I don't think</p> <p>13 there's a short and simple answer. Was the publication</p> <p>14 of the break-up of Chris Huhne's marriage in the public</p> <p>15 interest? Perhaps not, but then it emerges that there's</p> <p>16 a wrangle over who was behind the wheel of a car and</p> <p>17 whether or not he order her to take points on his</p> <p>18 licence. Then it definitely becomes a matter of public</p> <p>19 interest. So I come back to what I said earlier: the</p> <p>20 ground can shift.</p> <p>21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But it's not that their relationship</p> <p>22 has broken up that's a matter of public interest, but</p> <p>23 whether somebody has done something that contravenes</p> <p>24 criminal law.</p> <p>25 A. In the case of Chris Huhne, yes. In the case of David</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 86</p>	<p>1 A. I can't think of what we've done in reality, but in</p> <p>2 terms of hypotheses, I suppose if the subject of the</p> <p>3 story was going to destroy the information or it was no</p> <p>4 longer going to be material if you waited another day</p> <p>5 and they were going to change their mind, then there</p> <p>6 might be examples where you would not go for prior</p> <p>7 notification, but they would be extremely rare, and in</p> <p>8 fact I haven't come across them in my time there.</p> <p>9 Q. Thank you. May I ask you now about conditional fee</p> <p>10 agreements. I have no doubt you have views about the</p> <p>11 balance of power which is created by claimants having</p> <p>12 access to such agreements, but I understand it to be the</p> <p>13 position that sometimes the Telegraph uses conditional</p> <p>14 fee agreements. Is that so?</p> <p>15 A. That's correct.</p> <p>16 Q. Is this usually the case or always the case?</p> <p>17 A. It's occasionally the case, is how I would put it. They</p> <p>18 have become a weapon in our armoury as we face claimants</p> <p>19 who have fantastic funding and seemingly inexhaustible</p> <p>20 limits of patience to pursue us, even when they're flat</p> <p>21 wrong.</p> <p>22 Q. Can I take that answer in two parts? Why does the</p> <p>23 Telegraph's use of a conditional fee agreement improve</p> <p>24 its bargaining or litigation position vis a vis a</p> <p>25 claimant?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 88</p>

<p>1 A. It makes it cheaper. Bear in mind we're a company that 2 makes money, as you've seen, and we're reasonably 3 successful, and therefore we have deep enough pockets to 4 fight a number of these cases, but I have to tell you 5 that very often we fail to fight cases simply because 6 the expense of so doing is so onerous that it's easier 7 to pay our own expenses, carry a brief clarification and 8 then move on. 9 Only last week I signed off an amendment to a story, 10 and it was concerning a policeman who had been guilty of 11 some misconduct and we'd run up legal bills of £35,000, 12 which for us, while being a substantial sum of money, is 13 not ruinous, but if you're a local paper and you're 14 suffering that kind of difficulty, you'll automatically 15 throw in the towel. 16 I'll give you a second example, if that would be 17 helpful, which concerns the case of a man who was 18 described as the world's worst professional tennis 19 player, and we carried a small story about him on the 20 sports pages, in common with a good number of other 21 national newspapers, but armed with a conditional fee 22 agreement, he came after pretty much every national 23 newspaper and then showed up the cheques that he won 24 from all of them on his website. 25 Reuters, who I think I'm right in saying supplied</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 89</p>	<p>1 A quick and easy way, a cheap way of resolving legal 2 complaints I think would be one of the best policy 3 outcomes of this Inquiry, sir, because the chilling 4 effect of libel on small media organisations has to be 5 seen to be believed. 6 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But there's a downside to that, 7 Mr Gallagher, which I'm sure you appreciate, namely that 8 the only way that can become compulsory is if it's part 9 of the law. 10 A. Mm-hm. 11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: In other words, it requires those who 12 wish to complain about privacy or libel -- and there can 13 be limits or whatever -- to go down this route. If you 14 make it consensual, built on contract, entirely 15 self-organised, then those with the deepest pockets will 16 simply say, "I'm not prepared to play that game"; in 17 other words, you'll suffer exactly the same problems 18 which you are presently complaining about. 19 A. Quite so. I think I'm right in saying there is 20 a defamation bill going through the houses of Parliament 21 at the moment, and it's not for me to say, but people 22 have worked out more fully thoughts on this matter than 23 me, I would venture to suggest, but it seems to me that 24 if we could find add way of amending that bill to make 25 mediation a route into an earlier stopping stage than</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 91</p>
<p>1 the original story, eventually bailed out when their 2 legal bills came to £130,000, and we kept going and the 3 case against us was eventually struck out, but everybody 4 else fell by the wayside, to give you just one example. 5 Q. I ask you to deal with a point which has been forcefully 6 made by those acting for claimants, that if a newspaper 7 such as yours has a good defence, why doesn't the 8 newspaper take that defence to legal adjudication, since 9 the effective after-the-event insurance will mean you 10 get all your costs or most of them back? 11 A. You can. Do you mean proceeding to trial? 12 Q. Yes. 13 A. Proceeding to trial gets even more expensive than that. 14 We've had one or two cases where seven-figure sums have 15 been burned without successful resolution. I must say, 16 we try wherever possible to avoid going to trial and try 17 and resolve things at an earlier stage, but occasionally 18 you will get a litigant who is extremely determined to 19 have their day in court. 20 Q. Okay. 21 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: So that raises the question that 22 you've heard me ask before today -- I don't know whether 23 you were here earlier -- about some sort of arbitral 24 system. 25 A. I'm hugely attracted by that. Hugely attracted by that.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 90</p>	<p>1 libel, I think it would be highly desirable. 2 Indeed, I know you perhaps want to talk in more 3 detail in a moment about the future of the PCC, and it 4 would be a wholly advantageous outcome for the media, 5 I think, if some kind of arbitral system could be 6 embroidered into whatever replaces the PCC going 7 forward. 8 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Well, that's part of an overall 9 package that I've not decided. I make it abundantly 10 clear to everybody and I repeat it so that nobody thinks 11 that I'm becoming blinkered to everything. I'm not. 12 I am just raising questions and raising issues for you 13 to consider, because I'm sure you are already 14 involved -- at least I hope you're involved -- with 15 other editors in looking for ways forward which will 16 work for you and work for me. It's part of the overall 17 issue that I believe should be considered. 18 A. There has to be a better way, a cheaper way and 19 a quicker way than the current system we have, and 20 I think if all of us are thinking hard about it, it 21 can't be beyond the wit of man to come up with such 22 a system. 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But you see -- I mean, this goes into 24 the PCC material. I entirely agree that any regulation 25 has to be independent. It can't involve the government.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 92</p>

<p>1 It can't involve politicians. It must involve people 2 from the business, whether it's serving editors or 3 former editors and former journalists. It must involve 4 independent people. It probably has to involve some 5 legal input. But I could visualise a system that has 6 three limbs: the complaint and mediation services, 7 presently what everybody says the PCC does so well; 8 a regulatory mechanism, which I don't think the PCC now 9 claims to have done; and an arbitral mechanism, not 10 statutory in the sense that it is defined by statute, 11 but statutory in the sense that that provides the 12 compulsory background to appointment of independent 13 people to do all these things.</p> <p>14 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>15 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I don't ask you to comment upon that. 16 You're very welcome to if you want to, to express 17 definitive views now, and I'm not clear about it in my 18 own mind. I'm merely thinking about all the 19 possibilities.</p> <p>20 A. I must say I find the prospect very attractive, and if 21 you could find mediators who could take notes as the 22 process is ongoing, work out how willing or otherwise 23 the complainants or the litigants are to come to 24 a resolution, and if no resolution can be found, that 25 could be counted against them when it comes to an</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 93</p>	<p>1 ours and doesn't like us.</p> <p>2 Q. I think he was saying that not merely he doesn't like 3 you but you don't like him, because you were repeatedly 4 attacking him. Is that true or not?</p> <p>5 A. I don't think that's true, no.</p> <p>6 Q. If I ask you some general questions to conclude. What 7 is your vision for the paper and in what way will you 8 realise that vision in the manner in which you lead your 9 organisation?</p> <p>10 A. My vision for the paper is for it to be a continued and 11 increasing success. It's important, I think, as a force 12 for good in civil society. I want it to lead the news 13 agenda, to have the brightest and most provocative 14 comment, the most engaging features, the best business 15 section, the most compelling sport, the entire package, 16 and I would look to achieve that, I hope, by the work 17 rate that I put into the paper and my visibility on the 18 floor and my determination to lead from the front, 19 without wishing to sound vainglorious.</p> <p>20 Q. Okay. Finally, what is your biggest priority going 21 forward, Mr Gallagher?</p> <p>22 A. I think it's converting our vast digital audience into 23 money, because while we have a huge presence on the web, 24 the way in which that's converted into money hasn't 25 replaced the loss of display advertising in the downturn</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 95</p>
<p>1 ultimate libel action, but one would hope that most 2 cases would be resolved at a much earlier stage.</p> <p>3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Or up to a certain level you could 4 use this and permit appeals on points of law, whatever.</p> <p>5 There are all sorts of models that one could choose, but 6 one has to be prepared to think about the framework 7 broadly along the lines that I've said, because if one 8 says: well, it all has to be outwith some sort of 9 framework, then, as I say, people needn't co-operate.</p> <p>10 A. In principle, I find the prospect highly attractive.</p> <p>11 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you.</p> <p>12 MR JAY: Mr Gallagher, before I ask some final general 13 questions, can I ask you about your paper's diary 14 column, which I think is called Mandrake; is that right?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. I put this to you before lunch when we met. Are you 17 aware of a blogger called Mr Montgomerie writing in his 18 Conservative Home blog on 19 October last year that he 19 was leaving his Sunday Telegraph column because he was 20 repeatedly attacked in Mandrake on your orders because 21 he had tweeted a criticism of the Telegraph's coverage 22 of the resignation of Dr Liam Fox?</p> <p>23 A. I've never met Mr Montgomerie, but I think he has quite 24 an unhealthy obsession with all matters to do with the 25 Telegraph and for many years has been an opponent of</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 94</p>	<p>1 since 2008.</p> <p>2 MR JAY: Thank you very much. There will probably be some 3 more questions.</p> <p>4 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Really, they're to carry on with the 5 dialogue we were having just a few minutes ago, if you 6 wish to. I'm obviously anxious to explore with editors, 7 as I have with others, ways forward which work, and 8 you've probably heard me say that earlier today.</p> <p>9 A. Mm-hm.</p> <p>10 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: So ideas that you have would be 11 welcome.</p> <p>12 A. I have four thoughts which I will share with you, if 13 that's okay.</p> <p>14 I think the PCC as its constituted is clearly not 15 fit for purpose. That's been decreed by the 16 Prime Minister. So for whatever it is that replaces 17 it -- bearing in mind the good work that I think it does 18 on the complaints and mediation point, I think whatever 19 it is that replaces it must have an investigative arm. 20 I think one of the difficulties of the PCC is that it 21 stands condemned for things it was never able to do. 22 I think it was the Lord Chief Justice who said in his 23 speech in October to criticise the PCC for powers it 24 doesn't have is like criticising a judge for passing 25 a lenient sentence when he doesn't have those powers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 96</p>

<p>1 I think the PCC has never had investigative powers, and 2 I'd very much like it to have those, to be able to -- 3 when there's been a systemic breakdown in standards, to 4 go into newsrooms, interview staff, seek emails, demand 5 an audit trail to see how decisions have been taken. 6 I'm, as I say, greatly attracted by the idea of an 7 arbitral service which could be provided by the new 8 body. I think if that arbitral service was low cost, it 9 might be a great way of embracing the Internet news 10 providers, who at the moment remain outwith the system, 11 and if they realise that their access to that cheap and 12 quick arbitral system would be contingent upon joining 13 the new body, that would be wholly desirable. 14 Lastly I would say that I think we need to do much 15 more to increase the nature of pariah status for those 16 organisations that are not members of the body, and if 17 it was not enforceable by some kind of civil law, then 18 I think the industry could and should do a great deal 19 more to ensure that rogue publishers are given no access 20 to the benefits enjoyed by everybody else. 21 I'll give you some examples. Why should a rogue 22 publisher be allowed to have its reporters attend lobby 23 briefings? Why should they get access to briefings 24 carried out by any ministers? Indeed, why should they 25 get access to events organised by football writers or</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 97</p>	<p>1 press? 2 A. I'm not sure that it would. I think we need to do 3 a great deal more to heighten the sense of being 4 a pariah for those that remain outside the organisation. 5 The only other point I would make is that while -- 6 and I'm not sure I'm in the majority on this, but while 7 I would like them to have investigative powers, I'm not 8 sure I'm attracted to the idea of fines for the 9 recalcitrant media companies. I'd prefer to see 10 suspension of people to fines for the company. Bear in 11 mind we're operating in a very beleaguered landscape, 12 where a great number of media companies, far from making 13 money, are losing tens of millions of pounds per annum. 14 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Yes, I understand that point. I am 15 much more concerned to ensure that everybody is judged 16 on a level playing field, so that there is a commonality 17 of approach which is as wide as possible to all those 18 who are in the trade or business of supplying news. 19 A. I understand. 20 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I gather from what you say that you 21 don't really disagree with that? 22 A. I don't. 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Is there anything else that you'd 24 like? 25 A. No, I think that's it for now. Thank you.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 99</p>
<p>1 copy from the Press Association or copy from freelance 2 agencies? 3 I think we could do a great deal more to increase 4 pariah status for those that decided they didn't want to 5 be part of the system, and hopefully that could 6 encourage them to come into line. 7 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But if there was a system whereby 8 they had to be in the system, and that's what also got 9 them into the arbitral service and all the rest of it, 10 while ensuring that the regulator was entirely 11 independent -- in other words, staffed, as I said 12 before, by editors or probably ex-editors, because of 13 the problem about judging your competitors, and 14 independent people -- then doesn't that equally achieve 15 not merely the goal of bringing in not merely newspapers 16 but the magazine sector, who really should be part of 17 the same system? 18 A. Mm-hm. 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And who probably wouldn't care if 20 they weren't invited to lobby briefings, because they 21 don't come to them anyway. 22 A. Mm-hm. 23 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: And also all those who could take 24 advantage of an arbitral service. Why would that be 25 inimical to the rights of free speech and freedom of the</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 98</p>	<p>1 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you very much indeed. 2 A. Thank you. 3 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Right. 4 MR JAY: That concludes the witnesses for today. 5 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you very much. We'll start 6 again at 10 o'clock. 7 MR JAY: We do need to list the witnesses who are going to 8 be taken as read. 9 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Oh, please do. 10 MR JAY: In relation to this afternoon's witnesses, Mr Adam 11 Cannon, Mr Wynn-Davies, Mr Benedict Brogan, Mr Peter 12 Osborne and Mr Ian McGregor. 13 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: I'm not so sure about Mr Osborne, 14 because I think there may be reasons why I would be keen 15 for him to give evidence. 16 MR JAY: Yes. 17 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: But the others, certainly. 18 MR JAY: Yes. 19 LORD JUSTICE LEVESON: Thank you very much. 10 o'clock 20 (5.12 pm) 21 (The hearing adjourned until 10 o'clock the following day) 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Page 100</p>

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